



The Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Twenty Something

Author's book reminds us to keep the story of Jesus alive, page 12.

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Sister Demetria Smith smiles during a Mass on Aug. 17 in the St. Augustine Home for the Aged chapel in Indianapolis honoring her 70th jubilee as a member of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Sister Demetria Smith reflects with joy on her 70 years of serving in Uganda, the U.S.

By Natalie Hoefler

At 92, Sister Demetria Smith is the embodiment of gentleness and joy.

Those qualities shined on Aug. 17 during a Mass at St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis as the member of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa renewed the religious vows she first professed 70 years ago.

"I'm just beside myself," said a beaming Sister Demetria at a reception after the Mass, surrounded by family and friends. "I'm just very thankful to God for all that has been."

There is much "that has been" in a vocation that took her

from Indianapolis to Europe to Africa to Washington and back to Indianapolis.

Twenty-six of those 70 years were spent overseas. And more than 16 of those years abroad were spent ministering as a nurse and midwife in the East African country of Uganda—even during the dangerous and deadly eight-year reign of dictator Idi Amin, whom history dubbed the "Butcher of Uganda."

Her seven decades in service to the Lord stem from an upbringing as the second of nine children in a family "very much" rooted in Catholicism.

See **DEMETRIA**, page 8

Be reflections of God's love, pope tells people of Timor-Leste

TASITOLU, Timor-Leste (CNS)—While it is tempting to want more money and more power, God works great things through those who know how to make themselves small, Pope Francis told a massive crowd in one of the world's poorest countries.



Pope Francis

In a nation of 1.3 million people—96% of whom are Catholic—local authorities estimated 600,000 people gathered for Mass with the pope on Sept. 10 at a park in Tasitolu, which is about five miles

outside Timor-Leste's capital, Dili. They came from all over Timor-Leste and also from Indonesia.

People sitting near the metal barriers closest to the altar said they arrived at the site at 4 a.m. for the Mass at 4:30 p.m. They huddled under yellow-and-white umbrellas to avoid the worst effects of the intense sun on a cloudless day.

Even Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão and members of his government arrived more than an hour early; while they had seats on a brick-paved platform near the altar, they also had the special papal-visit umbrellas, although they put them down when the Mass began.

Before the Mass, Gusmão introduced Pope Francis to a long line of people who are sick or have disabilities. The pope blessed each one as the prime minister helped them up.

The prayers and readings were from the votive Mass for the queenship of Mary, "the mother of a king, Jesus, who chose to be born small and to make himself our brother, entrusting his powerful action to the 'yes' of a poor and innocent young mother," the pope said.

He asked the crowd to think about how the birth of a child is a moment of joy and how "an infant's vulnerability carries with it a message so strong that it touches even the most hardened souls."

See **POPE**, page 7

The joys of high school coaching: from seeing team members grow as people to earning a prized banana

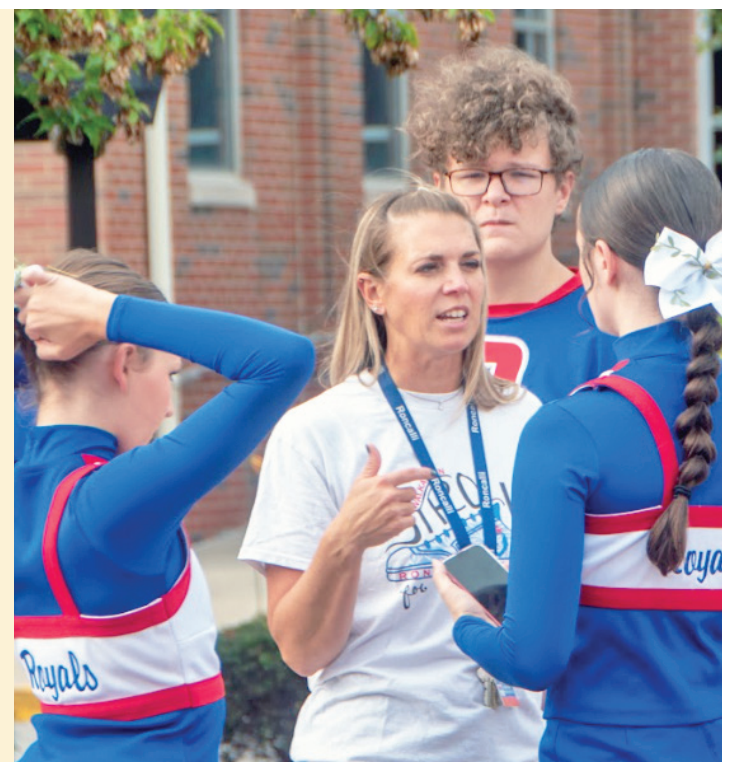
(Editor's note: With the fall sports season in full swing for Catholic high schools across the archdiocese, The Criterion invited a coach from each school to share the best part of coaching for them—and the moments this season that have brought them joy. Here is the first part of a series.)

By John Shaughnessy

As a high school coach, the focus is often on finding ways to help team members reach their potential. It's even better when the student-athletes contribute their own ideas to make that happen.

See **COACHING**, page 2

Roncalli High School's head cheerleading coach Jessica Engel talks with members of the Indianapolis school's cheerleading squad for the Sept. 6 football game against Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)



COACHING

continued from page 1

Nick Klingler has enjoyed watching that extra ingredient unfold this year with the girls' cross-country runners he coaches at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis.

"At our team camp over the summer, the girls came up with the idea of keeping a log of daily goals at each practice. Every day, prior to the beginning of practice, each runner writes down something they want to work on to get better that day," Klingler says. "At the end of



Nick Klingler

each practice, they circle back to their journal and reflect on whether or not they met their goal.

"Every day is an opportunity to grow and be better than the day before. It has had such a positive impact on how we approach practice this season."

That approach mirrors what Klingler calls "easily the best part of coaching"—"watching and supporting each runner's growth."

"Every time we gather, whether at a team meeting, at practice or at a cross-country meet, there are opportunities for the girls to grow in many ways—beyond just their athletic ability," he says. "To get to be a small part of that process is such a privilege. With almost 70 girls, we have a broad range of running abilities, but to see

each of them putting effort into getting better each day is inspiring."

'I love seeing them enjoy what they're doing'

While state championship trophies and medals are the usual rewards that teams seek, the cheerleading squad of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis had a different motivator when they participated in the three-day Universal Cheer Association (UCA) Camp at Purdue University in July:

A banana.

Let their head coach Jessica Engel explain.

"The most coveted award at a UCA camp is the banana, which is the top spirit award. To a lay person, this award doesn't look very glamorous, but to a cheerleader, it's the GOAT [Greatest of All Time]!" Engel says.

"Led by our excellent seniors, they went into camp and gave it their all. From dressing up, to screaming as loud as they could, to dancing in front of the entire camp, to listening, and leading by example, they won the banana award the second day. It was such a huge accomplishment for our squads! We spent more time taking pictures with the banana then we did with any of the other awards we won at camp. It meant so much to them, and I was so proud."

Seeing the team members work toward that combination of joy and accomplishment is the highlight of coaching for Engel.

"Whether it's a skill, a routine, a dance or just a fun chant, the smiles on their faces and their enthusiasm to perform provide an overwhelming sense of accomplishment for them and myself," she says. "They start to really encourage each other and build each other's confidence."

"They want to do it over and over until they get it exactly right. And when they finally do, they want to perform it right then and there. I love seeing them enjoy what they're doing."

"They want to do it over and over until they get it exactly right. And when they finally do, they want to perform it right then and there. I love seeing them enjoy what they're doing."

'A remarkable thing to experience'

Two moments this season have added an extra



As the head coach of the girls' cross-country team at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis, Nick Klingler appreciates when the team members contribute their own ideas to improving their performance. (Submitted photo)



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

September 14–22, 2024

<p>September 14 – 5 p.m. Mass for Archdiocesan Hispanic Family Camp at CYO Camp Rancho Framasa, Brown County</p> <p>September 17 – 10 a.m. Priest Formation Day at Knights of Columbus Council #8052, Scottsburg</p> <p>September 17 – 2 p.m. Virtual National Eucharistic Congress Board of Directors meeting</p> <p>September 17 – 5 p.m. CST Archbishop's Annual Dinner at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad</p> <p>September 18 – 10 a.m. Department Heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>September 18 – 6 p.m. Mass of Thanksgiving for the National Eucharistic Congress at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, followed by reception at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p>	<p>September 19 – 8:45 a.m. Mass and high school visit at Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis</p> <p>September 19 – 11:30 a.m. Lunch gathering with archdiocesan priests, Indianapolis</p> <p>September 19 – 3 p.m. Finance Council meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>September 21 – 10:30 a.m. Declaration of Candidacy for permanent deacon candidates at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>September 22 – 11 a.m. Confirmation Mass for youths of the Korean Catholic community at Korean Catholic Church, Indianapolis</p> <p>September 22 – 5 p.m. Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Ambrose Parish, Seymour, at St. Ambrose Church</p>
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touch of joy for Andrew Alig, the head coach of the girls' soccer team of Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg.

"We had a girl miss the first couple games of the season due to injury," Alig recalls. "When she came back, she had an incredible debut week. The whole team was excited for her and rallied behind her for her comeback."

"A second moment is when we were playing against a highly ranked opponent. We came out with lots of energy. When we scored our first goal to take the lead, all the players ran together with emotion to celebrate together."

Alig gets energized from "seeing the joy and emotion from athletes when they accomplish a personal goal or milestone."

"To me, this is what coaching is about because it is the completion of all the hard work the athlete has put in throughout the season. Not just the personal emotion, but seeing the shared team emotion when one player achieves something is quite a remarkable thing to experience." †



As the head coach of the girls' soccer team at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg, Andrew Alig views the best part of coaching as helping and seeing players strive to reach their potential. (Submitted photo)

Schedule is set for remainder of listening sessions for pastoral planning process

Criterion staff report

Catholics from across central and southern Indiana are invited to take part in a series of listening sessions that started on Aug. 24 at St. Louis Parish in Batesville and will be part of a pastoral planning process for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The rest of the listening sessions are scheduled for the following dates:

—**October 3**—6-8 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour.

—**October 5**—10 a.m.-noon, St. Benedict Parish, 111 S. Ninth St., Terre Haute.

—**October 19**—10 a.m.-noon, St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville.

—**October 26**—2-4 p.m. CST, St. Boniface Parish, N. State Road 545, Fulda.

—**October 30**—6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis.

—**November 6**—6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Dr., East, Indianapolis.

The process, which is expected to take place for two

years, is aimed at answering three questions: "Where are we today?"; "Where is God calling us to be?"; and "How will we get there together?"

During the pastoral planning process, Catholics in the archdiocese are invited to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the faithful in listening to God's word and one another as all the faithful seek together to discern God's will for the Church in central and southern Indiana.

They are also encouraged to take part in the listening sessions and complete an online survey that is being prepared for the planning process. †



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09/13/24

International Eucharistic Congress begins with call to fraternity

(OSV News)—The 53rd edition of the International Eucharistic Congress began on Sept. 8 in Quito, Ecuador, with a strong call to build fraternity as a way of healing the wounds of a world full of fractures and violence.



The opening celebration included a message sent by Pope Francis, in

which he emphasized that “we’re one and only in such unity we can serve the world and heal it.”

The encounter, which will conclude on Sept. 15, was planned to promote—in line with the eucharistic invitation—human brotherhood, despite many divides, under the theme “Fraternity to Heal the World.”

Archbishop Alfredo Espinoza of Quito said in his homily during the opening Mass that the city became “a great eucharistic tent,” and people from all over the world will think about a mystery that “challenges us to be real builders of fraternity so to heal the world’s wounds,” in a time “full of violence, death, and wars.”

The opening Mass was celebrated in Quito’s Bicentennial Park in the presence of thousands of people and dozens of bishops. To make the celebration even more joyful, 1,600 children received their first Communion during the Mass.

Cardinal Baltazar Porras Cardozo, retired archbishop of Caracas, Venezuela, was also present as pontifical legate for the congress.

For Bishop José Adalberto Jiménez of the Aguariño Vicariate, in the Ecuadorian Amazon, the combination of the perspective of adoration brought by the Eucharist with the call to a living exercise of faith was noticeable in Pope Francis’ message to the Congress, which the pontiff sent along as he was crossing the globe for his farthest and longest apostolic trip to date to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Singapore.

“The pontiff invited us to be on the side of those who suffer—and do so with concrete gestures. That idea of a proactive fraternity greatly impacted me,” Bishop Jiménez emphasized, adding that the pope pointed out that simple actions should “lead us to a new world, a fairer and more humane one.”

“We have to touch the wounds of the social reality, tainted by social injustice caused by political lukewarmness and corruption,” as well as “deaths provoked by immigration” and poverty, “by criminal gangs, by the violation of the prisoners’ rights, by the pain of the families of alcoholics and drug addicts,” and by “the illegal mining that is destroying the Amazon,” Bishop Jiménez told OSV News, pointing to painful realities of the region.

“The congress was preceded by a theological symposium [on Sept. 4-7] that gathered more than 600 theologians from all parts of the world. Their scholarly reflections will now be followed by a more pastoral and catechetical approach,” Father Juan Carlos Garzón, secretary-general of the congress, told OSV News.

With the theme “Wounded World,” the first full day of the congress allowed participants to think about some of the sufferings that currently exist in the world’s societies.

The problem sounds especially familiar in Ecuador’s capital. One of the speakers—Quito Mayor Pabel Muñoz—was to discuss the hardships in his city, which faced, along with several other regions, a wave of violence in January. Auxiliary Bishop Hryhoriy Komar of Sambir-Drohobych, Ukraine, was scheduled to talk about the consequences of the Russian invasion of his country.

On the second full day, Sept. 10, the conference was to deal with distinct forms of building brotherhood. Three Latin American bishops were scheduled to tell the stories of key members of the region’s episcopate in the past, like Bishop Leonidas Proaño, an Ecuadorian-born prelate who devoted his life to helping Indigenous groups and peasants.

The theme for day three was to focus on the transfiguration of the world provoked by the Eucharist. One of the scheduled speakers was Father José Antonio Maeso, a Spanish-born priest who has been working for several years with imprisoned people in Ecuador—and many times uses puppets in his activities with them. Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., organizer of the National Eucharistic Congress in the U.S. in July, was also to be a guest for the day.

The final two days of discussions were to focus on synodality and connections between the Eucharist and fraternity. One of the speakers was to be Bishop Rafael Cob of Puyo, in the Ecuadorian Amazon, who will talk about his work at the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network, known as REPAM in Spanish.

The congress was scheduled to conclude with an eucharistic procession on the streets of the old central district of Quito on Sept. 14. The closing Mass will be celebrated on Sept. 15.

Father Garzón recalled that it has been 20 years since the last International Eucharistic Congress happened in a Latin American country. In 2004, it was organized in Guadalajara, Mexico.

“We’re receiving participants from 60 nations, but the event will certainly have a Latin American and an Ecuadorian face. I think our region’s Church has a special contribution to give when it comes to promoting fraternity, in line with the pope’s message,” Father Garzón said.

It is also a region that has been dealing



Flag bearers walk to the opening Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress in Quito, Ecuador, on Sept. 8. (OSV News photo/courtesy International Eucharistic Congress)

with violence, divides and wounds, he added.

“We’re in an injured world. We’ll hear people talking about how they work in tough places, without seeing the others as enemies. We hope our minds will be open to receive the Holy Spirit’s blow,” he added.

Bishop Jiménez recalled that the Eucharistic Congress this year coincides with the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the South American country to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In 1874, Archbishop José Ignacio

Checa y Barba of Quito presided at the ceremony—side by side with then-President Gabriel García Moreno—that marked the first time a nation did so.

“That has a tremendous spiritual significance and will certainly throw light in the social dimension of the Church’s work as well,” Bishop Jiménez told OSV News.

“May this congress open the way for us to the Christ of the tabernacle, and may he lead us to the suffering Christs of our sick brothers, marginalized and forgotten by society,” he concluded. †

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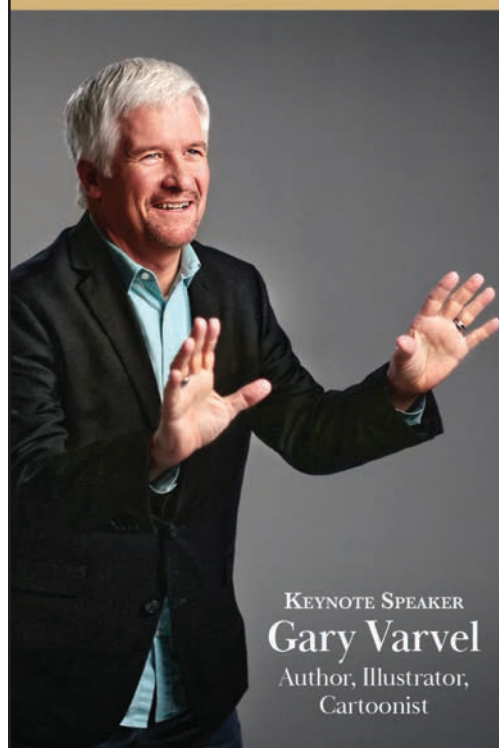
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Dinner and Awards – 6:45 p.m.

Gary Varvel – 8:00 p.m.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Gary Varvel
Author, Illustrator,
Cartoonist



Gary Varvel is a Christian, conservative, cartoonist and speaker in that order. Varvel was The Indianapolis Star cartoonist for 24 years. His work is syndicated through Creators Syndicate. In 2015 he was inducted into the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame. Varvel has won both national and state awards for his work. In addition, Varvel wrote and illustrated *The Good Shepherd* children’s book and has co-written and produced Christian films.



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The Criterion

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Editorial



Pope Francis greets a child in traditional dress during a welcome ceremony at the presidential palace in Dili, Timor-Leste, on Sept. 9. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Pope's 20,000-mile journey of hope: seeking harmony among faiths and sharing God's love with all

Since he became our universal shepherd in 2013, Pope Francis has consistently encouraged us in our call as missionary disciples to go to the peripheries to share the Gospel with all our brothers and sisters.

And it is a powerful witness of faith when our Holy Father travels thousands of miles to faraway places to practice what he preaches.

As *The Criterion* went to press this week, the pope was in the midst of a Sept. 2-13 visit to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Singapore for the longest foreign trip of his papacy. The 87-year-old pontiff was expected to cover more than 20,000 miles during his pilgrimage. And in the process, he hoped to promote unity in diversity among the ethnic groups and faith traditions that are a part of those countries' landscapes.

Not surprisingly, interreligious dialogue was among the themes Pope Francis was sharing during his visits.

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, and Catholics account for only about 3% of the population. Almost all the people of Papua New Guinea are Christian, and about 30% of them are Catholic. Timor-Leste is the only nation on the itinerary where Catholics are the majority; the Vatican estimates that 96% of the population belongs to the Church. In Singapore, Buddhists make up the largest religious group—about 31%—followed by 20% of the population claiming no religious belief; Christians account for almost 19% of the population, and Muslims about 15%.

Pope Francis on Sept. 4 told Indonesian President Joko Widodo and the other leaders that the Catholic Church is committed to promoting interreligious dialogue.

"In this way, prejudices can be eliminated, and a climate of mutual respect and trust can grow," the pope said. "This is indispensable for meeting common challenges, including that of countering extremism and intolerance, which through the distortion of religion attempt to impose their views by using deception and violence.

"The Catholic Church is at the service of the common good and wishes to strengthen cooperation with

public institutions and other actors in civil society, but never engaging in proselytism, never," he continued. "It respects the faith of every person."

Care for creation was another big theme of the visit, particularly because all four countries are island nations exposed to the dangers of rising sea levels. In fact, Indonesia is building a new capital city to replace Jakarta, which is known as "the fastest-sinking megacity on the planet."

Missionary discipleship and care for creation were front and center when the Holy Father on Sept. 8 flew to Vanimo, a remote outpost of Papua New Guinea to spend an afternoon with a group of missionaries—many from Argentina—and with their people. Vanimo is the capital of Papua New Guinea's Sandaun Province, which is one of the poorest in the nation. Situated on the northwestern coast, it is an area prone to earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic activity.

After flying over forests, mountains and the ocean on his trip to Vanimo, Pope Francis told the people, "One cannot help but be amazed by the colors, sounds and scents, as well as the grandiose spectacle of nature bursting forth with life, all evoking the image of Eden!

"The Lord entrusts this richness to you as a sign and an instrument, so that you too may live united in harmony with him and with your brothers and sisters, respecting our common home and looking after one another," the pope told them.

"An even more beautiful sight," though, he continued, is "that which grows in us when we love one another."

Loving one another. Isn't that what each of us is called to do? We naturally think of family, friends and our parish family, but our call to love goes beyond those people.

At the heart of our call as missionary disciples is to love all who cross our path—strangers, people of other faith traditions, and those on the peripheries as well.

During this current journey, Pope Francis has once again reminded us we need to step outside our comfort zone in our call to be instruments of the Lord.

May we have the courage to follow his example.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Greg Erlandson

Dealing with pandemic PTSD

I'd like a show of hands for how many of you tested positive for COVID this summer. Or felt like heck but didn't have any tests on-hand. Or self-diagnosed your distress as summer flu, even though this isn't flu season.



I thought so.

I'm pretty sure I was infected at an otherwise lovely wedding. A week later, a number

of us developed the sore throat/fever/exceptional tiredness that seemed like COVID. I did test, and the 15-minute test strip took all of 15 seconds to confirm why I felt so cruddy.

What a difference four years makes. This same disease that filled us with dread in 2020 and killed more than a million of our fellow Americans is now, for many of us, just endured, or treated with Paxlovid.

One would have to look far and wide to learn that 30,000 Americans have died from COVID so far this year. We are intent on putting the trauma of our plague years behind us. No one's really tracking it very closely because folks aren't testing routinely. Only our wastewater confirms that the COVID-19 pathogen is still infecting and occasionally killing.

Nicholas Christakis, who wrote one of the first popular books on COVID, predicted in 2020 that "over very long time frames, we reach an uneasy genetic truce" with plague pathogens. But he also said that pandemics are sociological as well as biological. "There is a social end to pandemics, too, when the fear, anxiety, and socioeconomic disruptions have either declined or simply come to be accepted as an ordinary fact of life."

Since COVID is still evolving, I think it is too soon to say we've reached a genetic truce, but it is certainly easy to say we've accepted it as just one more of life's indignities.

What my latest bout with COVID reminds me, however, is that most of us have repressed the trauma of 2020 and 2021, when the morgues overflowed and nursing homes became killing

zones. We've forgotten wiping down our groceries and scrounging for masks or wearing hopelessly inadequate homemade ones.

We've forgotten the wave of deaths on cruise ships like the *Diamond Princess*, stranded offshore from Japan because officials wouldn't let the possibly infected passengers disembark. We've forgotten medical systems on the verge of collapse, a shortage of ventilators, and people holding signs up outside hospitals to thank nurses who risked their lives to care for the sick. We've forgotten the scourge of long COVID.

We also forgot neighbors checking up on each other, and a million acts of mercy like bringing medicine or soup

to a sick friend (though maintaining 6 feet of distance).

If it was the worst of times, it was also the best of times. We lost a lot of people, but, at first, we rallied around each other. For a time, our better angels prevailed.

Later, not so much. We ended up dividing over what the best response to the pandemic should have been. Should churches have been closed? Were masks necessary? Are vaccines safe even if their creation was a medical and technological miracle?

As leaders struggled to make the right calls, we second-guessed them. Our distrust of institutions, of experts, of each other worsened even as we did find ways to fight the disease.

Four years later, we continue to live with the impact of the political, medical and social responses to the plague even as we repress how scary, how bad it was for a while.

Remembering the trauma, the PTSD of the pandemic, may be a way for us to also remember the courage, the unity we found in the midst of tragedy.

There are other threats on the horizon now: Bird flu and Mpox and pathogens we haven't encountered yet. Remembering our past may help us to prepare for what comes next.

What my latest bout with COVID reminds me, however, is that most of us have repressed the trauma of 2020 and 2021, when the morgues overflowed and nursing homes became killing zones. We've forgotten wiping down our groceries and scrounging for masks or wearing hopelessly inadequate homemade ones.

(Greg Erlandson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at *OSV News*. Follow him on X (formerly Twitter) @GregErlandson.) †

Letters Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

From the horror of the cross comes our hope, our salvation

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." (Jn 3:13-15)

Tomorrow, Sept. 14, is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. What was to the ancient world an instrument of unspeakable horror—not unlike the gas chamber or the guillotine—the wood of the cross has become for Christians a powerful sign of hope and salvation. Christ's redemptive sacrifice, his passion and death, is symbolized in the holy cross. We rejoice in it because it was the pathway to our Lord's resurrection.

The first reading from the Book of Numbers (21:4b-9) recalls the "lost" people of Israel wandering in the desert and complaining about God's supposed lack of care for them. In spite of the fact that God has rescued them from slavery in Egypt and offered them a new home in the promised land of milk and honey, they grumble among themselves saying to Moses, "Why

have you brought us up from Egypt to die in this desert, where there is no food or water?" (Nm 21:5)

The Israelites are punished for their ingratitude and infidelity. Poisonous snakes threaten them with serious illness, even death, and they beg God to save them—once again. The Lord tells Moses to mount a bronze snake on a pole. He promises anyone bitten by a venomous snake who looks at it will be cured.

We Christians understand the analogy. Jesus has taken on himself the sins of the world. As St. Paul tells us in the second reading for this feast day:

"Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:6-8).

Jesus becomes the Old Testament snake. As St. Paul says, Jesus, who was not a sinner, "became sin" (2 Cor 5:21). He became the antidote for the venomous evil that has infected all humanity since the sins of our first

parents. And the lifting up (exaltation) of the holy cross is an unmistakable sign that sin and death have been overcome once and for all by the redemptive sacrifice of God's only Son.

St. John's Gospel testifies to the power of this antidote with one of the most-quoted passages in all of sacred Scripture:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (Jn 3:16-17).

Our redemption, and the salvation of the whole world, come through the holy cross. There is no other road to heaven, no other way to true happiness and lasting joy. We must follow Jesus on the *via dolorosa*, the sorrowful way through death to everlasting life.

Catholic philosopher Peter Kreeft, in his book *Heaven, the Heart's Deepest Longing*, has written:

Suffering is an occasion for wisdom, and wisdom is an essential ingredient in happiness. If happiness is objective,

if it is not in us but we are in it, then its objective laws and principles may require subjective suffering on our part. Most great men and women of the past have both experienced and taught the creative value of suffering, the objective happiness of subjective unhappiness.

Jesus has taught us that we must endure suffering and death in this life in order to follow him to the everlasting joy of heaven. The holy cross is the sacramental sign of this profound truth.

God the Father loves each one of us, and all the vastness of his creation, so much that he willingly sent his only Son, the Word incarnate, to suffer and die for us on a cross. As a result, the hideous instrument of torture and death has been exalted. It has become for us the very opposite of what it was meant to be—not a sign of despair and death, but an affirmation of hope and joy.

Let us thank God for the great gift of sacrificial love that we have received. And let us pray fervently the words we sing on Good Friday: "We praise you, O Lord, and we bless you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world." †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Del horror de la cruz proviene nuestra esperanza y salvación

Jesús le dijo a Nicodemo: "Nadie ha subido al cielo sino el que descendió del cielo, el Hijo del Hombre. Y como Moisés levantó la serpiente en el desierto, así es necesario que el Hijo del Hombre sea levantado para que todo aquel que cree en él tenga vida eterna." (Jn 3:13-15)

Mañana, 14 de septiembre, es la Fiesta de la Exaltación de la Santa Cruz. Lo que para el mundo antiguo era un instrumento de horror indecible—no muy distinto de la cámara de gas o la guillotina—el madero de la cruz se ha convertido para los cristianos en un poderoso signo de esperanza y salvación. El sacrificio redentor de Cristo, su pasión y muerte, se resumen en el símbolo de la Santa Cruz, y es motivo de alegría para nosotros porque representa el camino hacia la resurrección de nuestro Señor.

La primera lectura del Libro de los Números (21:4b-9) recuerda al pueblo "perdido" de Israel que vagaba por el desierto y se quejaba de que supuestamente Dios no les prestaba atención. A pesar de que los rescató de la esclavitud en Egipto y les ofreció un nuevo hogar en la Tierra Prometida de Leche y Miel, refunfuñaban entre ellos y le decían a Moisés: "¿Por qué nos has hecho

subir de Egipto para morir en el desierto? Porque no hay pan ni hay agua, y nuestra alma está hastiada de esta comida miserable" (Núm 21:5).

Entonces se los castiga por su ingratitud e infidelidad; serpientes venenosas los amenazan con graves enfermedades, incluso con la muerte, y ruegan a Dios que los salve ... una vez más. El Señor le dice a Moisés que monte una serpiente en un poste y promete que quien haya sido mordido por una serpiente venenosa se curará.

Los cristianos entendemos la analogía: Jesús asume los pecados del mundo. Tal como nos dice san Pablo en la segunda lectura de la festividad de hoy:

"Haya en ustedes esta manera de pensar que hubo también en Cristo Jesús: Existiendo en forma de Dios, él no consideró el ser igual a Dios como algo a que aferrarse; sino que se despojó a sí mismo, tomando forma de siervo, haciéndose semejante a los hombres; y, hallándose en condición de hombre, se humilló a sí mismo haciéndose obediente hasta la muerte, ¡y muerte de cruz!" (Fil 2:6-8)

Jesús se convierte en la serpiente del Antiguo Testamento. Como dice san Pablo, Jesús, que no era pecador, "se hizo pecado" (2 Cor 5:21), se convirtió

en el antídoto para el mal venenoso que ha infectado a toda la humanidad desde los pecados de nuestros primeros padres. Y la elevación (exaltación) de la Santa Cruz es un signo incuestionable de que el sacrificio redentor del Hijo único de Dios ha vencido de una vez por todas el pecado y la muerte.

El Evangelio de san Juan da testimonio del poder de este antídoto mediante uno de los pasajes más citados de toda la Sagrada Escritura:

"Porque de tal manera amó Dios al mundo, que ha dado a su Hijo unigénito para que todo aquel que en él cree no se pierda mas tenga vida eterna. Porque Dios no envió a su Hijo al mundo para condenar al mundo, sino para que el mundo sea salvo por él" (Jn 3:16-17).

Nuestra redención, y la salvación del mundo entero, llegan a través de la Santa Cruz. No hay otro camino hacia el cielo, no hay otro camino hacia la verdadera felicidad y la alegría duradera. Debemos seguir a Jesús por la *via dolorosa*, el camino doloroso que atraviesa la muerte hacia la vida eterna.

El filósofo católico Peter Kreeft, en su libro *El cielo, el anhelo más profundo del corazón*, escribió:

El sufrimiento es una ocasión para la sabiduría, y la sabiduría es un ingrediente esencial de la felicidad.

Si la felicidad es objetiva, si no está en nosotros sino que nosotros estamos en ella, entonces sus leyes y principios objetivos pueden requerir un sufrimiento subjetivo por nuestra parte. La mayoría de los grandes hombres y mujeres del pasado han experimentado y enseñado el valor creativo del sufrimiento, la felicidad objetiva de la infelicidad subjetiva.

Jesús nos ha enseñado que debemos soportar el sufrimiento y la muerte en esta vida para poder seguirlo a la alegría eterna del cielo. La Santa Cruz es el signo sacramental de esta profunda verdad.

Dios Padre nos ama tanto a cada uno de nosotros, y a toda la inmensidad de su creación, que envió voluntariamente a su único Hijo, el Verbo encarnado, a sufrir y morir por nosotros en una cruz. Como resultado, el horrible instrumento de tortura y muerte ha sido exaltado y se ha convertido para nosotros en todo lo contrario de lo que era: ya no es un signo de desesperación y muerte, sino una afirmación de esperanza y alegría.

Demos gracias a Dios por el gran don del amor sacrificial que hemos recibido y recemos con fervor las palabras que entonamos el Viernes Santo: "Te adoramos, oh Cristo, y te bendicimos porque por tu Santa Cruz has redimido al mundo." †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

September 18

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Mass of Thanksgiving for National Eucharistic Congress** celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, 6 p.m., with reception to follow at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St. Information: Beth Roberts at broberts@archindy.org or 317-236-7325.

September 19

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

September 20

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Father Andrew Syberg, rector of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, presenting "Vocations and Discernment in the 21st Century," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18

members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Sept. 17. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

September 20-21

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Dr. E., Indianapolis. **Fall Fest**, 5-11 p.m.; Fri.: adults only, live music, games; Sat.: children's games and activities, food, beverages, live music by The Indigos, free admission. Information: 317-259-4373, tinyurl.com/StLukeFallFest2024.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Circle City Irish Festival**, Fri. 4-11 p.m., Sat. noon-11 p.m.; two raffle drawings 8:30 p.m. each night, Fri. for Irish basket and Anheuser Bush products, Sat. for two Colts suite tickets and Ireland tour for two, tickets \$5 each or five for \$20; live Irish music, Irish merchandise market, games, beer, food, admission \$15, ages 12 and younger free. Information: 317-341-3570, circlecityirishfestival.com.

September 20-22

Catholic Familyland, 3375 County Road 36, Bloomingdale, Ohio. **Catholic Marriage Retreat**, Fri. 3 p.m.-Sun. 1 p.m.,

presented by "Building a Eucharistic Marriage" program creator Greg Schutte, includes conferences, discussions, activities, daily Mass and confession, adoration, meals, snacks and beverages \$399, lodging additional \$109-\$289, sponsored by Apostolate for Family Consecration. Information, registration: 740-567-7700, afc.org/catholic-marriage-retreat, info@afc.org.

September 21

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Mountfest**, noon-8 p.m., regional arts festival, live entertainment, food trucks, local beer and wine, kids' zone, free admission, \$5 per car suggested donation. Information/artist registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/mountfest-2024.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, school parking lot, 1842 E. Eighth St., Jeffersonville. **Street Dance**, 7-11 p.m., school fundraiser, live music, food trucks, kids' area, live auction, \$10 admission. Information: 812-283-3123, info@sacredheartsschool.us.

St. Bridget Parish, 404 E. Vine St., Liberty. **Oktoberfest**,

lcoons@archindy.org.

October 1

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Divine Wine and Art with Heart**, 5-9 p.m., Hayley Oliverio presenting, includes snacks, beverages, art supplies, \$45. Registration: archindy.org/fatima-events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org. †

4-11 p.m., 4 p.m. Mass followed by German meal, Queen of Hearts, basket raffle, kids' games, music, beer, wine, bounce house, country store, free admission. Information: 765-825-8578.

September 22

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Filipino Mass**, 2-3 p.m., every fourth Sunday of the month, free. Information: mariasolito@gmail.com.

St. Michael Parish, 11400 Farmer's Lane NE, Greenville. **Parish Picnic**, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., fried chicken, homemade dumplings, silent auction, Nana's Basement, cake booth, kids' zone, pull tabs, food stand, dinners \$14, free admission. Information: 812-364-6646.

September 22 or 24

St. Mary Parish, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Jesus and the End Times Video Series Week 1: "The**

Destruction of the Temple and The End of the World," week one of four-week video Bible study by theologian Dr. Brant Pitre, Sept. 22, 4-5:30 p.m. or Sept. 24, 6:30-8 p.m., attend any or all weeks, free. Information: 812-346-3604, parish@stmarysnv.com.

September 25

Persimmon Festival, corner of 7th and Main streets, Mitchell. **St. Mary Parish Italian Dinner Food Tent**, 4:30-7 p.m., Italian dinner, meal cost TBD. Information: 812-849-3570, stmarysmitchell294@gmail.com.

September 26-28

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, 5901 Olive Branch Road, Greenwood. **Fall Festival**, Thurs. 4-8 p.m., rides only; Fri. 4-5 p.m. rides only, 5-10 p.m. full festival, fish fry, 6:30-9:30 p.m. live music by Tastes Like Chicken; Sat. noon-10 p.m. full festival, Art in the Park arts and crafts fair, 6:30-9:30 p.m. live music by

Big Rosco and The Hammers; full festival includes: rides, food, silent auction, quilt and \$10,000 raffles, kids' tent, cake wheel, free admission. Information: 317-859-4673, festival@ss-fc.org, ss-fc.org/news/parish-fall-festival.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. **Fall Festival**, Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. 5 p.m.-Sat. 1 a.m., Sat. 2 p.m.-midnight, live music, amusements, food, beverages, gaming, free admission. Information: 317-356-7291, ollfallfest@gmail.com.

September 27-28

St. Malachy Parish, 9833 E. County Rd. 750 N., Brownsburg. **Country Fair and Hog Roast**, Fri. 4-11 p.m., Sat. 3-11 p.m., food, drinks, casino, midway, beer tent, silent auction, kids' games, live music, free admission. Information: 317-852-3195, countryfair@stmalachy.org. †

Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.

September 28

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Transforming Our Grief into Growth"** Day of Retreat, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, \$45, includes lunch, Mass and program, register by midnight Sept. 27. Registration: archindy.org/fatima-events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

September 30

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Fatima Movie Night: Cabrini**, 6-9 p.m., after-film discussion with Father Keith Hoseny and Cheryl McSweeney, free but advance registration requested, optional dinner 5-6 p.m. \$17 (separate registration required). Registration: archindy.org/fatima-events, 317-545-7681,

Mass at St. Bartholomew in Columbus on Sept. 24 will mark Season of Creation

A Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson to mark the Season of Creation will be held at St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., in Columbus on Sept. 24 at 5:30 p.m., preceded by a musical prelude at 5 p.m.

The Season of Creation spans five weeks between the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on Sept. 1 and the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 4. In the words of Pope Francis, this "time for creation" offers "individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be

stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live" ("Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis For the Establishment of the 'World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation,'" 2015).

The concert and Mass are sponsored by the St. Bartholomew Care for Our Common Home Ministry.

For more information, call 812-379-9353, ext. 1 or e-mail dschafer@stbparish.net. †

Comedy show benefiting St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities to take place on Sept. 21

A comedy show fundraiser benefitting St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany will take place at Our Lady of Perpetual Hops Microbrewery, 300 Foundation Ct., in New Albany at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 21.

The show will feature comedians from Laughing Dad Entertainment: Danny Browning, June Dempsey and

Lucious Williams.

General admission is \$25, or \$35 for limited reserved seating. A table of 10 is \$350. Tickets can be purchased online at tinyurl.com/NACComedyShow24.

For more information, contact Brooke Daugherty at 812-949-7305 or bdaugherty@stecharities.org. †

Wedding Anniversaries

JOHN AND MARIE (ROMANO) WOOD, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Aug. 1.

The couple was married in Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 1, 1959.

They have four children: Angela Wood-Luzcando, Cheryl Wood-Wheelock, Brett and John Wood.

The couple also has four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



ROBERT AND MARYANN (BEDEL) NIESE, members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 5.

The couple was married in Immaculate Conception Church in Millhousen on Sept. 5, 1964.

They have seven children: Teresa Baugh, Jennifer Johnson, Patricia Louagie, Sandra Sneed, Donald, Richard and Steven Niese.

The couple also has 34 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



GENE AND BARBARA (JACKSON) KOCHERT, members of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Aug. 23.

The couple was married in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany on Aug. 23, 1969.

They have four children: Amanda Jehl, Amy Quinn, Allison Schuler and the late Adrienne Kochert.

The couple also has nine grandchildren.



GARY AND VICTORIA (STEMM) LOPP, members of St. Mary Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 9.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in New Albany on Aug. 9, 1974.

They have two children: Andrea and Erika Lopp.



BRUCE AND PATRICIA (MOCADLO) QUEAR, members of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 24.

The couple was married in St. Michael Church in Pitcairn, Pa., on Aug. 24, 1974.

They have two children: Melissa Long and Jason Quear.

The couple also has six grandchildren. †



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

United in love, young people can change Papua New Guinea, pope says

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (CNS)—In Papua New Guinea, the term “wantok” means people who share a language and culture, and that is what Christians should be, Pope Francis said, but only in the sense of sharing the language and culture of love.

Before leaving Papua New Guinea on Sept. 9, the pope returned to Sir John Guise Stadium in Port Moresby, where he had celebrated Mass the day before. His second visit was to spend time with an estimated 10,000 young people and to hear their concerns.

About 60% of Papua New Guinea’s population is under the age of 25.

Ryan Vulum spoke to the pope and to his peers about the harm done to children when parents, including his, separate when the children are still young. And Bernadette Turmoni spoke of an even more serious issue, violence and abuse within families.

“We hear about it daily in the news and crime reports,” she told the pope. “Abuse destroys the lives of young men and women. Those who have suffered from it feel unloved and disrespected. They lose hope and may commit suicide or leave their families.”

Bishop John Bosco Auram of Kimbe, the bishops’ conference delegate for youth, told Pope Francis, “Our young people face deep-seated challenges such as living Christian values within the family and society, limited opportunities for growth and development, the strong influence of modern life, various frustrations stemming from unfulfilled expectations of society, government and even the Church.”

But, he said, the greatest challenge is for them “to discover Christ within and amidst these realities and situations,” and so the pope’s visit is a celebration of hope.

Pope Francis repeatedly interrupted reading his prepared text to ask the young people questions and have them shout their replies, telling them, “I don’t hear you!”

His questions included: Do you want harmony or confusion? How many languages do the people of Papua New



Pope Francis is greeted by young people as he arrives in a golf cart at Sir John Guise Stadium for a special meeting with youth in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on Sept. 9. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Guinea speak? Can a young person make mistakes?

And—while not exactly following the prepared text—he insisted that young people need each other, they need their grandparents and they need Jesus.

People must “learn a common language, the language of love,” he said, because the words people use can divide them or even become weapons that destroy families.

“Break down divisions, do not close yourselves within your own group,” he said. Instead, “go out to meet others and form friendships and then dream together, walk together, build together.

“Dear young people,” he told them, “it is my hope that you learn the language of love and thus transform your country, because love brings about change, makes you grow and opens paths to the future.”

Everyone fails at something sometime, the pope said. “What is important is to get back up” and to help others get back up when they fall. †



A young woman cheers as she welcomes Pope Francis to Sir John Guise Stadium in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on Sept. 9. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

POPE

continued from page 1

Praising the people of Timor-Leste for continuing to have a relatively high birth rate, Pope Francis said it was “a great gift that so many children and young people are present, constantly renewing the freshness, energy, joy and enthusiasm of your people.”

With about 65% of the population being under the age of 30, Timor-Leste is “a young country and we can see every

corner of your land teeming with life,” he said.

If every baby brings joy, the pope said, how much more should people marvel at the fact that in Christ, God himself became human “to draw close to us and save us.”

The response to that gift, he said, should be to open oneself to God “so that he may heal our wounds, reconcile our differences and reorder our lives to create a new foundation for every aspect of our personal and communal life.

“Let us not be afraid to make ourselves

small before God, and before each other, to lose our lives, to give up our time, to revise our schedules, giving up something to help a brother or sister become better and happier,” the pope told them.

With dozens of Indigenous people present and wearing traditional dress, Pope Francis told the people that two traditional East Timorese symbols also speak of the “strength and tenderness of a father and mother.”

The “*Kaibauk*,” which represents a water buffalo’s horns and is worn as a headdress, “speaks of strength,

energy and warmth, and can represent the life-giving power of God,” the pope said, while the “*Belak*,” which represents the moon and is worn as a necklace, “speaks of peace, fertility and sweetness, and symbolizes the tenderness of a mother, who by her delicate loving gestures makes whatever she touches glow with the same light she receives from God.”

Pope Francis asked people to pray at the liturgy that “we may reflect in the world the strong and tender light of God’s love, of that God.” †



Pope Francis greets a woman and child during an outdoor Mass in Tasitolu, Timor-Leste, on Sept. 10. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



People wearing traditional dress attend an outdoor Mass with Pope Francis in Tasitolu, Timor-Leste, on Sept. 10. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

DEMETRIA

continued from page 1

'One little photo'

Sister Demetria was born in Indianapolis on Aug. 7, 1932. Her parents, Archie and Bettie Smith, named their daughter Catherine.

The Smiths grew up near St. Vincent Hospital—then located near downtown Indianapolis—where Archie worked as a chauffeur.

It was through the Daughters of Charity sisters who operated the hospital that Archie was introduced to—and was later baptized into—the Catholic faith.

"When he met my mom, she fell in love with the faith, too," Sister Demetria said. "We prayed the family rosary every day, and we [kids] all had 12 years of Catholic education."

It was while attending the former St. Bridget School in Indianapolis that she first felt the call to serve in Africa.

"They didn't say much about Africa in school back then," Sister Demetria recalled. "They just showed us one little photo [in a geography textbook] of two little boys in an African town on the equator, and I said, 'Oh, I want to go there and help the people in Africa!'"

But she also wanted to be a nurse, a desire that evolved during her years working at St. Vincent, said Sister Demetria.

"It was expensive, with such a large family, and it was expected that you would make a contribution to the family," she explained. "We only had to go out our back door and run in the back of the hospital, so one of my sisters and I worked there washing dishes."

As she came to know the religious sisters and learn about their work, "I knew I wanted to be a nurse," she said.

'Don't forget us—we're praying for you'

After graduating from the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis in 1950, Sister Demetria took nursing-related classes at the former Indiana University extension in Indianapolis for two years while working as an assistant in the surgery unit at St. Vincent.

Enter the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (MSOLA).

"They had come to the hospital trying to recruit nurses to become sisters and serve in Africa," Sister Demetria explained.

The religious women were staying with the Little Sisters of the Poor, then located near downtown Indianapolis. Her father drove the sisters there from the hospital.

"On the way, he said, 'You know, my daughter is always talking about going to Africa, and she wants to be a nun,'" said Sister Demetria. "They said, 'Oh! Tell her to come see us!' And they stayed an extra day at the Little Sisters, and I went and talked to them."

Sister Demetria recalled how, when MSOLA sisters were on a train that stopped in Indianapolis, "they would hop off real quick, find a phone and call to say, 'Catherine, this is the Missionary Sisters. Don't forget us—we're praying for you!'"

"When I think of how God planned that all through, I'm still amazed," she said.

Sister Demetria served her postulancy and novitiate with the order in Belleville, Ill., beginning in 1952 and professed her first vows there on Aug. 15, 1954.

'You wouldn't believe it'

Her first two years as a religious sister were spent earning a practical nursing license in Ohio. Then, in August 1956, Sister Demetria said farewell to her loved ones and headed overseas.

Her first destination was Lyon, France, for a three-month crash-course in French, the official language of the religious order.

"God is good, because I don't really have a problem learning a language," said Sister Demetria, who would also become fluent in Lagunda and Swahili, two languages spoken in Uganda.

She then spent a year at the motherhouse in Algiers, Algeria, in North Africa, receiving further religious formation and practicing her French.

At long last, in January 1958, Sister Demetria was ready to begin her dream of serving in Africa as a nurse.

"I was supposed to go to Rhodesia," she said, a region of south-central Africa now divided into the countries of Zambia and Zimbabwe. "But at that time apartheid was strong there, and they wouldn't give me an entry permit."

Instead, Sister Demetria was sent to Uganda, where she served as a nurse and midwife for more than 16 years.

"You wouldn't believe it, but we had a community there that was just straight up the road from where those two boys were standing in that picture I saw" in her grade school textbook, she marveled.

Sister Demetria professed her final vows in Uganda on Aug. 15, 1960.

'The Black White Sister'

When she first arrived in Uganda, Sister Demetria was the only Black woman among the sisters in her community there.

"You would think being Black like the people in Uganda would make them happy, but I was not received

with open arms at all," she recalled. "They said, 'You're Black like us—what do you think you can do for us?' Because they thought sisters were only white, and white people were the ones with the money. They really didn't trust me for a while.

"But eventually they did come to trust me, and they were wonderful to me afterward."

They even gave Sister Demetria a special nickname.

"The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa were known as the White Sisters because of their all-white habit," she explained. With a broad grin, she added, "The people started calling me the Black White Sister."

From 1962-1969, Sister Demetria spent time in England and the United States earning degrees as a registered nurse and as an accredited midwife.

Returning to Uganda, she worked at various hospitals as a nurse, training other nurses as well.

"Then came my public health nursing," she said, when she and other registered nurses in her community "traveled out to villages and set up temporary clinics along the roadside. The roads were dusty. Sometimes we'd travel half a day in a lorry [truck] to get where we needed to go. On a busy day, we'd help as many as 200 people."

Common issues included malaria, typhoid, pneumonia, dysentery, malnutrition, measles, snake bites, "and of course delivering babies," a service that brought her true joy, Sister Demetria said.

The days were long, she admitted.

"We'd be up at 5 or 5:30 in the morning for prayer before Mass," she recalled. "Then we'd work from 8 [a.m.] 'til 7 [p.m.], then we'd say evening prayers and have a little time left over before we went to bed."

But she loved her ministry and the Ugandan people she served.

They came to care for her, too. That sentiment especially came through starting on Jan. 25, 1971, the day that Ugandan army commander Idi Amin seized power of the government through a military coup.

'It became so dangerous there'

"He was a big tyrant," said Sister Demetria. "It was a difficult time. He came into power just brutally. It just became so dangerous there."

In 2003, when CNN announced the death of Idi Amin, the news organization called his reign "one of the bloodiest in African history—earning Amin the nickname 'Butcher of Uganda.'"

The New York Times noted that his "ruinous eight-year reign of terror encompassed widespread killing, torture and dispossession of multitudes." Estimates of the number of people killed during Amin's dictatorship range from 80,000 to 300,000 as he perpetrated genocide against certain Ugandan tribes.

"Soldiers would raid villages at night, so the villagers would come to our community's boarding school to sleep then go back to their village in the morning."

The soldiers came "several times" into her community, making it particularly dangerous for Sister Demetria with her dark skin.

"This was when you really saw that the people really cared for me," she said. "They would hide me because if I was seen, there would be no time to explain, 'She's not one of the tribes.'"

But the danger did not deter Sister Demetria. She continued to minister in Uganda until early 1978, when Americans in the country were advised to leave.

She returned to Uganda later that year and served there through 1982.

'It was like a Third World country'

Upon returning to the U.S., Sister Demetria spent two years working in the publications department of the Missionaries of Africa, an order of priests and religious brothers headquartered in Washington. She then served for a decade promoting the mission of and vocations to the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa.

After living away from Indianapolis for 33 years, Sister Demetria returned permanently to her hometown in 1995. Her order "allowed me to work for the Office of Missions" at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis "so at the same time I could take care of my aging parents."

In her new role, Sister Demetria visited archdiocesan



Sister Demetria Smith, second from right, and other Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa prepare to depart for Africa in 1956—although Sister Demetria's first stop was Lyon, France, to learn French, the official language of her order. (Submitted photo)



Sister Demetria Smith, left, and other Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, kneel in front of Pope Pius XII in this photo from 1957. (Submitted photo)

schools to raise awareness and funds for missions in Third World countries.

"I just shared my story of life in Africa and asked them to help the poor little children around the world," she said. "And children are so generous, they are so good."

Sister Demetria served in that role through 2008, then as a receptionist at the Catholic Center until she retired in 2013.

There was a one-week break, though, in September 2005, when she traveled to Mississippi. It was not for a vacation.

"There was an urgent call for nurses to go and help people displaced by Hurricane Katrina," she explained. "I went and was assigned to help assess their medical needs."

"The area was so devastated," she recalled, shaking her head at the memory. "It was like a Third World country—no water, no electricity. My heart especially broke when elderly people would tell me they had nowhere to go, no idea what was going to happen to them."

'The Lord has been so good to me!'

At 92, much in Sister Demetria's life has come full circle.

She ministered near the Ugandan town in the photo she saw as a schoolgirl.

Just as the religious women who recruited her stayed with the Little Sisters of the Poor, Sister Demetria now enjoys their hospitality as a resident of their St. Augustine Home for the Aged, now on the northwest side of Indianapolis.

And next to the home is the same neighbor of Sister Demetria's youth—St. Vincent Hospital (now known as Ascension St. Vincent), which also moved to the city's northwest side.

Along her full-circle path, she met Pope Pius XII and Pope (now Saint) John XXIII and earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree.

When asked what words come to mind when reflecting on her 70 years as a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa, Sister Demetria responded in song with her characteristic joy: "He's been so good, he's been so good, the Lord has been so good to me!" †

(Editor's note: The archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) recently presented its highest honor—

the St. John Bosco Medal—to eight individuals for their outstanding service to children and youths. This week, we

highlight four of the winners. Other winners were featured in the Aug. 9 issue of The Criterion.)



'It made me happy, doing a lot of work that made people happy'

By John Shaughnessy

Jerry Ross became choked up with emotion as he walked up the center aisle of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.



Jerry Ross

The wave of emotion hit him unexpectedly as he headed for a moment that was a fitting cap to his 40 years of work and service to the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO).

On his way up the aisle, the 64-year-old

Ross passed the pew where his former CYO colleague Ed Tinder was seated—a moment when both men smiled and winked at each other, shared gestures that said so much about their longtime friendship.

Seconds later, Ross received a smile from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, who placed the St. John Bosco Medal—the archdiocese's CYO highest honor—around Ross' neck.

"Walking up the stairs toward the archbishop, I really didn't think I would have that emotion," Ross recalls about that moment on May 14. "It was really an honor to receive that award."

A well-deserved honor, and one that Ross regards as another gift from four decades of service to the CYO and the countless number of children and families who have benefitted from that organization.

Recalling those years, Ross says, "Every event that we conducted at CYO over the years holds a very special place in my heart—the sports, our one-act play festival, our science fair, our music contest, our camp and, back in the day, our baking contest. All the CYO dances I went to, the talent show we used to do at Garfield Park, our big wrestling tournament."

He especially loves how the CYO connects the children of a parish in a distinct way.

"It's very different from Little Leagues and community programs where kids are just placed on a team out of a hat. These are kids that are studying together, worshipping together, playing on the playground together. They grow up

together and they play sports together. They do the science fair together. They do everything together in the Catholic school environment under the shadow of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. That's what has always made CYO so special."

At the same time, Ross laughs when he says that when he began working for the CYO, he initially viewed it as steppingstone to other jobs. But his years as administrator of volunteer services and then assistant director continued to make him feel that the CYO was the place he needed and wanted to be.

"When I first took the job, never in my wildest dreams did I think I'd be with the CYO for the next 40 years," says Ross, a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. "The reason I stayed was the pleasure I got out of all the programs, whether they be athletic, cultural or camping. I could see that everything we did day-to-day made a difference in the lives of the kids we were working with. It made a real impact on the lives of the kids and the families of the kids."

That family connection extended to the people he served with, especially his

friendships with Tinder and Bernadette "Bernie" Price—the combined service of the trio representing more than 100 years at one point.

"There was never a day in all those years when I went to work and didn't have fun," Ross says. "We organized and coordinated a lot of programs with a small staff, and we worked hard, but we had a lot of fun doing it. It's one of the greatest groups of people I've ever been around."

He has the same deep appreciation for his wife of 41 years, Julie, and their three now-grown daughters, Allie, Erin and Lauren.

"I would be remiss if I didn't thank Julie and my daughters for allowing me to do that for 40 years. They were part of the team just as much as I was."

While he retired from the organization in 2021, Ross still serves the CYO as an official of basketball, football and kickball games. It's a role he has embraced with joy for beyond 40 years, the same joy that marked his time at CYO.

"It was just a place I needed to be. It made me happy, doing a lot of work that made people happy. It was just that much fun." †

In laughs and tears, Dennis Southerland's connection to CYO is filled with emotion

By John Shaughnessy

Let's start with a humorous story about Dennis Southerland because he loves a story, especially one that leads to a laugh.



Dennis Southerland

It was May of 1974, and he had just received a phone call from Bill Kuntz, his former football coach at Arlington High School in Indianapolis who had just been named as the new executive director of the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO).

As Southerland and his wife Cathy congratulated him, Kuntz told his former player that he wanted him to be his assistant executive director.

"I said, 'You know we're not Catholic,'" Southerland recalls. "He said, 'I've already talked to the archbishop [George J. Biskup in 1974], and it's fine.' Cathy and I were both on the phone. We had a newborn baby. I said, 'What can I expect?' He said, 'Well, I know you've been working about 25 hours a week and making a lot of money, so you'd work about 50-60 hours a week, and I'll pay you about half of what you're making now.'"

Southerland pauses for a laugh and says, "Cathy and I looked at each other and said, 'Let's do it.'"

That agreement led to a funny moment on Southerland's first day on the job—at the CYO's annual

track and field meet. As hundreds of children waited to be organized for their events, Southerland was told to take them to the starting line and line them up by their parish. The non-Catholic asked, "What's a parish?"

From that humorous, humbling moment, Southerland dedicated himself to the CYO for the next 10 years—"the best job I've ever had because I got to hang out with the best people." And ever since, his commitment to the CYO has continued as a board member, a fan and a supporter, which leads to another story that unfolded earlier this year—50 years after that life-changing conversation with Kuntz.

This story begins with a letter to the Southerland home from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, a letter noting that Southerland was chosen as one of this year's recipients of the St. John Bosco Medal, the highest honor from the archdiocese's CYO.

"My wife intercepted the letter," Southerland says. "We've got five kids and 12 grandchildren, and most of them were over at our house one day. One of the grandsons, the 13-year-old, said, 'Hey, I want to read this letter to you.' He started reading this letter from the archbishop that said I would be one of the recipients of the St. John Bosco Medal. I started bawling."

"I was very involved in handing out the St. John Bosco medals when I joined the CYO in 1974. To say that somebody thought I was in the same category of some of the most important people in my life, people who have made a difference in this community—it means a great

deal to me, and we're not Catholic."

Still, Southerland proudly says that Catholic connections touch every part of his life in a positive way, from his friendships, including with priests and religious sisters, to the influence of his maternal grandmother, who was Catholic.

"I grew up in Little Flower," he says, referring to the neighborhood around St. Therese of the Infant Jesus Parish in Indianapolis. "I had a brother who was dying of leukemia. She didn't have much money, but when she would come over to our house, she'd give me a nickel. She'd say, 'Here, take your bike, take this nickel, and go over and light a candle at the church. And kneel when you light the candle, and put the nickel in the place where you put the money in.'"

"That was really meaningful to me. I still do that to this day when I drive by Little Flower. I'll park my car, run in real quick, and light a candle. So, it's had a big impact on me."

So did the evening of May 14 when he received the St. John Bosco Medal from Archbishop Thompson at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Naturally, Southerland adds a touch of humor to the emotional moment for him.

"When they asked me to come up, and the archbishop put the medal over my head, I gave him a hug and said, 'I do know what a parish is now.'"

A second later, he says about the honor, "It's just a wonderful thing." †

A light-hearted story of a player and a coach speaks volumes about growth

By John Shaughnessy

The stories we choose to share often reveal something about ourselves.

So when Kevin Sowinski is asked to share a moment that stands out to him from his 20 years of coaching football in the Catholic Youth Organization, he chooses what he describes as a "light-hearted" one.



Kevin Sowinski

"The light-hearted story was fairly recently," says

Sowinski, who coaches the fifth- and sixth-grade team at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. "One of the kids came up to me in practice, and this is a kid who's a lot of fun. He was making fun of me one day. He said, 'Coach, man you're really

old! I can tell that because of the gray hair that you have around your ears!'"

Sowinski laughs again at that moment and talks about how much he appreciates the boy and loved having him on the team.

It's a small story, yet it says a great deal about Sowinski's evolution as a coach during the two decades he has strived to make an impact on the lives of his young players.

When he and his wife Elizabeth moved from the Buffalo, N.Y., area to Indianapolis in 1995 and he began coaching several years later, Sowinski's approach was much more serious, focused on teaching the sport and winning rather than making it fun for the boys. Now, it's a blend.

"I love the kids and the coaches we have are many long-timers. We have a lot of fun. Maybe when I first started, I

See SOWINSKI, page 15

A leader who praised volunteers for years gets a fitting tribute for what he has done

By John Shaughnessy

In his 33 years as the executive director of the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), Ed Tinder always



Ed Tinder

enjoyed the process of crafting tributes to the volunteers who were chosen to receive the St. John Bosco Medal—the highest honor given by the CYO.

"I knew how important those individuals were to the CYO," Tinder says. "I knew how important their gifts, time and sacrifices were. I sensed that when I was writing those tributes up. I took a lot of pride in letting the audience know what this individual meant to the organization, to kids and to families."

On May 14, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis—where Tinder read those tributes for so many years—it was his turn to listen to a tribute to him as he was presented with his St. John Bosco Medal.

As much as he had done in his 37 years with the CYO before retiring in 2017, Tinder getting that honor seemed so natural to nearly everyone. Yet he was initially reluctant to receive it.

"I almost said I don't want to do this," he recalls when he was first notified about the honor. "Leading the CYO was my livelihood. It put food on the table for my family. The people I presented it to for years and years, they were volunteers."

"But as I thought about it, I was more comfortable with it. I understand fully that the St. John Bosco folks who received it made a great impact on this community, particularly the Catholic

See TINDER, page 15

Catholic youth minister calls day of school shooting ‘surreal’

WINDER, Ga. (OSV News)—“I could really use my prayers right now. My school is getting shot up.” The message arrived at 10:39 a.m. on Sept. 4 on youth minister Tania Martinez’s phone. The youth ministry program uses the Remind app to communicate as a group.



Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer

Many of her teen leaders at St. Matthew Parish in Winder were caught up in the shooting at nearby Apalachee High School. One sent the message.

Martinez knows the high school community. Two of her children graduated from the school, and another attends middle school on the shared campus. Holding back emotions, she called the day “surreal.”

Colt Gray, a 14-year-old student at the Barrow County school, is accused of killing two students and two teachers using a military-style rifle. He was taken into custody the day of the shooting and charged the next day with four counts of felony murder. He was arraigned on Sept. 6 and is expected to be tried as an adult.

The students who were killed were Mason Schermerhorn and Christian Angulo, both 14, and the educators were Richard Aspinwall and Cristina Irimie, reported the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. Gray is

also accused of wounding nine others in the shooting spree.

The teen’s father, Colin Gray, 54, was arrested on Sept. 5 and has been charged with four counts of involuntary manslaughter, two counts of second-degree murder and eight counts of cruelty to children. The elder Gray was also arraigned on Sept. 6, a few hours after his son in the same courtroom. Both remain in jail.

According to several law enforcement officials, the gun used in the shootings, a black AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, was given to the teen by his father as a Christmas gift in 2023. Months earlier, Colin Gray had assured law enforcement investigating a tip that the teen did not have unsupervised access to guns.

In a statement issued late on Sept. 4, Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer of Atlanta, joined by the archdiocese’s auxiliary bishops, said, “Our hearts ache for the lives that have been so cruelly cut short by this devastating tragedy.

“We grieve and pray with those who lost children and loved ones. We ask God for healing and strength for those who have been injured,” they said. “And we invoke God’s blessing on our first responders and medical personnel, especially during this traumatic time.”

The bishops called the shooting “another grim reminder” that taking additional steps to prevent gun violence “cannot wait for another tragedy to happen.

“Once again, we implore elected officials to work together, regardless of political or religious affiliation,

to enact laws and provide services that will prevent the repetition of such tragedies,” they said.

For the rest of the day of the shooting, Martinez’s phone pinged with messages as young people who worship at the parish checked in and consoled each other. Students have been in shock over the events and are trying to process what happened, she said.

The parish’s usual Wednesday evening Mass draws between 40 and 50 people. Hours after the tragedy, some 100 believers in grief and shock found support with each other as families with young people filled the pews. Father Gilbert Exumé, the pastor, shared a message of comfort with those attending.

A community vigil was also held at Jug Tavern Park in Winder the same evening. Winder is located about 50 miles northeast of Atlanta.

Martinez’s goal in the immediate days after the shooting is to let families and teens know the faith community is there for them, offering support in any way they need. The parish community wants to “let everybody know the doors are open. We’re here for them,” she said. No person needs to mourn by themselves or think they are alone, she said.

Martinez told *The Georgia Bulletin*, Atlanta’s archdiocesan newspaper, that she wants all the young people to know of “God’s love and grace, and we are not alone.”

She is reminding the youth of the words of the prophet Isaiah, “Fear not, for I am with you” (Is 41:10). †

Kenya mourns 21 young boys killed in academy dormitory fire

NAIROBI, Kenya (OSV News)—As Kenya mourned the 21 young boys killed in a school dormitory fire on Sept. 6 in Kieni, Archbishop Anthony Muheria of Nyeri said the Church was heartbroken and urged Christians to stay close to the affected families.

The tragedy at the Hillside Endarasha Academy in the central Kenyan county of Nyeri has drawn anger and shock, as Kenyans recall similar tragedies and a promise for

government action on safety in schools. As of Sept. 9, 17 children remained missing.

Pope Francis sent his condolences and prayers to the families of victims in a Sept. 7 telegram.

The pope said he was “deeply saddened” to learn of the loss of young lives, expressing his “spiritual closeness to all who are suffering the effects of this calamity, especially the injured and the families who grieve.”

On Sept. 9, anxious parents and relatives emotionally waited for DNA test results to identify bodies, some of which were burned beyond recognition. Churches joined together for interdenominational prayers at the school on Sept. 8, as parents, relatives and ordinary citizens teared up openly, crushed by the tragedy.

Archbishop Muheria said nothing could offer enough consolation to a parent or family for the loss of a child,

as he invited the families affected by the tragedy to find recourse in God’s mercy.

“We are also heartbroken for the loss of these little ones. ... I ask all our Christians to offer special prayers for those who have lost their lives and also for the families,” said the archbishop in a Sept. 6 statement. “To you Christians of Endarasha, stay close to all families as much as you are able in your small Christian communities.” †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Care for creation as expression of faith is a hallmark of pope's leadership

By D.D. Emmons

(OSV News)—A priest friend visited a sister parish in Central America. On arrival, a young girl quickly directed him to the village center and excitedly pointed out a newly installed water spigot.

Until the previous week, all water used by the inhabitants had to be transported from a nearby lake. The village—the entire village—now had a single source of running water. Eventually, the little girl asked my friend if his village had such a spigot? He was too embarrassed to tell her that he had seven at his house. The availability of clean water is one of the serious problems for mankind.

My friend's experience comes to mind when reading Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, "*Laudato Si'*: On Care for Our Common Home." In it, the pope discusses, among many environmental issues, the worldwide shortage of fresh drinking water which, as he emphasizes, is critical for all life.

He points out that the demand for water far exceeds supply in many places, while in others it is plentiful: "Our world has a grave social debt toward the poor who lack access to drinking water. ... This debt can be paid partially by an increase in funding to provide clean water and sanitary services among the poor" (#30).

Much of our planet has been damaged and is under siege by its occupants. The shortage of clean, accessible water is merely one of many self-caused ecological issues facing mankind. The cartoon character Pogo would describe the situation thus: "We have met the enemy and he is us."

The plight of the planet is largely our doing and should be regarded as among the most serious issues confronting every citizen, but it is not. In the grand scheme of things, man's harmful impact on creation is not well understood, much less acknowledged by the ordinary person.

One who continues the clarion call about this situation and of our sin against creation is Pope Francis. There is no more fervent advocate calling for the protection and caring of the Earth than the pope.

Nine years ago, he wrote his extensive, 42,000-word encyclical on care for creation in which he cautions that we must change how we deal with the environment both as individuals and as a world community. Last year, he wrote a follow-up apostolic exhortation, "*Laudate Deum*" ("Praise God"), to further underscore the call.

While the encyclical delineates many environmental problems, causes and suggested solutions, more than anything the pope is encouraging us to be attentive, to wake up to the ongoing defacement we are causing. He urges us to change our lifestyle, to end the careless use of natural resources. As Mahatma Gandhi pointed out: "The world has enough resources to meet everyone's need, but not enough to match everyone's greed."

The papal encyclical, widely discussed by many Catholic leaders, is not well-known by the average person in the pew. Likely, Massgoers would be squirming if the accusatory, truthful words and thoughts of Pope Francis were part of a Sunday morning homily. Indeed, this is an issue about which many would just as soon see go away. It makes us uncomfortable when someone—in this case, the pope—reminds us of our failures and the potential for long-term catastrophic consequences.

But awareness at the individual level is necessary if we are to begin to make a positive difference in the environment. Often encyclicals take decades to effect



Pope Francis releases a dove on July 7 outside the Basilica of St. Nicholas in Bari, Italy. Promoting care for creation from a Christian perspective has been a hallmark of the teaching of the pope since his election as bishop of Rome in 2013. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

change, but the ecological problems, as highlighted by the pope, need attention now.

Following the issuance of the 2015 papal encyclical, the Church proclaimed that a special "Season of Creation" would be observed every year from the beginning of September until the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 4. The time is designated as a period of prayer and thanksgiving; it is a special opportunity to be attentive to God's gift of creation and to commit to ways we can protect this gift. It is a time to remind ourselves of our responsibility toward the future of the planet.

The Season of Creation calls for us to pray together as one human family, asking that the Holy Spirit provide us needed wisdom, that through his awesome power we collectively find ways to protect the planet and begin to slow the decay that man has imposed.

On the first day of September, Pope Francis proclaims a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. He issues a yearly letter, reinforcing "*Laudato Si'*", exhorting every Catholic, every person, individually and collectively, to live in harmony with the environment. This message and the day of prayer are the catalysts that start the annual Season of Creation.

The pope usually urges everyone to use this monthlong season to offer thanks to the Creator, acknowledge that our natural resources are not without limit, and encourage actions that lead to better care of Earth. In his 2020

annual letter, the pope said that creation itself is admonishing us to recognize that "these days, however, our way of life is pushing the planet beyond its limits. Our constant demand for growth and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting the natural world. Forests are leached, topsoil erodes, fields fail, deserts advance, seas acidify and storms intensify. Creation is groaning!" (#3).

The Old Testament Book of Genesis, in its first two chapters, tells us that God created everything, not only the Earth, the sea and vegetation, but light and darkness, the stars, animals, man and woman. All creation was arranged for us and

put into our care for use. But we have not been good stewards.

Man has damaged this magnificent gift from God in horrendous ways, including wars that have featured explosives and gases not only killing each other but destroying the environment. Some have seen videos of World War I and II and how countries were destroyed by bombs and shells. We have seen pictures of military aircraft over the jungles of Southeast Asia spraying chemicals, intended to kill the foliage, trees and crops. We know about nuclear accidents that have wiped out plants and animals for centuries. Similar actions continue today around the globe.

But even if we don't consider the wars, through the centuries man has found many ways to pollute, poison and contaminate this universe God has given us. The pope says, in unambiguous terms, we have turned it into an "immense pile of filth" (#21). As occupants of the Earth, know that what is happening to the planet is on our watch. We have to pass creation on to the next generation, we are the link in an eternal chain.

Pope Francis, the vicar of Christ, repeatedly speaks out as one of the few truly international figures who constantly warns of our need to take care of creation. Unfortunately, much of mankind has not yet received the memo. Here then is an opportunity for the parish, a place where commonsense actions can mitigate some of the environmental damage being done.

Some actions? Words from the pulpit, leadership through groups such as the parish council looking for ways to educate parishioners, and defining positive steps ordinary Catholics can take to protect the planet.

There are numerous sources of information on how to align with and better understand the pleas of Pope Francis: "*Laudato Si'*" can be found at numerous websites.

Information on the Season of Creation is found, among many sources, at seasonofcreation.org and laudatosimovement.org. The *Laudato Si'* Action Platform (laudatosiactionplatform.org) is a worldwide coalition that helps a wide variety of organizations, as well as individuals, take action to care for creation in everyday life.

Study guides on the pope's encyclical and environmental issues are plentiful, including at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website, usccb.org.

This is not an easy task. Changing habits, attitudes and hearts never is.

(D.D. Emmons writes from Pennsylvania.) †



Trees reflect in a pond along a trail in Acadia National Park in Bar Harbor, Maine. Pope Francis has made care for creation as an expression of faith a centerpiece of his ministry as bishop of Rome. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

Minnesota author's book reminds us to keep the story of Jesus alive

The winter of 1915 was so cold in northeastern Minnesota that a moose wandered into the small town of Biwabik and settled in a horse stable.



The moose gradually won over the townspeople, who had initially tried to evict him. His memorable stay became part of Biwabik's oral history, one day reaching the town's basketball coach, an Iowa native named Phil Stong.

Phil had an ear for a good story. He worked like a reporter to gather all the details about the moose and then turned it into a chapter book, using the actual townspeople as its characters.

Honk the Moose was accepted by a New York publisher and illustrated by Kurt Wiese, the artist who drew pictures for the first English edition of *Bambi*. Published in 1935, *Honk the Moose* won a Newbery Honor Award the following year.

But time marched on, and eventually the book went out of print.

Steve Bradach decided to change that in 2000. A Biwabik native and a longtime city-council member, Steve knew *Honk the Moose* had potential to put his beloved town on the map. And the father of three believed new generations also deserved to be delighted by the tale.

"I wanted to give back to my hometown," said Steve, now 59. "I wanted to make a difference."

Hence began a pet project: The civil engineer dabbled in the foreign world of children's publishing. The original publisher refused to talk to Steve, so he searched for Phil Stong's family members.

Eventually he tracked down the author's nephew, who, it turned out, owned the rights to the book. He sold the rights to Steve and gave a blessing on the project.

There was only one problem: There were no digital files of the 1935 hardcover. It existed only in paper.

Steve fished for every copy of the book he could find in order to obtain the most pristine copy. Then he hired a company to scan all 80 pages—creating a digital file—and contracted a small publisher in Duluth, Minn., to print 6,000 copies.

To do so, he had to use the money that he and his wife, Kathy, had been saving to build a cabin on Lake Vermilion. The project cost about \$30,000.

"I was a little nervous," Steve said. "My wife asked: 'Are we ever going to see the money again?'"

But the books sold quickly, and Steve commissioned a second run, this time of 5,000 copies. Nearly every copy sold, save for a few boxes he keeps in the back of his shop.

Biwabik experienced a surge of interest, including invaluable media coverage and enduring moose-themed traditions like "Honktoberfest" every fall. Steve made the money back, plus a \$10,000 profit. He and Kathy completed their cabin, where they now live.

To Steve, now a grandpa of four, the lovable moose demonstrates the power of storytelling.

"Those stories you tell," he said, "they stick. They create memories."

As Christians, we are storytellers. We are called to share the Gospel, which means "good news."

We have two narratives to tell: What Jesus did on Earth, and what Jesus continues to do in our lives. How he guides us and provides for us, showing up when we least expect it or most need it.

The work of recording the Bible was painstaking, undertaken by candlelight with handmade pens. Dip by dip, stroke by stroke.

Our duty is to honor and advance that work, to keep telling the story. That begins with reading Scripture. You cannot love something you do not know.

When you really believe in something, it becomes part of you. You see your life as a new chapter in the story started by the evangelist Mark in the year 70: a never-ending saga, a redemption tale, the greatest story of all time.

"In the beginning was the Word," begins the Gospel of John, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn 1:1).

What happened next?

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

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

How to break the cycle of poverty and its continuing impact on children

Sixty years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson launched the "War on Poverty," introducing legislation aimed at lowering the national poverty rate. Back in 1964, 23% of U.S. children lived in poverty.



While the poverty rate has fluctuated through the years, the most recent data from 2023 shows that 12.4% of children in the U.S. are living in poverty. In Indiana, the child poverty rate was 20.5% in 2022, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. This statistic represents the percentage of children under 18 living in households below the poverty threshold.

Although Indiana's child poverty rate may have improved in 2023 (with fewer children residing in high-poverty areas) non-white children continue to face a higher likelihood of living in poverty compared to their white peers.

For instance, 20.6% of Black children aged 5 to 17 live in poverty, compared to 10% of white children in the same age group. Below, I highlight four ways poverty negatively impacts children and why it's crucial to continue this fight:

Poverty harms the brain and body.

For children, poverty isn't just about lacking life's essentials; it can significantly impair their physical and mental development. In severe cases, poverty can alter the brain's architecture, leading to a higher likelihood of chronic illnesses and reduced life expectancy in adulthood.

Poverty intensifies achievement gaps.

Children raised in poverty start falling behind early compared to their more economically secure peers.

From infancy, gaps in learning, knowledge and social-emotional development are evident and tend to widen as they grow. Without intervention, these early disadvantages lead to poor performance in kindergarten, lower reading skills by the end of third grade, weak executive functioning, and poorer school attendance in eighth grade.

As a result, children facing poverty are more likely to drop out of school and

miss opportunities for higher education.

Poverty impacts physical, emotional and behavioral health.

Even when poverty doesn't directly alter biological systems, it increases the likelihood of poor physical, emotional and behavioral health.

Poverty restricts opportunities and exposes children to numerous risks. Children in this situation are more likely to experience food insecurity and have diets lacking essential nutrients. They also have higher rates of chronic health conditions, such as asthma, and are less likely to receive preventive medical and dental care.

Poverty affects children through its impact on families and home environments.

While the strengths of poor families are often overlooked, these parents face numerous challenges that affect their emotional well-being and, in turn, their children's.

Parents living in poverty report higher levels of stress, frustration and depression compared to higher-income parents.

Financial strain makes it difficult to plan, prepare and provide for their family's needs. Children in low-income families have fewer educational resources at home and fewer opportunities for enriching experiences.

These families are also more likely to face housing instability. Evidence from various studies shows that increasing family income can lead to improvements in children's social and academic outcomes.

At Catholic Charities, we are on the front line in the war on poverty every day, working tirelessly to support vulnerable families and uplift communities in need.

Our programs provide essential resources such as food, shelter and educational opportunities, empowering individuals to break the cycle of poverty.

We believe in the dignity of every person and are committed to addressing the root causes of poverty through compassionate service and advocacy. Together, we strive to create a brighter, more equitable future for all.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at dbethuram@archindy.org.) †

Faith at Home/Laura Kelly Fanucci

Prayer's words invite us to reflect on our growth in our call to discipleship

Every week, my sons stand in the pew at Mass. Like staircases, all five in a row by age and height. Or like a motley crew, mixed together by shapes and sizes.



Five boys in the midst of becoming men.

They are the reason why the short line tucked within the Nicene Creed catches me with a lump in the throat: "... and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man."

We bow at this line, and rightly so. The marvel and mystery of the incarnation asks every knee to

bend. (And everyone who has witnessed the power of pregnancy and birth knows that Mary's labor was well worth our honor, too!)

But the second half of the phrase can get neglected. What does it mean to "become man"?

For Jesus, it meant the incarnation that made God human—including his growth during nine months within Mary's womb and his years of maturing from child to adult. All these parts of his earthly life are evoked by the simple, short phrase we profess.

Yet the words also invite us to reflect on our own becoming.

The original Latin reads, "*Et homo factus est*": "and became human" (since "*homo*" means human, not "*vir*" which means male). These words thus invite all of us to meditate on what it is to be human—for Christ and for us.

When I look at my sons, each becoming a man in his own way, I stand in awe of the untold moments and milestones that go into shaping who we are.

Every adult who loves and cares for children knows how much work it takes to raise the youngest among us: long days, sleepless nights, attentive care and boundless love. But most of this work of "becoming human" is ordinary and unremarkable.

When did Jesus learn to smile or laugh, to talk or walk? How did he learn to share, forgive, make friends and help his parents? His growth unfolded over years as it does for all of us—in everyday moments that are rarely recorded. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us of this relatable truth: "The hidden life at Nazareth allows everyone to enter into fellowship with Jesus by the most ordinary events of daily life" (#533).

Scripture shares only a sliver about Jesus' growth into adulthood. The Gospel of Luke sums up his first 12 years—between his presentation and his teaching in the temple—with a single line: "The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him" (Lk 2:40).

Then the next 18 years, between his time in the temple at age 12 and his public ministry at age 30, are also gathered into one sentence: "And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man" (Lk 2:52). Luke's words show us what it meant for Jesus to become man: to grow in faithfulness, wisdom, strength and obedience.

Jesus embodied the fullness of humanity. Not simply that his DNA would have looked like ours under a microscope, but also that he understood intimately all that it meant to be human: our joys, fears, hopes, struggles and suffering. His body changed from child to man. His voice deepened; his limbs lengthened; his muscles strengthened; his language skills advanced.

All these ordinary miracles brought forth by his incarnation can be gathered into our prayer with this phrase: "and became man."

On Sundays when my jostling sons in the pews pull me back to earth, they remind me that "becoming" is a long process. We are each changing and growing in wisdom, even the smallest among us.

May we learn to look with gentleness on each other's becoming human—and our own.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci is an author, speaker and founder of *Mothering Spirit*, an online gathering place on parenting and spirituality.) †

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, September 15, 2024

- Isaiah 50:5-9a
- James 2:14-18
- Mark 8:27-35

The last and third section of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend in Ordinary Time.



This passage is one of several similar sections in Isaiah. These sections together are often referred to as the “songs of the suffering servant.” Poetic and expressive, they figure in the liturgies of Holy

Week because Christians historically have applied them to Christ, the Lamb of God.

Who was in the mind of the author of Isaiah as these songs were written? Was he thinking of himself? Was he thinking of another loyal and devoted follower of the covenant who faced many difficulties? Was he thinking collectively of the chosen people?

In any case, the picture of the servant is complete. The servant is steadfast. Hardships and obstacles abound in the servant’s path to fidelity, but God unfailingly provides strength and guidance.

Assured of God’s help and resolute in faith, the servant is undaunted in obeying God.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend gives us a passage from the Epistle of St. James. At the time of the Reformation, differing opinions regarding texts such as this reading literally caused wars. It affirms the classic Roman Catholic interpretation of revelation. God gives us the healing and empowering grace so that we can believe.

We must ratify our belief in our worthy Christian conduct. Grace is not imposed upon us. It is not a question simply of following rules and regulations. Rather, we must conduct ourselves with the help of God’s grace so that in everything we replicate Christ.

St. Mark’s Gospel furnishes the last reading.

In this story, Jesus and the Apostles are in the region of Caesarea Philippi, an area that has seen much violence in the past 30 years. It is in the region now called the Golan Heights, territory claimed by Syria but taken militarily by

Israel about 40 years ago. It is part of the modern, turbulent Middle East, although the conflict in Gaza recently has eclipsed strife in the Golan.

At the origin of the Jordan River, it is picturesque and placid, as it was at the time of the Lord. In this reading, Jesus questions the Apostles. His identity is the issue. They respond by reporting the various answers people put forward as to the Lord’s identity. “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, others one of the prophets” (Mk 8:28).

Then Jesus bluntly asks the Apostles about their thoughts about who he is. Note that Peter speaks for the group. Also note Peter’s firm answer: “You are the Messiah” (Mk 8:29).

Jesus then gives the Twelve a special lesson, one of many occasions within the New Testament in which the Apostles appear as special students. They heard from Jesus lessons not given to the rank and file.

When Peter interjects his own, human thinking into the discussion, Jesus reprimands him. The Lord’s message is divine.

Then Jesus tells the crowd that discipleship means carrying personal crosses. It rang a bell. Crucifixion was the preferred Roman method of executing dissidents. Following Christ means the willingness to sacrifice everything, even earthly life itself.

Reflection

Living the Christian life by acts of genuine love and deep faith, reflecting Jesus, has always been challenging. The martyrs, from those crucified in ancient Rome to those dying today, know very well this aspect of discipleship.

Blessedly, Americans do not face this test of discipleship, but they face mighty attacks to the Gospel from our culture. We all must be strong if we wish to follow the Lord.

Challenges will come. Overcoming them and being loyal to Christ results in peace in this life and joy in the life eternal.

Our example is Jesus, the crucified, the risen, the suffering servant. His story is of victory, not defeat, of life, not death. †

Daily Readings

Monday, September 16

St. Cornelius, pope and martyr
St. Cyprian, bishop and martyr
1 Corinthians 11:17-26, 33
Psalm 40:7-10, 17
Luke 7:1-10

Tuesday, September 17

St. Robert Bellarmine, bishop and doctor of the Church
St. Hildegard of Bingen, virgin and doctor of the Church
1 Corinthians 12: 12-14, 27-31a
Psalm 100:1-5
Luke 7:11-17

Wednesday, September 18

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13
Psalm 33:2-5, 12, 22
Luke 7:31-35

Thursday, September 19

St. Januarius, bishop and martyr
1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Psalm 118:1b-2, 16ab-17, 28
Luke 7:36-50

Friday, September 20

St. Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn, priest, and St. Paul Chŏng Ha-sang, and companions, martyrs
1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Psalm 17:1bcd, 6-7, 8b, 15
Luke 8:1-3

Saturday, September 21

St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13
Psalm 19:2-5
Matthew 9:9-13

Sunday, September 22

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wisdom 2:12, 17-20
Psalm 54:3-4, 5, 6-8
James 3:16-4:3
Mark 9:30-37

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Receiving Communion physically is distinct from spiritual communion

Q Some people have said a spiritual communion is the same as a sacramental Communion when one has



a sincere desire and cannot receive otherwise.

If this is so, why do we pray, “Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.” Would it count in the case of making

a plenary indulgence? (Indiana)

A While a spiritual communion might be a praiseworthy aid to one’s spiritual life, it is not the same thing as a physical, sacramental Communion.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the practice, a spiritual communion is a prayer expressing one’s desire for deep closeness with Jesus, particularly in situations where it is not possible to receive Communion sacramentally. Making a spiritual communion can be devoutly helpful for many Catholics, and can certainly be an occasion for receiving God’s grace.

But this does not mean that the

Church considers spiritual communion and sacramental Communion to be exactly the same or interchangeable. And as you note, this is evident in the very wording of many common prayers for spiritual communion. For example, if a spiritual communion was identical to a sacramental Communion, clearly we would not be asking Jesus to come “at least spiritually” into our hearts.

One very rough analogy might be talking with our loved ones by phone or a video call versus being with them in person. Phone calls can be a great way to maintain a relationship with friends or family we cannot see very often, but nothing is quite the same as meeting face-to-face.

Because a spiritual communion is different from a sacramental Communion, normally it would not fulfill the requirements for obtaining an indulgence.

For reference, Canon 992 of the *Code of Canon Law* describes indulgences as: “the remission in the sight of God of the temporal punishment due for sins, the guilt of which has already been forgiven. A member of Christ’s faithful who is properly disposed and who fulfills certain specific conditions, may gain an indulgence by the help of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, authoritatively dispenses and applies the treasury of the merits of Christ and the saints.”

Or in other words, the Church uses her authority to “bind and loose” (see Mt 18:18) to apply merits and virtues “stored up” by those in heaven toward our own sanctification or the sanctification of souls in purgatory.

Typically, an indulgence is attached to some pious act, such as making a pilgrimage or doing a work of charity. But to actually earn the indulgence, other conditions must be met. The document “The Gift of the Indulgence” from the year 2000 lists these conditions as: making a sacramental confession and receiving holy Communion; not maintaining an attachment to any kind of sin; and praying for the pope’s intentions.

Still, even if a Catholic may not be able physically to take part in the Mass, this does not mean that they are thereby unable to obtain an indulgence.

For one thing, “The Gift of the Indulgence” indicates that while it is preferable to go to confession and receive holy Communion on the day the indulgence is earned, it is sufficient for these sacraments to be received “within several days (about 20) before or after the indulgenced act.” This document further explains that while it is ideal for the requisite holy Communion to occur in the context of the Mass, even a Communion received outside of Mass would count for the purpose of the indulgence.

“The Gift of the Indulgence” goes on to tell us that “for the sake of those legitimately impeded, confessors can commute both the work prescribed and the conditions required (except, obviously, detachment from even venial sin).” That is, if Catholics are truly unable to receive Communion through no fault of their own, a priest confessor can adapt the indulgence’s requirement accordingly.

(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.) †

My Journey to God

Heart to Heart

By Lynell Chamberlain

One needs not eyes to see the light,
Nor ears to hear the truth.
Love leads hearts through blackest night,
Beyond our realm of proof.

The tether binding heart to heart
Exists outside of time,
Flowing from the heart of God
Beyond the grasp of mind.

The bond of love transcends this world’s
Anger, hate, and spite,
And stretches to eternity,
When freed from earthly life.



(Lynell Chamberlain is a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg. Photo: Sunlight illuminates a stained-glass window with an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in St. Bridget of Ireland Church in Liberty.) (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

ADAMS, Ron, 68, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, July 23. Husband of Jennifer Adams. Father of Kimberly Keller, Emily and Byron Adams. Grandfather of four.

ANDRES, Elmer J., 91, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Aug. 3. Father of Ann Andres, Judith Bowe and Rita Nolot. Brother of Melford Andres.

ARTERBERRY, Maureen (Fitzgerald), 67, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, July 89. Wife of Ross Arterberry. Stepmother of Kristina and Trevor Arterberry. Sister of Ed and Jim Fitzgerald. Stepsister of Roy Coopman. Stepdaughter of Clara Fitzgerald. Grandmother of two.

BARNES, Kevin M., 52, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, July 30. Father of Katherine and Michael Barnes. Brother of Kimberly Johannigman and Rodger Barnes.

BLAND, Nancy, 75, St. Michael, Cannelton, July 31. Mother of Dan, Ivan III, John and Sam Bland. Sister of Jane Bruggeman and Joe Morgan.

BUENING, Maurice G., 83, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 6. Husband of Mary Jane Buening. Father of Julie Morris, Duane and Richard Buening. Brother of Joann Burkhart, Rita Meyer, Carl, James and Paul Buening. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of three.

CRAFTON, Francis, 76, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, June 13. Husband of Darlene Crafton. Father of Jason Crafton, Charles, Paul and Todd Guhl. Brother of Stephen Crafton. Grandfather of seven.

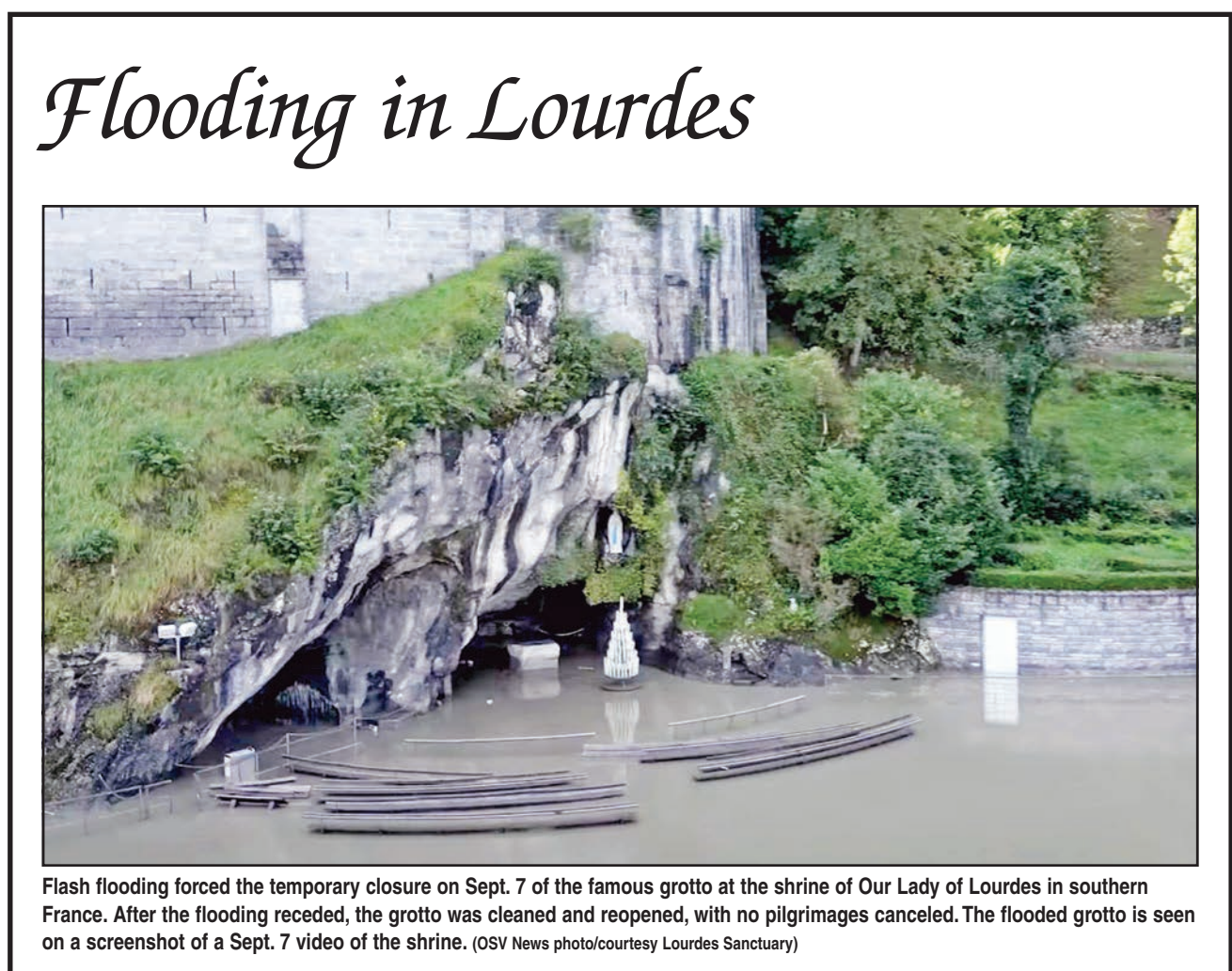
ELSTROD, Virginia M., 97, Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, July 26. Mother of Gloria Adams, Mary Branigin, Jackie Fox, Beth Gater, Theresa Prather and John Elstrod. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 22. Great-great-grandmother of two.

FORD-OAKLEY, Rosemary, 96, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, June 17. Mother of Jane Cameron, Earl, Karl and Mark Oakley. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of eight.

FREIBERGER, Barbara J. (Jacobi), 67, St. Mary, Navilleton, July 24. Wife of Edward Freiburger, Jr. Mother of Nicholas and Travis Freiburger. Sister of Ruth Collins, Carol Harness, Marcella Lenfert, Anthony, James, Jerome and Jude Jacobi. Grandmother of one.

GOFFINET, Evelyn, 94, St. Mark, Perry County, Aug. 1. Mother of Linda Freeman, Cheryl Reiners and Larry Goffinet. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of two. Step-great-grandmother of two.

GRANINGER, Jr., Charles, 80, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, July 26. Husband of Mary Graninger. Father of Lisa Allender and Charles Graninger III. Brother of Christopher, Eric, Michael and



Flash flooding forced the temporary closure on Sept. 7 of the famous grotto at the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in southern France. After the flooding receded, the grotto was cleaned and reopened, with no pilgrimages canceled. The flooded grotto is seen on a screenshot of a Sept. 7 video of the shrine. (OSV News photo/courtesy Lourdes Sanctuary)

Patrick Graninger. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of two.

HIRTH, Daniel L., 86, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, July 9. Husband of Nancy Hirth. Father of Sheryl Ward. Stepfather of Kimberly and Derek Sherrick. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of seven.

HOLTKAMP, William H., 70, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 5. Husband of Vengi Holtkamp. Father of Alicia Narwold, Emily Smith and Anthony Holtkamp. Son of Ella Mae Holtkamp. Brother of Charles, David and Dennis Holtkamp. Grandfather of eight.

KING, Richard, 96, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Indianapolis, June 7. Father of Pamela Kirkham, Linda Nolting, Phillip, Robert and Rodnick King. Stepfather of Teresa Axthelm, Mary Ginder and Peter Bixler. Brother of Rosemary Thurston and Russell King. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of 13. Great-great-grandfather of three.

KNECHT, Aloys, 71, St. Peter, Franklin County, Aug. 4. Husband of Cathy Knecht. Brother of Bertie Bauman, Cindy Ross, Connie Wintz, Gary and Mark Knecht. Uncle of several.

KRISTEL, Bradley G., 86, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, April 19. Husband of Carol Kristel. Father of Kimberly Stabelfeldt, Dawn, Sharon, Wendy, David and Randy Kristel. Brother of Melvyn and Robert Kristel. Grandfather of 13.

LUNSFORD, Florence, 87, St. Peter, Franklin County, May 24. Wife of Ralph Lunsford. Mother of Linda Grimmeissen, Lisa Vormohr and Larry Lunsford. Sister of Ohmer, Jr., Orville and Virgil Kunkel. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of six.

MAILLOUX, Norma Jean, 91, St. Peter, Harrison County,

Aug. 4. Mother of Theresa Sant and Thomas Mailloux. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of nine.

MASCARI, Frank, 92, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Aug. 9. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

MILLER III, Charles L., 83, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, July 7. Husband of Lelia Miller. Father of Tamera Schilling, Brian and Charles Miller IV. Brother of Lucinda Robson. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight.

MINA, Ada, 86, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Aug. 8. Mother of Mary Ann Phillips, Enza Sprauer, Angela, Anthony, Dominic and Gino Mina. Sister of Julia Haas and Gabby Lambert. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of 15.

MITCHELL, Olivia, 65, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, July 5. Mother of Jackie and Sue Mitchell and Maria Sanders. Sister of Jorge Ortiz Gallegos. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of several.

ROBERTS, Margaret, 69, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Aug. 3. Mother of Andrew Roberts. Sister of Mary Ann King. Aunt of several.

SHEPPARD, Joan E. (King), 91, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, July 26. Mother of Susan McQuaid and James King. Stepmother of Robbin Leonard and Robert Sheppard. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of five.

SMITH, Patrick, 78, Our Lady of the Springs, French Lick, July 23. Husband of Mary Anne Smith. Father of Mary Catherine Jurczk, Patricia, John and Kevin Smith. Brother of Michael Smith. Grandfather of eight.

STUMLER, Martha Lee Missi, 94, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, July 31. Mother of Vickie Armes, Myra Batliner and Michael Missi. Sister of Rosella Bickel, Alfred, Jim, Marvin and Robert Schmidt. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of nine.

VOYLES, Robert M., 89, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Aug. 6. Husband of Laura Voyles. Father of Gloria Priest, Jacqueline Tengi, Jane and Robert Voyles, Jr. Brother of Margie Conn, Mary Strait and Bill Voyles. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of five.

WILKENS, Robert H., 87, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, July 3. Father of Jennifer Carr, Janice Cope, Theresa and Robert Wilkens, Jr. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of two.

WITTMER, Karen, 81, St. Paul, Tell City, Aug. 4. Mother of Kelly Bowman and Cindy Hildebrandt. Sister of Philip Wittmer. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of four.

WOOTON, Robert L., 91, Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville, Aug. 4. Husband of Carolyn Wooton. Father of Angela Mangus, Elizabeth Misener, Susan Monroe, John and Roman Wooton. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of five. Step-grandfather of two.

WRYE, Susan, 88, St. Paul, Tell City, July 24. Mother of Karyn Parks, Laurie Sullivan, Jeff and Mike Wrye. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 10. †



Remembering JDub On his Mom's Birthday with love

JDub's letter to his mom.

Mom, if you are reading this just know nothing was your fault. You were the best mother I could of ever asked for and I love you so much. I never understood why any of this had to happen to me, but I am finally at peace with everything and all the pain and suffering is gone. You and dad gave me the best life any kid could have asked for and you guys will never know how thankful I was for everything. Even though I am no longer here, I will always be here in your guys hearts. I had 23 great years of life and wouldn't change a thing. Take care of Maebre and tell her I love her, and tell mamaw and dad I love them too. Don't be sad or hurt, just know I am happy now and in a better place. I'll always love you mom, thank you for everything. - Your son Jdub ❤️

JDub's letter to his family and friends

If you are reading this my fight with cancer has come to an end. I gave it everything I had and never gave up one second, but God had other plans for me. I want to thank everyone who has been there for me through it all. I never knew how many people loved and cared about me, and I will never forget any of you. I am at peace now and all the pain is gone. I love everyone from the bottom of my heart, and I had the best 23 years of life anyone could ask for. One thing I learned through this all is never give up no matter what you are going through, and to go live your life to the fullest, go do those things you've always wanted to do and never hold grudges life is too short. I will see you all again one day, and I'll always be watching over all of you ❤️. -Love Jdub

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



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 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

SOWINSKI

continued from page 9

took it too seriously. Now, I think I better understand the perspective of what this is all about. Maybe just a better appreciation of what we're trying to use the game of football to do—to build great men.

“Something we say on a yearly basis and something we really try to communicate with the parents is that we really want the kids to keep playing football. It's a great way to prepare kids. There are a lot of life lessons for sure. I

think the most important thing is to be a good teammate. Being a good teammate, looking out for each other, working hard. Things that will serve you well as a member of society.”

That approach, his longtime commitment as a coach, his three years as athletic director and his continuing dedication as a volunteer at Christ the King recently led to Sowinski receiving the St. John Bosco Award, the highest honor given by the archdiocese's CYO.

He's kept coaching even as his five children have moved on from the parish school. He's served on the parish council,

been a member of the school commission, flipped burgers at the parish's festival and shares the Eucharist at Masses as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion.

“My faith is very important,” Sowinski says. “We pray before and after each practice. If there's a particularly interesting saint of the day, one of the coaches tends to bring it up.”

As he talks, Sowinski also brings up the influence of one of the first people he coached with at Christ the King, Joe Bill. He credits Bill for teaching him that coaching can combine striving to win

with making it fun—and that the most important goals are giving the players a great experience and getting them to return for the next season.

That approach has led to his own return season after season with the fifth- and sixth-grade team.

“It's really the kids and the guys I coach with that keep me coming back. The kids at that age are really fun. They still kind of like you. They still think you know something. There's a lot of innocence. They like to laugh a lot.”

Just as telling, their coach laughs with them. †

TINDER

continued from page 9

community. I feel like, *I hope*, that I made an impact on the Catholic community and the lives of kids and families as well.”

That honor sunk in deeply as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson placed the medal on Tinder.

“That was one of the most special moments of my life. And I've had a lot of special moments,” says Tinder, a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis. “Having been on the chain gang of the [Indianapolis] Colts, I've seen NFL games from perspectives that people could only dream of. I've worked the Super Bowl in 2012, the college football championship in 2022.

“But having been presented with the

St. John Bosco Award by the archbishop, that ranks right up there. Because I reflected on the feelings I had when I was writing up the tributes to the few hundred people I presented the medal to. That made it pretty special for me to be receiving it.”

The honor also led him to reflect on his proudest accomplishments in leading the CYO. His list starts with Camp Rancho Framasa in Brown County, under the co-leadership of Kevin and Angi Sullivan.

“In 1984, we had a lot of problems at camp. The whole physical plant was in a sad state, and it was financially challenging,” Tinder says. “But if you look at camp today, and I'm not just saying this because it's our local CYO, we have *the best* Catholic camp in the country. The physical plant and the programs are just

outstanding. Kevin and Angi Sullivan have just done an unbelievable job.”

He's also proud of keeping the CYO on the right side of what he calls “a tug of war” in youth sports.

“It's real easy, particularly in today's world, for sports to become athletic development institutions. It's real important for CYO activities—athletics, everything—to have a strong connection to Catholic education and the Catholic Church.

“I always used the visual analogy with the staff that it's like a tug of war. We're on one end of that rope, and we're pulling as hard as we can toward a Catholic mission for the kids and the families. On the other side, they're pulling as hard as they can toward their vision. Our job is to never let go of that rope. If you do, you'll never get it back.”

“We had rules and policies that were all driven and meant to keep the organization as grounded in the Catholic faith as we possibly could. I take pride in that. I feel we were so important to the whole Catholic Church, particularly in the archdiocese. We impacted the lives of so many families. I felt I was the steward of a real treasure in this Catholic community.”


His treasure in retirement is spending time with his three children and seven grandchildren—the lasting gifts of his marriage with his late wife, Kathy.

“They're my whole social life these days. I go to so many ball games. All the grandchildren are playing ball. I enjoy the grandparent role of being involved and guiding them. I'm just enjoying the heck out of it.” †

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call (317) 236-1585.


Employment



Job Posting for Director of Worship and Music Ministry

Epiphany Catholic Church in Louisville, KY seeks a creative and energetic individual for the full-time position of Director of Worship and Music Ministry. Epiphany is an active and engaged parish community known for its dedication to meaningful, community-involved worship and a vibrant music ministry. We are situated on a picturesque 18-acre wooded campus in eastern Louisville. The Director of Worship and Music's responsibilities include the planning of liturgical and sacramental celebrations, fostering spiritual wellbeing through prayer and worship experiences, and the direction of the liturgical music program (over 50 ensemble musicians/singers, and a bell choir). The successful candidate must be familiar with Roman Catholic liturgy and have demonstrated vocal and/or piano/keyboard proficiency. Competency or fluency in Spanish is a plus. More parish information and a full job description can be found online at EccLou.org. The position comes with a competitive salary and benefits including medical/dental insurance and matching 401k. We will provide a relocation stipend to help with the transition to Louisville. Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest, a resume, and list of references to:

apply@ecclou.org or
Pastor, Epiphany Catholic Church
914 Old Harrods Creek Road,
Louisville, KY 40223



Volunteer Opportunity

ASL Interpreters Needed!

The Disabilities Ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis is in urgent need of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for 7:30 a.m. Mass at St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, and sacramental prep assistance for two children at St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

It is preferred that interpreters be Catholic, but those who have a strong familiarity with the Catholic Mass and other liturgical rites are encouraged to apply. It is also preferred that interpreters have an Indiana Interpreting Certificate, though allowances can be made depending on experience.

For more information, contact Jenny Bryans, Disabilities Ministry Coordinator, at jbryans@archindy.org or 317-236-1448.

Employment

Maintenance Technician

This full-time, hourly, position is responsible for the maintenance of several buildings.

Duties include:

- Completing repairs, preventative maintenance and maintenance tasks on buildings and grounds.
- Responding, in a timely manner, to internal equipment repair needs.
- A verifiable background in building maintenance.
- A working knowledge of all building systems and components.
- The ability to evaluate and repair existing equipment.
- The ability to work with contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers.
- An ability to work with the Archdiocesan staff.
- Basic computer skills.
- Good organizational and communication skills.

If you are interested in this position, please send your resume to:
dherbertz@archindy.org.

Director of Faith Formation

St. Pius X Catholic Church and School in Indianapolis IN, is currently seeking a full-time Director of Faith Formation to join are team. The Director of Faith Formation will foster and nourish community in the faith, from birth through adulthood. Communion and will also function as Coordinator of Adult and children's RCIA. The ideal candidate will be able to work independently and demonstrate flexibility, creativity, and responsibility. The DFF is an active, practicing Catholic who lives a life in keeping with the teachings of the Church. We are looking for an individual who will be; Outreaching, engaging, and supporting families in their call to grow in their faith and be the first witness of Jesus to their children.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:
 Plan and Implement new and inviting formation programs to the parish. Supervise and assist with the Sunday Children's Faith Formation (CFF) Lead and oversee the Sacramental Preparation, Coordinate the Special Religious Education Program, Lead and coordinate the RCIA and RCIA for Children program, Coordinate and lead the Adult Education Programs, Assist the Coordinator of the Vacation Bible School program, Lead and coordinate the Children's Liturgy of the Word program, Communications to parish regarding programs, Coordinate School Masses with teachers and school staff, Coordinate Children's Masses on weekends, Coordinate Baptism prep classes, Other duties assigned by the Director of Evangelization and Discipleship.

For Immediate Consideration, Send applications or inquiries to:
ralbertson@spxparish.org

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