



The

# Criterion

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## Twenty Something

Leap of faith: taking risks and beginning anew, page 12.

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Jude Anton Twal poses in front of the area of the "Sacred Places" exhibit at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis that features her, her Christian faith and her Catholic parish church, The Beheading of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Madaba, Jordan. (Photo courtesy of The Children's Museum of Indianapolis)

## An unlikely faith journey of 6,250 miles draws a young woman closer to Christ

By John Shaughnessy

At 27, Jude Anton Twal often marvels at the way God works in her life, but a recent experience surpassed even her expectations.

At the time, the architect and consultant was going about her life in Madaba, Jordan, the city where her Catholic faith is at the heart of everything she does, everything she is.

Then came the opportunity she never imagined—an opportunity to represent her faith and her relationship with Christ in a special exhibit on the world's religions at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

Before the "Sacred Places" exhibit opened to the public on Sept. 7, Twal traveled more than 6,250 miles from her home to get a firsthand look at the exhibit that features her and five other young adults from around the world who represent the faiths of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Rapa Nui.

"It was impeccable, to say the least, for I never expected to fly all the way to Indianapolis to be a part of such an immersive experience, joined by an outstandingly diverse group of people," she says. "I never even thought that the exhibit would be of this grand magnitude until I entered the exhibit."

See JOURNEY, page 8

## Pope encourages children to speak up, work for peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In a celebration of life, peace, joy and harmony, thousands of children representing young people on every



Pope Francis

continent greeted Pope Francis during an afternoon event in the Vatican's Paul VI hall.

Children from different parts of the world, such as the Amazon and the slums of Brazil, sang on stage, and Italian pop star Mr. Rain

performed his hit single, "Super Heroes."

The event on Nov. 6 was sponsored by the Dicastery for Culture and Education and was attended by more than 6,000 children from different parts of Italy and other parts of the world.

Dedicated to the importance of peace, fraternity and respect for others and creation, the event was titled, "Let Us Learn from Boys and Girls," to focus attention on children's simple and sincere desires for peace and harmony in the world.

"There is much to learn from you," the pope said. "I am always happy when I meet you because you teach me something new every time. For example, you remind me how beautiful life is in its simplicity and how beautiful it is to be together!"

"Two big gifts God has given us," he continued, are life and being together with simplicity.

The pope encouraged the kids to embrace their adolescence, which is "a wonderful age," and to make their thoughts, feelings and experiences heard by adults.

He asked the children to remember all the other kids their age who are suffering from war, hunger, climate disasters and poverty.

"You know there are bad people who do bad things, they make war and destroy. Do you want to do bad things?" the pope

See POPE, page 10

## Truck driver finds God's presence in a snowy winter night's command to 'Stop for the black van'

(Editor's note: The Criterion invited our readers to share their stories of how God has made his presence known in their lives. Here is one story in a continuing series.)

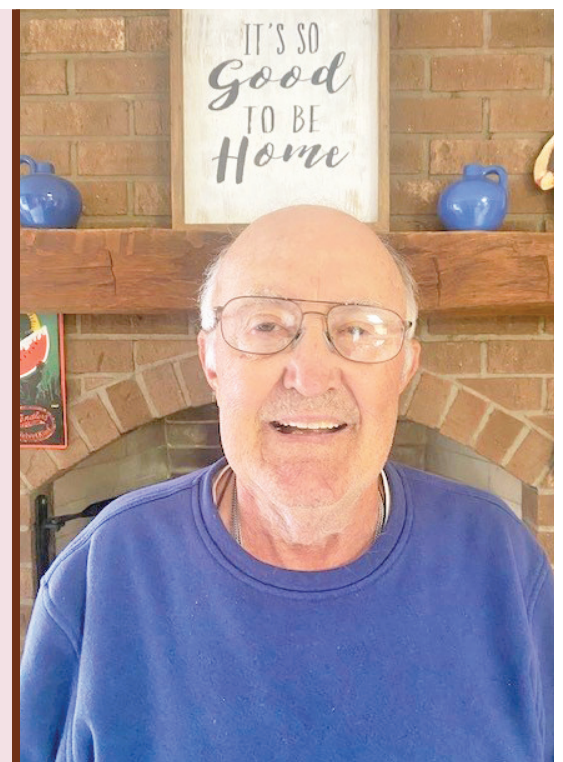
By John Shaughnessy

In his career as a long-distance truck driver, Alan "Allie" Waechter made countless journeys from his home in Indiana to different parts of the country, but none as memorable as the bitter, winter night when he heard a voice instructing him, "Stop for the black van."

On that frigid February night in 1979, Waechter was hauling hospital equipment to Des Moines, Iowa, a 550-mile trip that included a long stretch on I-74 westbound. As he neared Peoria, Ill., he heard a voice—"loud and profound," he recalls—telling him for the first time, "Stop for the black van."

See PRESENCE, page 8

Alan "Allie" Waechter of St. Louis Parish in Batesville will never forget the bitterly cold night when he felt God's presence while driving a truck on an interstate. (Submitted photo)



# 10 top takeaways from the synod synthesis report and why they matter for Catholics

(OSV News)—The Synod on Synodality’s first session at the Vatican has concluded, with its results wrapped up in a 41-page “half-time report” for the entire Church to digest, reflect on and give feedback about ahead of the synod’s final session in Rome next October.

The report, a synthesis of the Oct. 4-29 meeting, is fundamentally an instrument for discernment, and it is designed to elicit further reflection and response from the whole Church. The synod’s next session in Rome will have the task of making decisions about what concrete proposals to present before the pope. Ultimately, the pope will decide what to implement coming out of the Synod on Synodality.

The following are 10 takeaways about the synod’s synthesis report, with why it matters for Catholics in parishes and what happens next.

—1. Synodality is about the Church’s evangelizing mission, and baptism is why synodal governance matters.

The synod relates that “synodality is ordered to mission,” recognizing that the Church’s members—with diverse backgrounds, languages and cultures—share the “common grace of baptism.” The synod’s themes of “communion, participation, mission” are the hallmarks for how the entire people of God in a synodal Church—the laity, consecrated religious, deacons and priests with the bishops united with the pope—relate to each other and live together the call to holiness, proclaiming Jesus Christ’s good news to the world.

The synod explicitly says its work is rooted in the Church’s dynamic and living tradition in the context of the Second Vatican Council’s teaching. But the synod also recognizes much remains to be done to clarify what “synodality” means, and to develop it into real processes and structures.

Part of that is figuring out how decisions are made in the Church in a way that is faithful to its nature—including discerning how episcopal collegiality is exercised in a synodal Church—because the Church’s members have “differentiated co-responsibility for the common mission of evangelization.”

The synod’s “conversations in the Spirit”—an experience of listening and sharing in the light of faith, and seeking God’s will in an authentically evangelical atmosphere—is recognized as a helpful tool in this regard.

—2. The synod calls for formation in

“authentic discipleship,” united by the Eucharist and nourished by the word.

The synod stresses that all the Church’s members are called to be “all disciples, all missionaries” who have the “responsibility of demonstrating and transmitting the love and tenderness of God to a wounded humanity.” In other words, living discipleship is at the heart of being Catholic.

The synod suggested deepening the notion that a “mature exercise of the ‘sensus fidei’ [‘sense of the faith’] requires not only reception of baptism, but a life lived in authentic discipleship that develops the grace of baptism.” The synod recognizes this can help people discern where the Holy Spirit is at work, as opposed to where the baptized are just advocating dominant thinking, cultural conditions or “matters inconsistent with the Gospel.”

In this regard, the synod stresses that “the Eucharist shapes synodality,” and so the Mass should be celebrated “with an authentic sense of friendship in Christ” that reflects beauty and simplicity. The synod proposes “liturgy celebrated with authenticity is the first and fundamental school of discipleship.”

It also proposes enriching Catholic life beyond the Mass with alternative forms of liturgical prayer, as well as popular piety, particularly Marian devotion—both of which form the faithful and can also help others outside the Church encounter the Lord.

—3. Synodality is not about having more meetings, but it

is about discerning together how to go on mission at each level of the Church.

The synod also emphasizes that synodality in the Church calls Catholics to discern intentionally as a community how Jesus is calling them to live out their mission. It’s not about self-referential meetings, but rather a style of carrying out “evangelical proclamation, service to those experiencing poverty, care for our common home and theological research.”

The document emphasizes the need for formation, and also making spaces to receive the Church’s teaching, and discern how to act on it. The Church’s social doctrine needs to be understood by the faithful so they can build up the kingdom of God.

Synodality is about gathering the disciple community together to discern what is their mission and how Jesus is sending them on mission. Any effective structural change to make the Church’s members “co-responsible” presupposes “profound spiritual conversion,” both





## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

November 11–30, 2023

<p><b>November 11-16</b> U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee and General Meeting in Baltimore, Md.</p> <p><b>November 16-18</b> National Catholic Youth Conference at Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis</p> <p><b>November 21 – 11 a.m.</b> College of Deans meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p><b>November 27 – 10 a.m.</b> Clergy Advent Day of Prayer at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis</p>	<p><b>November 28 – 1 p.m.</b> Council of Priests meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p><b>November 29 – 10:30 a.m.</b> Mass for seniors of archdiocesan high schools at St. Malachy Church, Brownsburg</p> <p><b>November 30 – 10 a.m.</b> Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p><b>November 30 – 3 p.m.</b> Finance Council meeting, Mass and dinner meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p>
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personal and communal, in order to carry out Jesus’ mission.

At the same time, the synod calls for further consideration on how the Church’s theology and modern developments in science can dialogue, and effective ways to do that for the Church’s discernment, particularly on complicated or controversial questions. Above all, the synod says, “Jesus’ actions, assimilated in prayer and conversion of heart, show us the way forward.”

—4. A synodal Church must reflect on what formation its priests, deacons and laity need to carry out their mission together.

The synod recognizes bishops and priests face disproportionate burdens of responsibility for the Church’s mission. It also identifies clericalism as opposed to Jesus’ model of ministerial service, leading to “authoritarian attitudes,” and vocations stifled by privilege and power that refuse accountability.

The synod suggests extensive discussion and consideration of revising priestly formation to address this. Instead of forming priests in an “artificial environment separate from the ordinary lives of the faith,” they should develop through “close contact with the people of God and through concrete service learning experiences.”

The synod recognized there is

universal agreement that priestly celibacy is “richly prophetic and a profound witness to Christ.” But it also suggested further consideration of whether it is appropriate for the Latin Church alone to continue to insist on it—the Eastern Churches (Catholic and Orthodox) have a tradition of celibate and married priests and deacons—when there are ecclesial and cultural contexts that make it more difficult for the Church’s mission.

The synod is calling for a deepening reflection on the vocation of the deacon, “above all in the exercise of charity.”

The synod indicated the importance of expanding women’s access to theological formation, their inclusion in decision-making and responsibility in pastoral care and ministry, and even the exploration of new ministries where women could decisively contribute. It noted the debate over women and the diaconal ministry, and expressed openness to continuing research and examining what has been done so far.

It also touched on lay ministry and called for more creativity in how these roles are thought of and lived at the service of mission: for example, developing the ministry of lector beyond its liturgical role, such as preaching in appropriate contexts. It also envisioned possibly a lay ministry taken up by

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

## An invitation to teachers and principals: How are your schools celebrating the Eucharistic Revival?

The Criterion is inviting teachers and principals of Catholic schools in the archdiocese to share their stories and photos of how their classrooms and/or their school communities are celebrating this year of the Eucharistic Revival. We hope to include these special celebrations of the Eucharist as part of our Catholic Schools Week supplement in January and in our regular issues.

Please send your stories and photos to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at [jshaughnessy@archindy.org](mailto:jshaughnessy@archindy.org).



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married couples to support married and family life.

—5. Disciples listen to people and accompany them like Christ in whatever their personal, familial or social situations.

The synod says “listening is the word that best expresses our experience. This is listening given and received.” Listening really is where the Church discerns the mission Jesus is calling his disciples and their particular communities.

It also emphasized the Church needs to give its closeness, listening and accompaniment to those who feel alone in remaining faithful to the Church’s teaching on marriage and sexual ethics, as well as to those on the margins because of “their marriage status, identity or sexuality.”

The synod suggests further consideration of the point that listening “does not mean compromising proclamation of the Gospel or endorsing any opinion or position proposed”—but rather being like Jesus, who listens and loves unconditionally to share his good news.

It also emphasized the Church needs to extend its closeness to the lonely and abandoned, the elderly and sick.

The synod document called for further discernment about “Eucharistic hospitality”—the situation of people of different churches receiving Communion—and “inter-church marriages.”

—6. The Catholic Church needs strong Eastern Churches collaborating with the Latin Church.

The synod indicates it is vital for Catholics to realize that the Catholic Church is a communion of coequal sister Churches—Latin Church (the biggest and headed by the pope) and 23 different Eastern Catholic Churches, all enjoying communion through their unity with the pope. The synod calls for all Catholic communities and clergy to learn about each other and actively work together modeling “unity in diversity.”

It stresses that the Latin Church’s members (for the most part known as Roman Catholics) need to help Eastern Catholics in situations where they do not have access to their own churches to live out their traditions. The synod said “Latinization” (making Eastern Churches conform to the traditions and practices of the Latin Church) is “outdated.”

The synod indicated that Eastern Churches must work out their relationship to role of the pope, whose role is rooted in the Latin Church, specifically in whether his assent is needed in the selection of bishops, and the fact that Catholics of these Eastern Churches are no longer confined to a traditional patriarchal territory but are now all over the world.

It proposes a permanent council of patriarchs and major archbishops to the

Holy Father, and that Eastern Catholics should be adequately represented throughout the Roman Curia.

—7. The synod suggests a new path for ecumenism, particularly thanks to the martyrs.

There has been a lot of discouragement about dialogue between Catholic and other Christian confessions achieving its goal of actual unity—but the synod appears to have made significant suggestions for moving ahead.

Among the proposals was that an “ecumenical martyrology” be developed, which would allow the Church to commemorate Christian martyrs who share a common baptism but not the same confessional boundaries. The point has been emphasized most recently by the early 21st-century martyrdoms, such as in the Middle East, where Islamist militants killed Orthodox and Catholics for being Christians—among them the 21 Coptic Orthodox martyrs of Libya.

The synod emphasized that local Churches can engage ecumenically with other Churches in carrying out the work of the Gospel, and the importance of continuing to involve Christians of other Churches and traditions in synodal processes “at all levels.”

Among the proposals is to find a common date for the celebration of Easter with an eye to the year 2025, the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea.

—8. The synod emphasizes the Church needs to evangelize digital spaces intentionally as a dimension of its mission.

The synod views the digital realm not as a separate field, but a “crucial dimension of the Church’s witness in contemporary culture.” This means understanding digital culture in order to evangelize it and engaging the Church’s younger generation—clergy, religious and lay—in carrying out the mission here.

The synod proposes discernment on how the Church can be involved in helping make the online world “safe” for families—noting the dangers of intimidation, disinformation, sex exploitation and addiction—and how the Church can make the digital realm “spiritually life-giving.”

This challenges parishes and dioceses about how to engage here, especially forming and accompanying “digital missionaries” and networking them together. It also suggests creating collaborative opportunities with influencers, particularly in areas of “human dignity, justice and care for our common home.”

—9. Sex abuse is undermining the Church’s missionary life, and the synod recognizes that a truly synodal Church needs to get this right.

The synod stated, “Sexual abuse and the abuse of power and authority continue to cry out for justice, healing and reconciliation.” It acknowledges this synodal



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., joins members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops for a working session in the Vatican’s Paul VI Audience Hall on Oct. 26. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

process has seen the Holy Spirit pour out fruits of “hope, healing, reconciliation and restoration of trust.”

Furthermore, listening to and accompanying those who have suffered abuse in the Church have helped people feel no longer invisible. At the same time, the synod makes clear “the long journey towards reconciliation and justice” remains and requires “addressing the structural conditions that abetted such abuse” and “concrete gestures of penitence.”

A synodal Church requires a “culture of transparency,” respect for existing procedures to safeguard minors and people when they are vulnerable, and “further structures dedicated to the prevention of abuse.” It noted bishops are in a difficult situation of reconciling their “role of father with that of judge,” and suggested exploring the possibility of giving the judicial task to another body specified in canon law.

—10. The bishops must now figure out how to take these ideas to the pews for further discernment and bring that back to the synod.

The synod synthesis’ 41 pages are

broken up into three sections with vital topics that truly interest and affect the entire people of God.

At this point, the synod leaves it to worldwide episcopal conferences to discern the next steps to take. During the synod’s first session, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, who is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, acknowledged that the bishops would have to foster greater participation, including encouraging pastors to buy in. The U.S. participation rate in the synod’s preparatory process was 1% of Catholics.

The prospect of getting this feedback within a year may seem daunting to bishops. If the document is really going to be thoroughly discerned and feedback provided within 11 months, the lay faithful will likely have to raise their voices and volunteer to work with their pastors and bishops to get it done in time for the second October session.

(The synod’s synthesis report can be found at [bit.ly/SynodalChurch](https://bit.ly/SynodalChurch). The link is case sensitive.) †

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## Editorial

# A call to holiness, a call to become saints

Earlier this month, we celebrated the Solemnity of All Saints (Nov. 1) and the commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day on Nov. 2).

During Masses on both days, we remembered our brothers and sisters in Christ who have gone before us.

At liturgies on All Saints' Day, we were reminded that all of us are called to be saints by loving God and loving all our sisters and brothers in Christ.

During a Nov. 1 Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, Cardinal Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio to the United States, said as much. "The Solemnity of All Saints is a celebration of the universal call of holiness," he said in a homily as reported on OSV News. All Saints' Day, he added, not only celebrates men, women and children known for living holy lives in a heroic way, but also people not universally known who lived lives of faith, hope and love.

"We rejoice in the hope that we too will join the saints in heaven, by becoming people of love today," the apostolic nuncio said.

Reflecting on a Scripture reading for the day, Cardinal Pierre said St. John emphasized that Christians are beloved by God because they are God's children.

"Becoming a saint means choosing God and choosing to follow his way, but this only matters because God first



Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, gives his homily during Mass for All Saints' Day on Nov. 1 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (OSV News photo/Patrick Ryan)

chose us," he said. "To be God's child, to be loved by him, is our core identity. It is who we are."

As we continue living out our vocations in this month in which we remember those who have gone before us, we pray we all strive to become saints and let the goal of sainthood guide us each day.

And in the process, let us remember our call to live a life of holiness, understanding we can achieve it by doing everyday things—by living lives of faith, hope and love.

—Mike Krokos

## Vocations awareness means being open to the Spirit

As you read in last week's issue of *The Criterion*, Nov. 5-11 marks the U.S. bishops' annual Vocations Awareness Week. In that issue of the newspaper, we included a 12-page supplement that featured articles highlighting vocations in the Church to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life.

The special section presented an opportunity to raise awareness for vocations and to nurture those who are discerning a vocation to ordained ministry or consecrated life.

"During this week, the Church gives thanks to God for the faithful example of husbands and wives, and joyful witness of ordained ministers and consecrated persons," said a statement from Bishop Earl A. Boyea of Lansing, Mich., chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

"We pray that many more men and women will be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in their hearts as they discern the mission God has for them," he added.

Bishop Austin A. Vetter of Helena, Mont., a member of the USCCB vocations committee, said the week is a "wonderful time for us to hone our efforts" to promote vocations.

"We should always have vocation awareness and always be asking God

for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life around the world and for our own local churches," he said, underscoring the importance of the weeklong focus "to heighten awareness" about the need for vocations and have this on "the forefront of our minds."

Bishop Vetter, who also serves as episcopal liaison to the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors, the National Religious Vocation Conference and Serra International, emphasized that National Vocation Awareness Week offers a special opportunity for "redoubling our efforts of prayer that young people would be able to hear the voice—the quiet, gentle voice many times—of Jesus inviting them into a vocation as a priest or religious.

"It's such a beautiful life, and it's such a needed life and a life that is so loved by our people," he added.

While we recognize a week each November to highlight vocations, we should not limit our prayers for people to answer the call to the priesthood, diaconate or consecrated life to a weeklong period.

We encourage people of faith to pray for vocations as often as possible—even daily. And please Lord, may these petitions bear fruit.

—Mike Krokos

## Be Our Guest/Fr. Patrick Briscoe, O.P.

# A visit to a saint's tomb reveals how we are all called to know Christ

We like to think we follow the saints, but sometimes the saints follow us.

As I walked home from class in Tours, France, I had an irresistible urge to explore the church I was passing by. As I entered, I marveled at the architecture. A choir of nuns happened to be singing Vespers.

I knelt in a pew at the back of the church and began to pray.

Then I noticed something strange about the church. The altar appeared to have two tabernacles. How strange, I thought. This required investigation.

I rose and approached the sanctuary. Even as the sun fell, the neo-Byzantine church was luminous. Gazing up at the brass chest perched on top of the high altar, I couldn't determine what it was. I searched around for a brochure.

## Discovering St. Martin

Then, thanks to the help of reading, I learned: the chest was not a second tabernacle, it was a reliquary. It contained a relic of the skull of St. Martin of Tours. And in fact, the church was not only dedicated to him but included his tomb. I continued my exploration.

The dimly lit crypt flickered in the candlelight. *Ex-votos*, mementos of prayers answered and favors received, adorned the sandstone walls. The smell of beeswax and the cold damp of the subterranean refuge were intoxicatingly peaceful. Again, I knelt in prayer. I prayed for my family. For my vocation. Probably for help with my French, too.

It was the first visit I made to a saint's tomb. And it was a complete accident.

I was baptized in St. Martin of Tours Church in Martinsville. It was my

grandmother's parish, my mother's family church. It was the place where I received the grace of faith. And here I was, an undergraduate in France, receiving grace through St. Martin, yet again.

The Basilica of St. Martin of Tours was once one of the greatest monuments in the Christian world. Today, all that remains of the ancient church is one tower. The current church was rebuilt after the French Revolution. The building hadn't just fallen into despair. Revolutionaries used the church as a stable, then ripped it stone from stone. Then, to make sure it couldn't be rebuilt, they sold the stones.

But it was rebuilt.

## Pursued by the saints

And there's a lesson in that. Jesus always has a way. Often that way is through his saints, who pursue us. The saints invite us to come to them, not for their own glory, but to know Christ.

St. Martin's story shows this clearly. A Roman soldier, he famously split his cloak in two and gave half to a beggar on the street one cold winter night. Christ later came to him in a dream, revealing that he had been the beggar. The inscriptions around his tomb bear eloquent testimony to the power of his intercession.

St. Martin's love of Christ is what made him a saint. And through the centuries, pilgrims can discover that love anew for themselves. Devotion to him is what inspired the reconstruction of the once-destroyed basilica. And through Martin's intercession, the faithful are still discovering new grace.

I know St. Martin was pursuing me that day, now 16 years ago. We are closer to the saints than we often think. And, pray God, may we one day be numbered among them.

(Dominican Father Patrick Briscoe is the editor of *Our Sunday Visitor*.) †

## Be Our Guest/Margaret Rose Realy

# November: A month to seek the Lord and grow ever deeper our roots of faith

Not quite past autumn, but not yet winter, November is a difficult month to describe. Dried grass fronds and flower heads full of seeds sway in the late fall breeze, the berries and fruits of trees and shrubs glisten with frost. This is the month when nature goes dormant, a time to be wrapped in restfulness.



As I go about the garden and fields collecting ripened seeds for next year's growth, there is an anticipation of sowing goodness; a lovely metaphor from our Lord for spreading his word.

The thing about being a sower, as a farmer or a gardener, is understanding all that took place in order to produce the fertile seeds that I now hold in my hand. We gather them from plants that had been successfully developed and grown before us. We know what the seed's purpose is, what fruit it will produce, and how it will feed us in body or spirit.

As with our great ancestry of Catholic saints, there was a desire of those men and women who endeavored before us to determine what needed to be grown and how to make the growth more abundant.

If a plant expresses dormancy—a state of resting, a time of minimal activity—it will have worked through a productive season and developed fruit and seed; it must rest. Many organisms require this cycle of "downtime." Without it, the

future holds reduced productivity and impaired vitality—plants don't flower, animals become obese and people distraught. Dormancy is the time when roots expand; when the overt activities of life decrease, and we become grounded in the soil of purpose.

This is when the true purpose of dormancy develops in us and our lives of faith. It is the time after we have prepared the soil of our soul and planted the seeds that our Lord has given us to sow. We've worked, yoked to the Holy Spirit, and pulled the weeds, strengthened what was weak, watered with the word, and shared what was produced for the spiritual health of others.

Now, like the plants, we rest from active production (our evangelizing work), knowing that the seeds we've gathered that are to be sown merely await the movement of the Lord. We are in a fallow season, and all the work we've done, whether in the garden or in our soul, settles in for a period of dormancy and becomes the dream for future growth.

We work, we pray, we contemplate, and, by doing so, we grow ever deeper our roots of faith. Our ability to produce good results is greater from these periods of inactivity; for we gather ourselves before the Lord, seeking out his embrace and awaiting the next season and its fruitfulness.

(Margaret Rose Realy is a Benedictine oblate and the author of *A Garden Catechism: 100 Plants in Christian Tradition and How to Grow Them*.) †

## ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



# Christ the Cornerstone

## Made in God's image, we all share an inherent value and dignity

*“Christian, remember your dignity, and know that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition.” (St. Leo the Great)*

The publication date for this column is Friday, Nov. 10, the memorial of St. Leo the Great. Leo was elected pope in 440 and was a prolific writer and teacher. His contributions to the Council of Chalcedon, which in 451 affirmed the unity of Christ's two natures in one person, set the standard for authoritative Catholic teaching on human dignity.

One of St. Leo's most popular Christmas sermons reminds baptized Christians that we share in God's own nature and, therefore, possess a dignity that is the foundation for all human rights.

We frequently hear it said that we are “made in the image and likeness of God.” This truth lies at the heart of Catholic social teaching. Because every man, woman and child (born and unborn) reflects the face of God, everyone has inherent value and inalienable rights regardless of his or her race, ethnicity, religious, economic or social position.

As I noted in 2018 in “We Are

One in Christ: A Pastoral Letter on Christian Anthropology”:

*The first key principle of Catholic social teaching is respect for the dignity of each and every human person—regardless of race, sex, nationality, economic or social status, educational background, political affiliation or sexual orientation—as created in the image and likeness of God. All are equal in dignity. No one is “better” than anyone else. All deserve respect. All share basic human rights. No one is exempt from the responsibility to support and assist fellow human beings—whether they are from the same family/community, or they are strangers who are foreign to us in some way. Every human person, as created in the image of God, is a member of God's family. For Christians, this also means that we are sisters and brothers of Christ and each other.*

Respect for human dignity is paramount in the struggle for peace, justice, equality and compassion among individuals and communities. Today there would be no wars in Ukraine, the Holy Land, regions of Africa or other parts of the world if the rights and dignity of all were recognized and respected.

In my pastoral letter, I also observed:

*All sins against the dignity of persons, including the taking of a human life,*

*sexual abuse and sexual harassment, rape, racism, sexism, nativism and homophobia, are violations of this fundamental principle. We can (and sometimes must) disapprove of the behavior of others, but we may never belittle, disrespect or abuse others simply because of our differences, no matter how serious.*

As St. Leo the Great says, we “share in God's own nature.” This means that every human person is worthy of reverence and respect. No one is “less than” anyone else. No one deserves to be belittled or abused, regardless of their beliefs or actions, no matter how much we disagree with them.

True and lasting peace will only come when individuals, families, communities and nations learn to respect each other despite their differences. Violence and hatred are incompatible with respect for human dignity. They poison human hearts and, as St. Leo the Great says, “they return us by sin to our former base condition”—the state humankind was in following our first parents' refusal to accept the dignity originally bestowed on them by God.

The incomparable worth and dignity of every human person was revealed to us when God's only Son became a

human being in the womb of his Blessed Mother Mary. Taking on our human nature, Jesus showed us that we who are his brothers and sisters share in the divine nature of the Holy Trinity.

We are not accidents in a random evolutionary process. Still less are any of us superior by birth, social position or religious tradition to any other person or group. We have legitimate differences and disagreements, but these should be settled in respectful and dignified ways, certainly not by war or oppression.

In my pastoral letter on our unity in Christ, I observe:

*In every social situation, there exists the presence of evil both in the form of individual sinful actions and in the corrupt social structures that have been allowed to develop and become institutionalized in society. What is needed to overcome evil in all its forms is the love of Christ—pure, unselfish, compassionate, merciful and transformational.*

Love overcomes sin and death. It has the power to transform the hearts and actions of individuals and societies, to break down barriers and build bridges, and to overcome anything that undermines the dignity that all persons possess in Christ the God-man. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## Hechos a imagen de Dios, todos tenemos un valor y una dignidad inherentes

*“Cristiano, recuerda tu dignidad, y sabiendo que participas de la propia naturaleza de Dios, no vuelvas por el pecado a tu vil condición anterior.” (San León el Magno)*

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el viernes 10 de noviembre, memorial de san León el Magno. León fue elegido papa en 440 y fue profesor y un prolífico escritor. Sus contribuciones al Concilio de Calcedonia, que en 451 afirmó la unidad de las dos naturalezas de Cristo, sentaron las bases de la enseñanza católica reconocida sobre la dignidad humana.

Uno de los sermones navideños más populares de san León recuerda a los cristianos bautizados que participamos en la propia naturaleza de Dios y, por tanto, poseemos una dignidad que es el fundamento de todos los derechos humanos.

Con frecuencia oímos decir que estamos “hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios” y esta verdad es la esencia de la enseñanza social católica. Dado que cada hombre, mujer y niño (nacido y no nacido) es reflejo del rostro de Dios, todos tienen un valor inherente y derechos inalienables, independientemente de su raza, etnia, posición religiosa, económica o social.

Tal como señalé en la carta pastoral de 2018 titulada “Somos uno con Jesucristo: Sobre los fundamentos de

la antropología cristiana”:

*El primer principio clave de la doctrina social católica es el respeto de la dignidad de cada persona humana, independientemente de su raza, sexo, nacionalidad, situación económica o social, nivel de educación, afiliación política u orientación sexual, puesto que todos hemos sido creados a imagen y semejanza de Dios. La dignidad es igual para todos. Ninguna persona es «mejor» que otra. Todos tenemos derechos humanos fundamentales. Nadie está exento de la responsabilidad de apoyar y ayudar a los demás seres humanos, independientemente de que pertenezcan a la misma familia o comunidad, o que sean extranjeros que nos resulten de algún modo extraños. Puesto que cada persona humana ha sido creada a imagen de Dios, forma parte de la familia de Dios. Para los cristianos esto también significa que somos hermanos de Cristo y entre nosotros.*

El respeto de la dignidad humana es primordial en la lucha por la paz, la justicia, la igualdad y la compasión entre las personas y las comunidades. Hoy no habría guerras en Ucrania, Tierra Santa, regiones de África u otras partes del mundo si se reconocieran y respetaran los derechos y la dignidad de todos.

En mi carta pastoral, puntalicé:

*Todos los pecados cometidos contra la dignidad de las personas, incluyendo tomar*

*una vida humana, el abuso y el acoso sexual, la violación, el racismo, el sexismo, la teoría antimigratoria del nativismo y la homofobia, constituyen transgresiones a este principio fundamental. Tenemos la capacidad (y a veces es nuestra obligación) reprobar la conducta de algunas personas, pero jamás podemos denigrar, irrespetar o maltratar a otros sencillamente a causa de nuestras diferencias, independientemente de las circunstancias.*

Como dice san León el Magno, “participamos en la propia naturaleza de Dios” y esto significa que toda persona humana es digna de reverencia y respeto. Nadie es “menos” que otra; nadie merece ser menospreciado o maltratado, independientemente de sus creencias o acciones por mucho que no estemos de acuerdo con ellas.

La paz verdadera y duradera solamente llegará cuando los individuos, las familias, las comunidades y los países aprendan a respetarse a pesar de sus diferencias. La violencia y el odio son incompatibles con el respeto de la dignidad humana ya que envenenan los corazones humanos y, como dice san León el Magno, “nos devuelven por el pecado a nuestra vil condición anterior,” el estado en el que se encontraba la humanidad tras la negativa de nuestros primeros padres a aceptar la dignidad que Dios les había otorgado originalmente.

El incomparable valor y dignidad de

toda persona humana nos fue revelado cuando el Hijo único de Dios se convirtió en ser humano en el vientre de su Santa Madre María. Asumiendo nuestra naturaleza humana, Jesús nos mostró que nosotros, sus hermanos y hermanas, participamos en la naturaleza divina de la Santísima Trinidad.

No somos accidentes en un proceso evolutivo aleatorio y menos aún somos superiores por nacimiento, posición social o tradición religiosa a ninguna otra persona o grupo. Tenemos diferencias y desacuerdos legítimos, pero estos deben resolverse de forma respetuosa y digna, y desde luego, no mediante la guerra o la opresión.

En mi carta pastoral sobre nuestra unidad en Cristo, expreso que:

*En cada situación social la presencia del mal se manifiesta a través de las acciones censurables de las personas, así como también en las estructuras sociales corruptas que la sociedad ha permitido que se desarrollen al punto de la institucionalización. Para superar el mal en todas sus formas se necesita el amor puro, desinteresado, compasivo, misericordioso y transformador de Cristo.*

El amor vence al pecado y la muerte y tiene el poder de transformar los corazones y las acciones de los individuos y las sociedades, de derribar barreras y tender puentes, y de superar todo lo que socava la dignidad que todas las personas poseen en Cristo, Dios hecho hombre. †

# Events Calendar

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

## November 13, 27

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Jesus and the Eucharist Bible Study**, 6:30-8 p.m., sixth and seventh of seven Monday afternoon stand-alone sessions, content also available through [formed.org](http://formed.org), free, registration preferred. Information, registration: 317-501-0060, [cacdiehr@gmail.com](mailto:cacdiehr@gmail.com).

## November 14

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information: [Taize.SistersofProvidence.org](http://Taize.SistersofProvidence.org), 812-535-2952.

## November 15

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

## November 16

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

## November 16, 30

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus

(Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Jesus and the Eucharist Bible Study**, 1-2:30 p.m., sixth and seventh of seven Thursday afternoon stand-alone sessions, content also available through [formed.org](http://formed.org), free, registration preferred. Information, registration: 317-501-0060, [cacdiehr@gmail.com](mailto:cacdiehr@gmail.com).

## November 17

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Indiana Historical Society Vice President of Marketing and Sales Amy Lamb presenting "Festival of Trees ... and Much, Much More!," 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 Nov. 14. Information, registration: [cutt.ly/CBE-Reg](http://cutt.ly/CBE-Reg)

## November 23

Downtown Depot 1401 J St., Bedford. **Becky's Place Run for Hope 5K**, 9 a.m., pick up registration packets Nov. 22 at Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce noon-6 p.m. or Downtown Depot on race day 8-8:45 a.m., \$20 ages 18 and younger, \$25 adult, \$15 for one-mile fun walk, registration preferred by Nov. 17, however

walk-ups will be accepted, T-shirts available for \$20 through Nov. 10, sponsorships available. Information, registration: 812-275-5773, [lnkiy.in/RaceForHope2023](http://lnkiy.in/RaceForHope2023).

Our Lady of Lourdes School cafeteria, 30 S. Downey Ave., Indianapolis. **Irvington Community Thanksgiving Dinner**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., sponsored by Irvington churches, all are welcome, freewill offerings accepted. Also accepting advance food and monetary donations at [tinyurl.com/IrvTDayfood23](http://tinyurl.com/IrvTDayfood23) and [tinyurl.com/IrvTDaydonate23](http://tinyurl.com/IrvTDaydonate23). Information: 317-356-7291, [parishsecretary@ollindy.org](mailto:parishsecretary@ollindy.org).

## November 26

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: [franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam](http://franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam).

## December 1

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, [womenscarecenter.org](http://womenscarecenter.org).

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday**

**bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, [msross1@hotmail.com](mailto:msross1@hotmail.com).

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

## December 2

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confessions 8:10-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

## December 2-22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Shop INN-Spiced Christmas Sale**, Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Dec. 2, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Dec. 9, 16 and 23, 9 a.m.-noon; many items 25-75% off. Information: 317-788-7581, [benedictinn.org](http://benedictinn.org).

## December 3

St. Matthew the Apostle

Parish, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Advent Evening of Music and Reflection**, 6 p.m., featuring choirs, handbell choir, readings and reflections followed by refreshments in parish café, free. Information: 317-257-4297, [ssulka@saintmatt.org](mailto:ssulka@saintmatt.org).

## December 5

Ritz Charles, 12156 N. Meridian St., Carmel, Ind. **Right to Life Indiana Christmas Gala**, 5:30 p.m. VIP sponsor reception, 6:30-9 p.m. dinner and program, Super Bowl champion and author of *The New Fight for Life* Benjamin Watson keynote speaker, Christian musician Ordan St. Cyr, \$100, table of 10 \$1,000. Information, reservations: [irtl.org/gala](http://irtl.org/gala), [mwilliams@irtl.org](mailto:mwilliams@irtl.org), 317-413-9123.

## December 6

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Catlepton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

Marian University Hall Theater, 3200 Cold Spring

Road, Indianapolis. **Advent Concert**, 6:30 p.m., Catholic composer John Angotti with Marian University Sacred Choir, followed by penance service during holy hour with praise and worship music in Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel, free. Information: 317-955-6000, [jgarcia@marian.edu](mailto:jgarcia@marian.edu).

## December 7

**Monthly Prayer with Sisters of Providence: "Prayer on Christmas,"** for single Catholic women ages 18-42, via Zoom, 7-7:45 p.m., seventh day of each month. Information, registration: [Events.SistersofProvidence.org](http://Events.SistersofProvidence.org), 361-500-9505, [jluna@spsmw.org](mailto:jluna@spsmw.org).

## December 10

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: [franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam](http://franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam).

St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Come Home for Christmas: Christmas Cantata**, 5 p.m., Christmas story shared through song, freewill donations accepted. Information: 812-663-8427, [parishoffice@stmarysgreensburg.com](mailto:parishoffice@stmarysgreensburg.com). †

## Retreats and Programs

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

## November 21

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Advent Workshop: "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!"** 9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT, Benedictine Father Jeremy King presenting, \$55. Registration: [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats).

## December 2

Mother of the Redeemer

Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Rd. 48, Bloomington. **Advent Day of Reflection**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Dominican Father Reginald Wolford presenting "The Hope of the Advent Wreath for the Order of Preachers," freewill offering accepted, no advance registration required. Information: 812-825-4642, ext. 1

## December 4

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Advent Mysteries—An Evening of Reflection**, 6-9 p.m., Father James Farrell presenting, includes dinner, \$45 credit card, \$40 cash or check. Information, registration: [benedictinn.org/programs](http://benedictinn.org/programs).

317-788-7581, [benedictinn.org](http://benedictinn.org).

## December 6

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

## December 8

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, [oldenburgfranciscancenter.org](http://oldenburgfranciscancenter.org).

## December 11

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Movie Night at Fatima: The Nativity Story**,

5-9 p.m., includes dinner, popcorn, refreshments, \$16. Registration: [ftm.retreatportal.com/events](http://ftm.retreatportal.com/events), 317-545-7681, [lcoons@archindy.org](mailto:lcoons@archindy.org).

## Dec. 12, 13, 14

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Advent Days of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40 per day, includes room, lunch and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$30 per night, dinner additional \$10 per meal. Registration: [ftm.retreatportal.com/events](http://ftm.retreatportal.com/events), 317-545-7681 or [lcoons@archindy.org](mailto:lcoons@archindy.org).

## December 13

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes private room for the day and lunch; spiritual direction available for additional \$30, must

be scheduled in advance. Information, registration: [benedictinn.org/programs](http://benedictinn.org/programs), 317-788-7581, [benedictinn@benedictinn.org](mailto:benedictinn@benedictinn.org).

## December 16

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Organ Workshop and Concert**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT, recital at 3 p.m., Nolan Snyder presenting, \$55. Registration: [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats).

## December 24-26

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Christmas Celebration at Saint Meinrad Archabbey**, opportunity to join monastic community in their Christmas Eve and Christmas Day prayer and liturgies in the archabbey church, fellowship and socials with monks and other guests, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats). †

## Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Jr. to be performed on Dec. 1-3 in Indianapolis

Agape Theater Company, formerly a ministry Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, will be performing *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Jr.* at Theater at the Fort, 8920 Otis Ave., in Indianapolis, from Dec. 1-3.

*Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Jr.* is a family-friendly play based on the popular song and television special. It will be performed by Agape Theater Company's cast of youth actors.

The Agape Theater Company strives to help performers grow in confidence and character. Within a loving community, they work to create

high quality theater productions that are good family entertainment. Their shows help young people strengthen their performing arts skills while also reinforcing their self-control, teamwork, diligence and patience.

The show will be performed at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 1 and 2, and at 3 p.m. on Dec. 3. Tickets are \$5 for children and \$10-\$15 for adults. There is a small service fee when purchasing tickets online.

Tickets can be purchased at [tinyurl.com/RudolphAgape](http://tinyurl.com/RudolphAgape). More information on Agape Performing Arts Company can be found at [agapetheatercompany.com](http://agapetheatercompany.com). †

## St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright will offer drive-through Christmas light display

"Bright Lights: Drive-Thru Christmas Light Display" will be offered at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, 23455 Gaven Lane, in Bright, between 6-10 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Dec. 1-Jan. 6.

The display will focus on the joy, hope and message of Christ's birth. There is no charge for the experience.

For more information, call 812-512-1941 or send an e-mail to [bright-lightsdcc@gmail.com](mailto:bright-lightsdcc@gmail.com). †

## Wedding Anniversaries

**NATHAN AND JUDY (ALLGEIER) WUESTEFELD**, members of St. Peter Parish in Franklin County, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 3.

The couple was married in St. Nicholas Church in Ripley County on Nov. 3, 1973.

They have two children: Tina Werner and Tim Wuestefeld.

The couple also has three grandchildren. †



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



# The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



## Joy and humor are among the best gifts we can offer God

At the end of the feature-length documentary *Pope Francis: A Man of His Word*, the Holy Father encourages everyone who serves God's people to smile and have a good sense of humor.

Joy "is the best witness we can offer to God's holy faithful people, whom we are called to serve and accompany on their pilgrimage toward the encounter with the Father," the pope tells us.

Speaking about the members of religious orders, the pope, who is a member of the Jesuits, says: "The joyful witness of consecrated men and women comes in many forms, especially through a sense of humor.

"It is so sad to see consecrated men and women who have no sense of humor, who take everything seriously," Pope Francis said. "To be with Jesus is to be joyful; it is also to have the capacity that holiness gives us to have this sense of humor."

Pope Francis' various solemn pronouncements have often been named with some variant of joy: from the "Joy of the Gospel" to the "Joy of Love." Indeed, his apostolic exhortation on the call to holiness in today's world is aptly titled "*Gaudate et Exultate*" ("Rejoice and Be

Glad"). This underscores the idea that being happy, really happy, is a response to the good news of Jesus Christ.

As St. Matthew tells us, the magi—wise and learned foreigners who searched for Jesus without fully understanding what they were looking for—"rejoiced with exceedingly great joy" (Mt 2:10) when they discovered the star that led them to Bethlehem. There is something about the encounter with Jesus that occasions profound joy.

Not surprisingly, there is a section of the pope's apostolic exhortation "*Gaudate et Exultate*" with the subhead "Joy and a Sense of Humor," where he expands on this idea.

"Far from being timid, morose, acerbic or melancholy, or putting on a dreary face, [the original Spanish uses a term that might well be translated as 'sourpuss'], the saints are joyful and full of good humor" (#122).

The pope mentions St. Thomas More, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Philip Neri as examples of joyful saints. St. Philip, known as the Apostle of Rome, was a 16th-century priest known for his cheerfulness and jests. His joy was something more than natural gaiety of

character, outbursts of humor or vivacity and high spirits. It was something supernatural, and all the people he served were struck by the radiance and exultation which the presence of the Holy Spirit produced in Philip. We are told again and again that Philip Neri was "always joyful, even in his illnesses."

St. Thomas More, an English Catholic lawyer and martyr, died with a jest on his lips. He told his executioner on the way to the chopping block: "See me safe up; for in coming down, I can shift for myself."

Pope Francis quotes from a prayer attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas: "Grant me, O Lord, good digestion, and also something to digest. Grant me a healthy body, and the necessary good humor to maintain it. ... Grant me, O Lord, a good sense of humor. Allow me the grace to be able to take a joke and to discover in life a bit of joy, and to be able to share it with others."

Far from being grim or overly serious, the pope tells us, saints are light-hearted and "able to discover in life a bit of joy." Pope Francis comments, "Hard times may come when the cross casts its shadow, yet nothing can destroy the

supernatural joy that adapts and changes, but always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved."

Christian joy is usually accompanied by a sense of humor. The saints are joyful and full of good humor—far from being sourpusses who put on a dreary face. This is an amazing truth, given what many saints had to endure in their efforts to follow Jesus and care for his wounded and oppressed people.

True joy greatly exceeds the superficial self-gratifications that we pursue in our search for happiness. In fact, the holy women and men we call saints were not engaged in the quest for worldly happiness or self-satisfaction. They freely embraced suffering and hardship for the sake of the Gospel. In return, they were given abundant joy.

To be a saint is to be someone who is close to God. "The closer the Lord is to us," Pope Francis says, "the more joy we feel; the farther away he is, the more sadness we feel."

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

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

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

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

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

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

## La alegría y el humor están entre los mejores regalos que podemos ofrecer a Dios

Al final del largometraje documental *El Papa Francisco: un hombre de palabra*, el Santo Padre anima a todos los que sirven al pueblo de Dios a sonreír y a tener buen sentido del humor.

La alegría "es el mejor testimonio que podemos ofrecer al pueblo fiel de Dios, al que estamos llamados a servir y acompañar en su peregrinación hacia el encuentro con el Padre," nos dice el Papa.

Al hablar de los integrantes de las órdenes religiosas, el Papa, que es jesuita, dice: "El testimonio alegre de los consagrados y consagradas se manifiesta de muchas formas, especialmente a través del sentido del humor.

"Es muy triste ver a hombres y mujeres consagrados que no tienen sentido del humor, que se lo toman todo en serio"— afirmó el Sumo Pontífice—. "Por favor: estar con Jesús es estar alegres, es también tener la capacidad que nos da la santidad de tener sentido del humor."

Los diversos pronunciamientos solemnes del Papa Francisco a menudo llevan por título alguna combinación con la palabra alegría: desde la "*Alegría del Evangelio*" hasta la "*Alegría del Amor*." De hecho, su exhortación apostólica sobre el llamado a la santidad en el

mundo actual se titula acertadamente "*Gaudate et Exultate*" ("*Alegraos y regocijaos*"). Esto subraya la idea de que ser feliz, realmente feliz, es una respuesta a la buena nueva de Jesucristo.

Como nos cuenta san Mateo, los magos—extranjeros sabios y eruditos que buscaban a Jesús sin comprender del todo lo que buscaban—"se regocijaron mucho" (Mt 2:10) cuando redescubrieron la estrella que les condujo a Belén. Hay algo en el encuentro con Jesús que provoca una profunda alegría.

No en vano, hay una sección de la exhortación apostólica "*Gaudate et Exultate*" del Papa con el subtítulo "Alegría y sentido del humor," en la que amplía esta idea.

"Lo dicho hasta ahora no implica un espíritu apocado, triston, agriado, melancólico, o un bajo perfil sin energía. El santo es capaz de vivir con alegría y sentido del humor" (#122).

El Papa menciona a santo Tomás Moro, san Vicente de Paúl y san Felipe Neri como ejemplos de santos alegres. San Felipe, conocido como el Apóstol de Roma, fue un sacerdote secular del siglo XVI conocido por su alegría y sus bromas. Su alegría era algo más que la alegría natural de su carácter, arranques de humor o vivacidad y buen ánimo.

Era algo sobrenatural, y toda la gente a la que servía estaba impresionada por el resplandor y la exultación que la presencia del Espíritu Santo producía en Felipe. Se nos dice una y otra vez que Felipe Neri estaba "siempre alegre, incluso en sus enfermedades."

Santo Tomás Moro, abogado y mártir católico inglés, murió con una broma en los labios. Le dijo a su verdugo de camino a la guillotina: "Asegúrate de que suba bien arriba, porque para que baje no necesito ayuda."

El Papa Francisco cita una oración atribuida a santo Tomás de Aquino: "Concédeme, Señor, una buena digestión y también algo que digerir. Concédeme un cuerpo sano y el buen humor necesario para mantenerlo. ... Concédeme, Señor, un buen sentido del humor. Permíteme la gracia de poder aceptar una broma y descubrir en la vida un poco de alegría, y poder compartirla con los demás."

Lejos de ser sombríos o demasiado serios, nos dice el Papa, los santos son desenfadados y "capaces de descubrir en la vida un poco de alegría." El Papa Francisco comenta que "Hay momentos duros, tiempos de cruz, pero nada puede destruir la alegría sobrenatural, que se adapta y se transforma, y siempre

permanece al menos como un brote de luz que nace de la certeza personal de ser infinitamente amado, más allá de todo."

La alegría cristiana suele ir acompañada de sentido del humor. Los santos son alegres y están llenos de buen humor, lejos de ser unos amargados que fruncen el ceño. Esta es una verdad asombrosa teniendo en cuenta lo que muchos santos tienen que soportar en sus esfuerzos por seguir a Jesús y cuidar de su pueblo herido y oprimido.

La verdadera alegría supera con creces las autogratificaciones superficiales que perseguimos en nuestra búsqueda de la felicidad. De hecho, las mujeres y los hombres que llamamos santos no se dedicaron a la búsqueda de la felicidad mundana o la propia satisfacción sino que abrazaron libremente el sufrimiento y las dificultades por el bien del Evangelio. A cambio, recibieron abundante alegría.

Ser santo es ser alguien que está cerca de Dios. "Cuanto más cerca está el Señor de nosotros—dice el Papa Francisco— más alegría sentimos; cuanto más lejos está, más tristeza sentimos."

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

## ‘Sacred Places’ exhibit focuses on world’s religions, including Christianity

By John Shaughnessy

As the director of collections for The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, Chris Carron had a key role in developing its new exhibit, “Sacred Places,” focusing on religious traditions from around the world.

Here is an edited version of an interview with Carron about the exhibit—and how the Catholic faith and Christianity are represented in the exhibit that is on display until April 7, 2024.

**Q. Talk about the hopes of The Children’s Museum for the “Sacred Places” exhibit—and what led the museum to want to make it a leading focus.**

**A.** “It is our hope that, by showcasing some of the world’s sacred places, we will foster curiosity and understanding of religious traditions so that people may better understand one another and communicate in thoughtful and respectful ways. The Children’s Museum has a history of tackling topics that are important to our community and of addressing subjects, like religion, that sometimes are avoided in public venues.

“We recognize the diversity of experiences of our audiences and wanted to provide a safe place for adults as well as families with children to see their own traditions and learn about and discuss the traditions of their neighbors.”

**Q. What are some of the distinctive features of the exhibit?**

**A.** “The exhibit includes stories and artifacts from more than two dozen sacred places representing a wide range of religious traditions around the world. Six of those [Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Rapa Nui] are treated as larger immersive environments with artifacts, large photo murals and interactives.”

**Q. How did you decide upon The Beheading of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Madaba, Jordan, as a sacred place to represent Christianity?**

**A.** “In creating this exhibit, we wanted real people to share their stories about what their sacred place means to them. So, we traveled across the country and around the world to interview young people about their sacred places.

“To capture these interviews, we teamed up with a company called CyArk, which produces photography and video stories across the globe and shares with us a respect and compassion for others’ cultural traditions. Their previous work documenting Byzantine Christian architecture and mosaics in Madaba, Jordan, had introduced them to the vibrant Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic communities there, which they introduced to us.”

**Q. How did you come upon 27-year-old Jude Anton Twal as a good person to represent Christianity and the Catholic faith?**

**A.** “Jude is an architect and consultant for an archaeological museum in Madaba, whom our partners from CyArk had worked with before. They knew her



To develop its “Sacred Places” exhibit, staff members of The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis traveled to different parts of the world to understand young people’s religious and spiritual beliefs. Chris Carron, the museum’s director of collections, visited Rapa Nui, Chile, to understand more about the stone statues, called moai, that represent ancestors and their importance in the spiritual traditions and daily life of this Pacific Island community, which is also known as Easter Island. (Photo courtesy of The Children’s Museum)

to be not only good at her job, but also articulate about the Christian community there. During our team’s expedition to Madaba, we found that she was an active member of her parish [The Beheading of St. John the Baptist] who was willing to help our American visitors understand how she feels about her church and her faith.” †

## JOURNEY

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Twal came to the attention of The Children’s Museum staff members as they scoured the world looking for faith-filled people who represent their religions. The museum worked with a non-profit organization called CyArk that digitally records and shares the heritage of the world’s cultures. A friend who works for CyArk invited Twal to join a meeting with staff members of the museum.

“During our team’s expedition to Madaba, we found that she was an active member of her parish who was willing to help our American visitors understand how she feels about her Church and her faith,” says Chris Carron, director of collections at The Children’s Museum.

Twal was thrilled to participate, mainly because it meant her city and her parish church would be representing Christianity.

“I immediately jumped on the opportunity as both Christianity and Madaba play a great deal in my life,” she says. “For one represents who I am, and the other tells the story of where I come from. When I was informed that Madaba was indeed chosen, I was incredibly proud and ecstatic.”

What made it even more special to her was seeing the respect that was given to the way she and other Christians in her homeland live their faith.

“I am not generalizing here, but for most of us if not all of us Middle Eastern Christians, our faith is not

just how we identify religiously but how we identify in general,” Twal says. “It is how we represent ourselves to the world, how we view the world, how we interact with others. To say that our faith is only a small part of us is simply not true. At least in my case, it isn’t.”

Twal also appreciates the reverence shown toward her parish church, The Beheading of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.

“The church and the parish are simply other names for home,” she says. “It has raised me, alongside my parents. To have the church featured in the exhibit was impeccable. The church is located at the highest point in the city, and it is the center point of the Latin Patriarchate school.

“So, when I wasn’t learning in my school next to the church, I was going to Mass every Wednesday during our religious class or every Sunday. And if I wasn’t playing after hours in the school’s courtyards, I would be climbing the church’s steeple with my friends to just hang out at the very top. So, the church was not just the center point of my school but the center point in my life.”

Still, she stresses, “It is important to know that my parish is not limited to one church, but to the denomination as a whole. I am only but one of Christ’s many children.”

A part of the exhibit that focuses on Twal’s life of faith shows her proclaiming the readings during a Mass.

“When I come to church, it’s the only place where I feel I can actually unburden myself,” she is quoted as saying in the exhibit. “I can talk to God silently, and he listens, even though I’m not talking out loud. I’m

talking in my mind, but there’s actually someone in the receiving end that I can feel comfortable enough to share my problems with. That’s why it feels calming to me.”

In an interview with *The Criterion* later, Twal added, “Every time I go to [Mass], I just gaze upon the painting and symbols above the altar; especially when I am walking down the nave to receive holy Communion. I admit I get anxious having to walk among a sea of people, but the minute I lift my eyes and take in the scenery, it’s as if I lost all my troubles and worries at that time. And I would be in a serene state for the rest of the day.

“That feeling alone was and still is big enough to be a catalyst in my journey of faith.”

It’s a faith journey that now includes an unlikely and unexpected trip from Madaba to Indianapolis—a faith journey which she always makes with one constant companion.

“My relationship with Jesus is an extremely private one,” she says. “I do not normally share such an intimate part of my life with anyone, but if I were to describe it, it is that of a father and his daughter.

“It’s where I share my thoughts and feelings without feeling pressured or judged, where I can expect love and protection and ask for guidance whenever I need it. Sometimes, I do feel that he drew the short end of the stick. Because no matter how much I try, I could never be able to give him as much as he gives me.”

(The “Sacred Places” exhibit at The Children’s Museum continues through April 7, 2024. For ticket information, visit [www.childrensmuseum.org/visit/buy-tickets](http://www.childrensmuseum.org/visit/buy-tickets).) †

## PRESENCE

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“As I’m westbound, I just assume that the black van is just ahead of me,” says Waechter, a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville. “I’m looking as far as my headlights can go, watching the snow swirl around. It’s cold, and the wind is blowing against me hard. I’ve got this old truck, and I’m just fighting the whole thing, trying to get westbound.”

Waechter scanned the shoulder of the highway, but he didn’t see any vehicles. Yet he heard the voice again, “Stop for the black van.”

“I look across the road, in the dark, on the eastbound side, and there’s a big, old Ford, full-size, black van sitting over there—no lights, no nothing,” he recalls. “I didn’t even let up on the accelerator pedal. I just kept on going. I said, ‘That’s on the eastbound side. There’s a lot of people on the eastbound side. I’m westbound, I’m late, I’m tired, I’m hungry. I ain’t got time for this nonsense.’

“So, I truck a little bit longer, and the

voice gets louder, ‘Go up to next exit, get off, go across and go back on the eastbound side.’

“OK, OK, I’ll be obedient to the voice. I get off, cross over, get back on the interstate eastbound, finally see the black van in my headlights and pull up behind it. Throw my four-ways [flashers] on, get my flashlight out, put my jacket on, hop out, walk up to the van, shine my light inside—and it’s empty!”

Standing there in the snow and the cold, Waechter felt the anger boiling up inside him.

“I’m not a happy camper. I’m late. I got to go. I get back in the truck. The next exit is only a mile down the road. So, I get off, go across again and come back over. I’m westbound again where I was 20 minutes ago. Lost all this time. I’m looking over at the black van and saying all my expletives about what just went on.”

Yet as he turned his gaze back to the westbound highway, he was stunned and overwhelmed by what he saw.

“There are three little figures, walking

backward in the wind. You can’t hardly see them in the dark. The wind is eating them up. The voice says, ‘There they are. Pick them up.’”

Waechter pulled his truck to the side of the road. In the moments that followed, he learned that the three figures were a 16-year-old boy, his 14-year-old sister and their 12-year-old cousin.

Waechter’s voice gets increasingly emotional as he shares the rest of the story.

“They had crossed the interstate from the time I had passed, walked through the snow in the middle of the interstate, came across, and were walking the 6 miles back to that exit.

“I opened the door in my big old Peterbilt and said, ‘Get on in here.’ They had been to some kind of church service, and they had tiny jackets on. They got settled in, and they said, ‘Thank you for stopping, sir. We prayed and prayed and prayed, but nobody would stop. So we thought we would walk back to Peoria.’”

Waechter pauses for a long time at this point.

“I get emotional,” he finally says. “There’s no way they could have made it. It was 5 below zero, windchill 20 below.”

He turned the heater up as high as it would go and drove them to the next exit so they could call their parents.

Now 76, Waechter looks back across the years to that night and says, “I let them off, they thanked me, and I went on my way. I often thought it would be nice over the years if I ever would meet these kids again.”

The voice he heard that night has continued to instruct him at different moments through the years, Waechter says.

“Your own imagination always has this voice in your head,” he says. “But sometimes, it’s louder and more profound, and you realize that you didn’t just create this idea. Especially when the reality of it comes into play that it was real.

“It was the incessant power of the command. You know there’s a divine direction coming to you. You know that it’s of God. How could I not obey God when he’s manifested it to this degree?” †



# Love of worship, God's people mark 50 years of ministry for Father Stephen Jarrell

By Sean Gallagher

BEECH GROVE—For much of his 50 years of priestly life and ministry in the archdiocese, Father Stephen Jarrell has been a pioneer.

He served as the first director of the archdiocesan Office of Worship from 1976-1993. Then he was appointed to be the founding pastor of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood.

Later health challenges may have forced Father Jarrell to cut back on outward groundbreaking ministry. But he continued to be a pioneer, exploring more the spiritual depths of what it means to be a priest.

Through it all, it's been Father Jarrell's love of the Church's faithful and its worship that has guided him through 50 years as a priest.

His love of worship was nurtured when he grew up before the Second Vatican Council as a member of St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville.

"In Connersville, people cared for the liturgy," Father Jarrell recalled. "The Mass was never rushed. The priests didn't give it a short shrift. There was always music."

It was also while growing up in Connersville that the seeds of his priestly vocation were planted.

"There was an impulse, something that rang true with my heart," Father Jarrell said. "It wasn't a divine revelation, though. But I was very focused on it."

In the years just before Vatican II, many young men from St. Gabriel became archdiocesan seminarians.

"It was like it was OK to be a priest," Father Jarrell said. "It was a very positive environment."

That encouragement continued through his years of priestly formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

"The call to the priesthood was always strong for me, pretty constant," Father Jarrell said. "I felt very supported through all my seminary days. I heard echoes of support not just from professors and spiritual directors, but also from peers."

It was during his years at Saint Meinrad, 1961-73, that the Church's worship underwent significant reform during and following Vatican II.

"At Saint Meinrad, everything was changing," Father Jarrell recalled. "I didn't feel, though, that everything was out of control. The monks really led the way, I think, in our country in terms of helping us make that transition better."

After Father Jarrell was ordained a

priest on May 20, 1973, he was charged with helping further that transition in the Church's worship across central and southern Indiana, serving immediately on the archdiocese's liturgical commission.

In 1976, he was appointed the first director of the then-new archdiocesan Office of Worship. He led workshops on liturgy in parishes across the archdiocese, often served as master of ceremonies for liturgies celebrated by the archbishop and organized major liturgies in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, including ordinations and chrisms Masses.

"It wasn't about me or me having something great to give people," Father Jarrell said. "There was always a sense of collaboration. My approach to pastoring and in teaching was to collaborate with others [in archdiocesan leadership] and also with folks in the audience."

This focus on collaboration was necessary in Father Jarrell's next assignment, as the founding pastor of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, a ministry he was given in 1993.

Father Jarrell recalled meeting with new parishioners in a public library since the fledgling faith community had no property or buildings yet.

"You could tell that these people were super-committed to making this work," he said. "They were so much together in making it happen. And we got to know each other. I'd never had an experience of bonding quite like that."

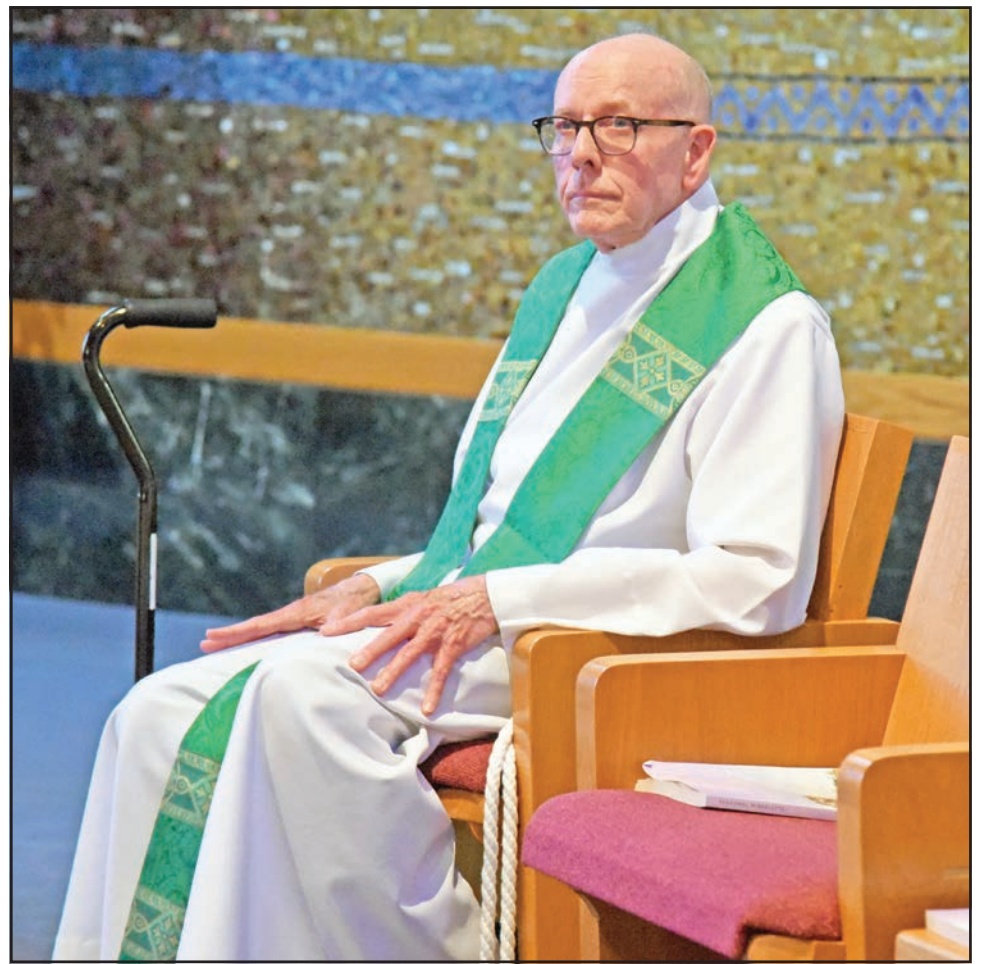
In 2003, Father Jarrell was appointed pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, with shepherding Annunciation Parish in Brazil being added to his responsibilities two years later.

On Jan. 10, 2007, Father Jarrell was severely injured in a car accident. Immediately, this very active priest had to adjust to being cared for by others.

"The shepherd of the flock was tended to by the sheep," he said. "It was a role reversal. I was laid up for three-and-a-half months."

Parishioners made meals for Father Jarrell and took him to medical appointments.

While serving as pastor of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis from 2010



Retired Father Stephen Jarrell listens to a reading proclaimed while concelebrating a July 11 Mass in the chapel of Envive Healthcare of Beech Grove where he lives. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

until his retirement in 2017, Father Jarrell experienced a loss of strength and growing balance problems due to neuropathy in his legs.

More recently, he's begun to

suffer from the nerve disorder Huntington's chorea.

This has led Father Jarrell to now live at Envive Healthcare of Beech Grove, a retirement facility and nursing home previously known as St. Paul Hermitage.

The limitations his health has placed on his priestly ministry have not dampened his love

for his vocation and the fulfillment he's experienced in it.

"My love for the people of God when I started out as a new priest existed," Father Jarrell said. "But I didn't

know the depth of it. It's just like in a marriage. Over the years, I think I've opened my heart to allowing the Lord to love me more deeply, especially when I was weak, vulnerable and dependent. I also welcomed the love from God's people, too."

Father Jarrell shared words of encouragement for men considering a possible call to the priesthood in their own lives.

"I often think of the words of our Lord from the Bible, 'Do not be afraid' (Lk 12:32), Father Jarrell said. "So often today, we live in a world where so much is mechanized and planned. We're trying to predict everything. That's not how it works with God in the life of faith—in the life of a priest or in life in a marriage."

"If we're in love, we have to learn how to leap into the unknown and to trust God and each other."

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

**'Over the years, I think I've opened my heart to allowing the Lord to love me more deeply, especially when I was weak, vulnerable and dependent. I also welcomed the love from God's people, too.'**

—Father Stephen Jarrell

## Caritas establishes 'humanitarian bridge' for hurricane-stricken Acapulco

(OSV News)—The morning after Hurricane Otis stormed through Acapulco as a Category 5 monster, Father Leonardo Morales surveyed the damage and saw total destruction.

"It looked like a war zone," Father Morales, archdiocesan Caritas director, said in WhatsApp messages shared with OSV News. "It hit everyone."

People in Acapulco have been left to pick up the pieces after Hurricane Otis battered the already down-on-its-luck tourist destination. The storm made landfall on Oct. 25 as the strongest hurricane to hit Mexico's Pacific Coast with winds reaching 165 mph.

Caritas chapters across Mexico have established collection centers and sent donations to Acapulco, which was left incommunicado after the storm and so badly battered that electricity still hasn't been fully restored.

CoreLogic, which models catastrophic risks, estimated the insurable damage in Acapulco at between \$10 billion and \$15 billion, while some 63% of buildings on the city's tourist strip were damaged, according to a satellite analysis by Copernicus Emergency Management System.

Many of Acapulco's residents lived in poor neighborhoods of self-built dwellings, which were obliterated in the storm, according to clergy familiar with the city. The situation has been aggravated by businesses being unable to open amid shortages of water and electricity—and many stores having been looted after the storm.

As of Nov. 6, the death toll stood at 47 with 56

missing, according to the Mexican government.

The Archdiocese of Acapulco has provided spiritual support and started celebrating Mass daily, though many parish churches remain damaged. It also has established three collection centers for receiving supplies from other parts of Mexico—including the Cristo Rey Cathedral, which had its roof ripped off—along with nine parish soup kitchens.

"Help is arriving from Caritas chapters in other states," said Father Morales.

At least 100 tons of aid have been delivered to the Diocese of Chilpancingo-Chilapa, some 65 miles north of Acapulco, according to Father José Filiberto Velázquez, diocesan director of social ministries. In the touristy city torn into pieces, every basic necessity is urgently needed, including clean water.

But getting assistance into Acapulco is no easy task. Father Velázquez traveled to Acapulco the morning after the hurricane struck—a journey that took eight hours rather than the normal 90 minutes as mudslides had closed the highway—to contact his Caritas colleagues and determine a plan of action.

Caritas donations arrive first in Chilpancingo, capital of Guerrero state, due to a lack of storage space in Acapulco, then are taken to the port city in small vehicles to avoid security issues such as looting and the difficulties of entering the area with large vehicles.

"Chilpancingo-Chilapa has become a humanitarian bridge for everything en route, volunteers, supplies, all of it," Father Velázquez told OSV News.

The needs in Acapulco are enormous, he added,

explaining, "It's a port city, and its main source of employment is tourism. None of that is functioning now. Many people have already left."

Mexico's bishops have called for solidarity with Acapulco and urged generosity.

"In Mexico, we have always shown solidarity after cyclones and earthquakes. People participate," Bishop Salvador Rangel told OSV News from Acapulco, where he was helping with relief efforts. Bishop Rangel led the Diocese of Chilpancingo-Chilapa prior to his retirement in 2022.

The response comes amid criticism of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has yet to visit Acapulco and used his morning press conference the day after the hurricane to speak of a poll purportedly showing him having a high approval rating.

"It's as if Acapulco has been orphaned," Bishop Rangel said. "The storm hit everyone, rich and poor."

López Obrador has announced a relief plan of 61 billion pesos (roughly \$3.4 billion), though his party in Congress has declined to approve additional funding for Acapulco in the 2024 budget. The president also announced plans to have the military deliver all assistance—to the exclusion of civil society, which he criticized in his press conference—though assistance from nongovernmental groups has arrived in Acapulco.

"A stronger, firmer response is needed" with the government and civil society working together, Bishop Rangel said. "The government isn't going to do everything." †

# Archbishop reflects on importance of sacred Scripture at Spanish Bible conference, recognizes ecclesial movement

Criterion staff report

More than 150 people gathered on Sept. 30 at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis to participate in a Bible conference in Spanish during which Archbishop Charles C. Thompson presented a talk about the history of the Bible and the importance of the study of sacred Scripture in the life of the Church.

He also recognized members of the Apostles of the Word movement for their service to Hispanic families in the archdiocese's evangelization and catechesis mission. "Sacred Scripture is the discourse of God, as it is written under the breath of the Holy Spirit that the Church transmits to us in its entirety, the word of God that has been sent to the Apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit," Archbishop Thompson said in his presentation.

The archbishop also reminded those in attendance of the actions of a trinitarian God, who does not speak for himself but for a people sharing the word that is transmitted through the action of the third person of the Holy Trinity.

The Apostles of the Word (*Apostoles de la Palabra*) movement, whose name highlights its primary mission, promotes biblical study and catechesis for Latinos through the word.

The program for adults is present in the archdiocese in several parish communities and offers great support for the Church's catechetical and evangelization ministries for Spanish-speaking families.

From St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish on the west side of Indianapolis to St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville to St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour in the southern part of the state, the Apostles of the Word movement shares its evangelizing mission. Its goal is to leave footprints and sow seeds of faith in our Hispanic communities.

The approach is similar to what is found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: "The Holy Spirit is truly the protagonist of the entire ecclesiastical mission. He is the one who guides the Church along the paths of mission. It continues and develops in the course of history the mission of Christ himself, who was sent to evangelize the poor ... driven by the Holy Spirit, it must advance along the same path along which Christ advanced" (#852).

Through this movement, the Hispanic community brings to life the words of Pope Francis in his ongoing exhortation to reach out to the margins of society. The chapter of "Apostles" recently begun in Seymour hopes to evangelize new immigrants who are already participating in the community, in such a way that it leads to integration with the parish through the knowledge of the word of God.

The Apostles of the Word was founded by Father Flaviano Amatulli Valente, an Italian priest, on July 2, 1978, in Mexico. It received diocesan approval from the bishop of San Andrés Tuxtla, Mexico, on March 31, 1980, and was established as a public association of faithful in 1990. Its motto is: "A missionary family at the service of the Catholic Church."

"Like all Christians, we must necessarily read, listen, study, discern, apply and proclaim the word of God. To do so, one must know the word of God. The Bible, of course, is not just a book among books," Archbishop Thompson noted. "It is both a book and a collection or canon of books, letters and hymns."

The archbishop urged everyone present to continually study sacred Scripture, where God speaks to us in very particular ways.



Juanita Barrera, left, Luis Xalanda and Reynaldo Gerardo, all members of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, are pictured on Sept. 30 during a Bible conference at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson; Ken Ogorek, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis; and Felix Navarrete, the archdiocese's Hispanic ministry coordinator. The St. Gabriel parishioners are members of the board of *Apostoles de la Palabra* (Apostles of the Word) and were recognized for their service to Hispanic families in the archdiocese's evangelization and catechesis mission. (Photo by Mike Krokos)

Conference participants were reminded "the Church insistently recommends to all its faithful ... the assiduous reading of Scripture so that they may acquire the supreme knowledge of Jesus Christ" (#2653). They were also reminded that their prayer life must be accompanied by reading the Bible in such a way so that they can hear the voice of God.

Father John Kamwendo, pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Parish, began the event by leading eucharistic adoration. †

## El arzobispo reflexiona sobre la importancia de las Sagradas Escrituras en una conferencia bíblica en español y reconoce el movimiento eclesial

Reportaje del personal del *The Criterion*

Más de 150 personas se reunieron el 30 de septiembre en la parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel de Indianápolis para participar en una conferencia bíblica en español durante la cual el arzobispo Charles C. Thompson presentó una ponencia sobre la historia de la Biblia y la importancia del estudio de las Sagradas Escrituras para la vida de la Iglesia.

También reconoció la labor de los miembros del movimiento Apóstoles de la Palabra por su servicio a las familias hispanas en la misión de evangelización y catequesis de la Arquidiócesis.

"Las Sagradas Escrituras son el discurso de Dios tal como fue escrito bajo el soplo del Espíritu Santo y que la Iglesia nos transmite en su totalidad; la palabra de Dios que ha sido enviada a los Apóstoles por Cristo Jesús y el Espíritu Santo," afirmó el arzobispo Thompson en su presentación.

El arzobispo recordó también a los asistentes el proceder de un Dios trinitario, que no habla por sí mismo, sino en nombre de un pueblo que comparte la palabra transmitida por la acción de la tercera persona de la Santísima Trinidad.

El movimiento Apóstoles de la Palabra, cuyo nombre destaca su misión principal, promueve el estudio bíblico y la catequesis para nuestros hermanos y hermanas latinos a través de la palabra.

El programa para adultos está presente en varias comunidades parroquiales de la Arquidiócesis y ofrece un gran apoyo a los ministerios de catequesis y evangelización de la Iglesia para las familias hispanohablantes.

Desde la parroquia de San Gabriel Arcángel, en la zona oeste de Indianápolis, hasta la de San José, en Shelbyville, y la de San Ambrosio, en Seymour, en el sur del estado, el movimiento de los Apóstoles de la Palabra comparte su misión evangelizadora. Su objetivo es dejar huella y sembrar semillas de fe en nuestras comunidades hispanas.

Este enfoque se asemeja a lo que se describe en el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*: "El Espíritu Santo es en verdad el protagonista de toda la misión eclesial. Él es quien conduce la Iglesia por los caminos de la misión. Ella continúa y desarrolla en el curso de la historia la misión del propio Cristo, que fue enviado a evangelizar a los pobres; impulsada por el Espíritu Santo, debe avanzar por el mismo camino por el que avanzó Cristo" (#852).

A través de este movimiento, la comunidad hispana da vida a las palabras del Papa Francisco en su continua exhortación a llegar a los márgenes de la sociedad. El capítulo de "Apóstoles" recientemente creado en Seymour espera evangelizar a los nuevos inmigrantes que ya participan en la comunidad, de tal forma que

los lleve a integrarse en la parroquia a través del conocimiento de la palabra de Dios.

El Padre Flaviano Amatulli Valente, sacerdote italiano, fundó los Apóstoles de la Palabra el 2 de julio de 1978 en México. El 31 de marzo de 1980 recibió la aprobación diocesana del obispo de San Andrés Tuxtla, México, y en 1990 se constituyó como asociación pública de fieles. Su lema es: "Una familia misionera al servicio de la Iglesia católica."

"Como todos los cristianos, debemos necesariamente leer, escuchar, estudiar, discernir, aplicar y proclamar la palabra de Dios; y para ello, hay que conocerla. La Biblia, por supuesto, no es solamente un libro entre muchos otros"—señaló el arzobispo Thompson—. "Es a la vez un libro y una colección o canon de libros, cartas e himnos."

El arzobispo instó a todos los presentes a estudiar continuamente las Sagradas Escrituras, donde Dios nos habla de maneras muy particulares.

Recordó a los participantes que "La Iglesia recomienda insistentemente a todos sus fieles [...] la lectura asidua de la Escritura para que adquieran 'la ciencia suprema de Jesucristo' (#2653). También les recordó que su vida de oración debe ir acompañada de una lectura de la Biblia que les permita escuchar la voz de Dios.

El padre John Kamwendo, párroco de San Miguel Arcángel, comenzó el acto dirigiendo la adoración eucarística. †



Pope Francis greets a child during a meeting with youths from around the world called "Let Us Learn from Boys and Girls" in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican on Nov. 6. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

## POPE

continued from page 1

asked. After the children yelled, "No!" he asked, "Do you want to help?" to which they replied with enthusiasm, "Yes!"

The pope cut short his prepared speech in order to dedicate more time to questions from the children, who asked him about climate change, wars, his friends, his work habits and what he dreams about at night.

"I don't know what I dream because I am asleep!" he joked as the kids laughed. Sometimes, he said, he dreams about things he remembers when he was a child. "Dreaming is beautiful," he said, because

it shows something alive is stirring inside.

With each question, the pope had a tidbit of wisdom for the kids to remember, making them repeat each phrase a number of times.

His words of advice included: "Whoever destroys the Earth, destroys us." "Take care of nature because nature takes care of us." "Work gives us dignity." "Do not waste food." "Let's work for peace." "Peace is made with the heart and an outstretched hand." "Children's voices are needed" because "kids are messengers of peace." "When you are angry, drink a glass of water before you respond."

When a 9-year-old boy from Syria asked the pope, "Why do they kill

kids during a war and no one defends them?" the pope said, "This shows the wickedness of war."

That innocent civilians and children are killed in wartime, he said, "is cruelty," and he led the children in praying the Our Father for all children killed in wars.

He urged all the children to work for peace after a 12-year-old girl from Palestine asked whether there would be no more peace if World War III broke out.

"We have to work for peace," the pope said, asking everyone to wave to the girl so she could let the people back in Palestine know that everyone there said "Hello."

"Peace is beautiful!" the pope said, as the children repeated it loudly. †

# SIMPLY CATHOLIC

## ‘Veritatis Splendor’ is a reminder to turn to Christ to learn good and evil

By Bishop Donald J. Hying

First of two parts

(OSV News)—Promulgated on Aug. 6, 1993, by St. John Paul II, the encyclical letter “*Veritatis Splendor*” (“The Splendor of Truth”) is the holy pontiff’s articulation of Catholic moral principles.



Bishop Donald J. Hying

It views the moral life through the lens of the rich young man, who comes to Christ asking what he must do to inherit eternal life (Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-31; Lk 18:18-30).

This question of knowing what moral action to take is the fundamental response to an encounter with God and his word. Once a person comes to understand that God is his or her ultimate and supreme good, the discernment of knowing how to act in a way which is convergent with the true, good and beautiful becomes imperative.

Similar to the rich young man’s question, both the crowds who hear the preaching of St. John the Baptist in the desert and those who hear Simon Peter proclaiming the essential Gospel message, or *kerygma*, on Pentecost, are cut to the heart and respond with the same question: What must I do?

Jesus tells the young man to keep the commandments, reminding us that the Ten Commandments give us a fundamental moral road map to embrace the good and eschew evil.

Entrusted to Moses by God himself, the Ten Commandments are also a supernatural revelation of divine teaching to guide our moral decision-making. But they also point to the primacy of the natural law, written on the human heart. Man comes to know the good, both through the voice of conscience within himself and also through God’s word.

We, like the rich young man, need to turn to Christ to know good and evil.

St. John Paul reminds us that our ultimate purpose is to live for the praise of God’s glory. In this context, the moral life becomes the response to the gracious love of God, which has been made manifest in Jesus Christ in an absolute and saving way.

Guided by the Church’s authoritative magisterium, obliged to form his or her conscience in the truth and graced with the efficacious power of the sacraments, a Christian has the capacity to know the good and to act upon it.

We live in an age which diminishes or even denies the existence of absolutes, the human capacity to comprehend that truth, and the moral ability to live it. St. John Paul in contrast lovingly reminds us of our capacity for heroic sanctity and sacrificial goodness—if we cooperate with the grace offered us.

When the rich young man tells Christ that he has kept all the commandments and asks what he still lacks, the Lord invites him to sell all he has and to follow him.

This desire to go further in the moral life, to exceed the prescriptions of the law through a life of heroic charity and goodness, finds its expression in the Beatitudes, which the encyclical describes as “basic attitudes and dispositions in life” (#16).

John Paul II sees a complementarity between the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes. The Decalogue commands us to love God and to do no harm to our neighbor. The Beatitudes open us to the “horizon of perfection” (#16).

We can easily see the integrated beauty of the moral life exemplified in the lives of the saints, who show us the symmetry of the Ten Commandments and the Gospel as they poured their hearts out in radical, self-emptying love.

From the beginning of the Church, the Apostles and Church fathers lay out the intrinsic unity and harmony of faith and life for a Christian, expressed in particular moral actions. The unity and witness of the Church suffer damage, “not only by Christians who reject or distort the truths of faith, but also by those who disregard the moral obligations to which they are called by the Gospel,” St. John Paul wrote (#26).

We see the sad consequences of the disconnect between faith and life all around us, by those who reject all religious and moral principles and by those who seek to remain in the Church but redefine her teachings to match their life choices and relationships.

St. John Paul seeks to outline the principles necessary for “discerning what is contrary to sound doctrine” and to answer some fundamental questions: “What is man? What is the meaning and purpose of our life? What is good and what is sin? What origin and purpose do sufferings have? What is the way to attain true happiness? What are death, judgment and retribution after death? ... What is freedom and what is its relationship to the truth contained in God’s law? What is the role of conscience in man’s moral development?” (#30).

The divine revelation given to us by God and entrusted to the Church answers all of these questions. The moral law is the north star that guides us to salvation in Christ as we seek to embrace and live the good.

(Bishop Donald J. Hying is bishop of the Diocese of Madison, Wis. He previously served as bishop of the Diocese of Gary, Ind., from 2014-19.) †



St. John Paul II is depicted in a stained-glass window at Our Lady Help of Christians Church in the Staten Island borough of New York. The pontiff’s groundbreaking 1993 encyclical letter, “*Veritatis Splendor*” (“The Splendor of Truth”) articulates the principles of Catholic moral teaching. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)



An icon of Moses holding the tablets of the Ten Commandments is displayed in an exhibit on iconography at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. Catholic morality flows from the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes. (CNS photo by Nancy Wiehcek)

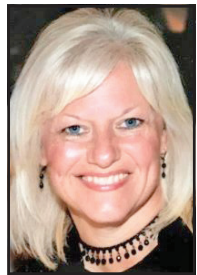


“The Sermon of the Beatitudes” (“*La sermon des beatitudes*”) is a watercolor over graphite produced by French artist James Tissot around 1900. The Beatitudes serve as a foundation of Catholic moral teaching. (OSV News photo/Brooklyn Museum)

Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

## Put your worry in God's hands and feel his peace

I recently spoke to a long-lost friend I haven't connected with in more than 20 years. While it was terrific catching up with her and learning all about her life, I couldn't help feeling sad after hanging up the phone.



She shared that one of her sons is a sophomore living away at college, and he is struggling mightily. She voiced

that when her kids hurt, so does she. She also divulged that she deals with very heightened anxiety which is only exacerbated with her son's issues.

Ultimately, she said she was putting it all in God's hands—but still she worries.

Does this sound familiar? It definitely could describe me at particular times in my life. How many times have I told myself and prayed that I was putting in God's hands whatever the person or situation was in my life—but, still holding on to my worry. As if I needed a Plan B. That's not at all putting it in God's hands.

While I still worry at times, which I believe is only human, I can honestly say I've worked hard to let go of anxiety. The truth is that worry does us no good. It does not solve any issue. In my experience, it only amplifies our fear and ultimately causes negative psychological

and even physical effects like depression, low immunity, high blood pressure and more. So why do we worry?

A quick perusal of *Psychology Today* online helped me understand a little more about what fuels anxiety. One reason I read made sense to me.

Our human bodies are designed to protect us from (real or perceived) threats. When we experience stress, a signal is sent to our brains, and we try to problem-solve the situation. As the anticipation of a future negative event churns in our brains, it is manifested as anxiety. But many times, it spirals into irrational thoughts.

Anxiety can also be caused by a loss of control, overthinking or sometimes, caring too much.

For instance, if we have children, we might be overly invested in their lives and/or adverse to them taking any risks.

But there's good news, and it comes straight from *the* good news shared with us in the Bible.

Jesus himself said in the Gospel of Matthew: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Mt 11:28-30). Seriously, how many times have we heard these words but continue to choose the burdened path of worry?

So how do we truly let go of anxiety? In St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians, he gives us the key: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:6-7).

As I have worked at reducing anxiety through the years, I have found a method that helps me. I do just what St. Paul suggests and replace my worried thoughts with prayer, thanking God for taking over the burden for me, and placing the issue or person in his hands to figure out.

And then I compartmentalize my worry. I tell myself I have put my worry in God's hands and now I need to let it go. In doing so, I place it somewhere at the recesses of my brain. If I feel it creeping again into the forefront, I repeat the prayer.

While it doesn't happen in every situation, I can honestly say that I have felt the peace of God wash over me in total surrender. And I am always left thinking, why did I worry? As if I could solve any issue on my own. God so obviously has this.

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

## A story of a childhood in poverty and the drive to a better future

In my ministry and profession, I have been fortunate and privileged to meet wonderful people who have overcome adversity in their lives, even at a young age.



I met Rita about 10 years ago. She grew up in Philadelphia. I was honored that she shared her childhood story with me and the struggles she and her family faced every day. Her family lived in dire poverty.

She told me that she remembered the smell of mold and mildew, that she would watch as her most valuable possessions were destroyed by them. The smell of decay was all around her.

She remembered being cold and being in houses with no heat or hot water. She told me her stepfather would use gray duct tape to wrap around the cords of the heater when they burned out so they could keep using it. Yes, it was a fire hazard, but who cared—the heater was keeping them warm. On occasion, she said she would hear a sizzle and a pop from the heater. Despite all their efforts, her family was still cold.

Rita said her family never had a working kitchen. Her mom would cook food at her grandparents' house and then take the food back to wherever they were staying. Most of the places she said they lived had no running water and were very unsanitary. She and her siblings would also go to her grandparents' house to take baths. She grew up thinking that it was OK to live like this.

As for food, she said she didn't starve, but she was hungry. They ate whatever they could afford. This is where the past affects the present. Today she is somewhat of a food hoarder—she is afraid of not having enough food for herself and her family.

Rita told me she knows what it feels like to not have the food that you need or want. She has to constantly remind

herself that she no longer lives that way. But it's the only way she's ever known.

Rita said she doesn't take showers, only baths, because she's used to it. If she does get cold or hungry, she told me she has learned how to deal with it. She describes that it is like an out-of-body experience.

She said that's what it's like when you are born into hunger and a dirty, unhealthy environment. This kind of living goes back in time, too. If an adult is used to living that way, it's likely because their childhood was the same way. You are stripped of your dignity. You are ashamed. Your soul feels like a bottomless pit. You feel less than human.

Rita is now in her 30s, and she is still haunted by the trauma and food insecurity. Her scars run long and deep—they will always be there. The long-lasting effects of trauma stick with you. But she refuses to let her past dictate her future.

Rita believes that her memories keep her humble. Even though she grew up in poverty, it doesn't mean she has to live in poverty now. Instead, she has been shaped by the idea that while you can't change the past, you can change the future.

Today, Rita is far from her childhood of mold, cold and hunger. But even though she has healed a great deal and doesn't live that way anymore, the effects of early poverty and trauma are still a part of her being.

They shape her into the woman she is today: a woman who is motivated and works hard to make sure that her daughter will have more opportunities than she had growing up.

Rita took what she experienced as a child and used that to drive her to be a better person for herself, her family and for others who live through the trauma of poverty.

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

Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

## Can the laity help revitalize the Church? Not if it isn't involved

There's a good chance that Russell Shaw is one of the most prolific contemporary authors and commentators on the Catholic Church that you may never have heard of.



Defiantly unretired, in just the past seven years, Russ has written *Catholics in America* (Ignatius), *Eight Popes and the Crisis of Modernity* (Ignatius), *The Life of*

*Jesus Christ* (OSV) and now *Revitalizing Catholic America: Nine Tasks for Every Catholic* (OSV).

In the course of his more than six decades in service to the Church and numerous Catholic institutions, he has authored 25 books and countless articles for a wide variety of Catholic and secular publications.

In addition, he has worked for several Catholic institutions, from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Catholic Educational Association to the Knights of Columbus. He was a longtime consultant to what was then called the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

If you haven't heard of him, it may well be because Russ does not bask in the limelight. At a time when everyone seems

to be pimping his or her "brand" and getting as many "clicks and eyeballs" as possible by tossing what Russ called "red meat" to the readers, he is none of that.

He isn't a flamethrower. He doesn't pander. He is what is becoming increasingly rare: a quiet, thoughtful observer of Catholic life today, understood through the prism of Catholic history.

His institutional experience may explain his tempered tone, but it may also explain the fact that he was a critic of clericalism long before Pope Francis. His book, *To Hunt, to Shoot, to Entertain* (the only tasks one bishop said were

See **ERLANDSON**, page 15

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

## Leap of faith: taking risks and beginning anew

I've been following the press around the most anticipated biography of the year: *Elon Musk* by Walter Isaacson.



I'm interested in the controversial innovator and also the author's writing process, which involved shadowing Musk for two years.

Isaacson, an acclaimed journalist, gained surprising access to Musk,

sitting in on high-profile meetings and negotiations, studying the billionaire in real-time as he made headlines and profits and mistakes.

One of the author's central talking points, articulated again and again in the press circuit, resonated with me: We have become a nation with more referees and fewer risktakers. In our beginning, in our glory days, the scales were tilted toward risktakers. These are the people who founded countries and churches, companies and movements.

By contrast, Isaacson says, modern culture is largely defined by referees. These are the folks who sit on the sidelines and offer commentary. They criticize, cancel and correct the risktakers—often from the comfort of their couch, through anonymous online profiles.

I've been reflecting on this claim through a Catholic lens. The prophets, the early Church fathers, the saints—it certainly holds true in religion. The people with the strongest convictions didn't think twice about taking risks. They were compelled by an undeniable drive.

The Catholics I most admire today take risks for their families, spurred by their faith. They see the perils and pitfalls of modern secular life and they dare to build something different.

That's what Karen and Tully Wyatt did. By any measure, the Catholic parents of four had the perfect life. They had built their dream home on a shady cul-de-sac in a coveted school district.

But Karen, now 41, a realtor and Beautycounter executive director, felt a stirring in her heart. She yearned for rural life.

Most days, she dismissed it. "It seemed like a retirement dream—or maybe it was just a dream altogether," she said. "There were too many unknowns, so many moving pieces that seemed impossible to fall into place. But my heart kept longing. We'd search Zillow and daydream."

In the fall of 2020, they visited friends in a small Kansas town. "We loved every minute—small-town values and a slower pace of life," Karen said.

She and Tully were convinced a smaller town would serve them well. Their hunt began around the same time they began homeschooling. Something new felt possible.

They found a Catholic hybrid school on a 100-acre farm and fell in love.

"Our oldest was 11, and if we wanted her to feel like she grew up in the country, we needed to make the move soon," Karen said.

The Wyatts now live on 52 sprawling acres set down a winding country road—complete with cows, chickens, a donkey, a horse and a big, fenced-in garden. Their ranch is an hour from downtown Dallas.

"Our new life feels worlds away, a turn-back-time lifestyle mostly spent outdoors with very little screentime," said Karen, a member of St. William Parish in Greenville, Texas. "Days pass slower. We spend hours on the porch watching the most beautiful

See **CAPECCHI**, page 15

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, November 12, 2023

- Wisdom 6:12-16
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Matthew 25:1-13

The Book of Wisdom supplies the first reading for Mass this weekend. The title itself of the book teaches a lesson.



As centuries passed, foreign influences virtually overwhelmed the Holy Land. Times perennially were hard. Understandably, many Jews left their ancestral homeland in search of better lives.

They emigrated to places where paganism prevailed.

In these new places, devoted Jews found themselves required to explain and defend their ancient belief in the one God of Israel.

This book, among others, arose from this process. The title simply makes the point that acceptance of the God of Israel is the wise choice, a logical choice, not a leap into fantasy.

An interesting literary technique in this book is that wisdom is personified, described as if this human attribute were a person, moving through the world, being available to humans.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians provides the second reading. This epistle was sent long ago to the Church in Thessalonica, now the city of Saloniki in modern Greece. The presence of Christians in Thessalonica at that time shows that the Church had already moved beyond its geographic origins and was becoming a factor in Europe, not only in Asia.

Paul makes several important theological points in this passage. First, he expressed the Christian thought that life endures after earthly death. Such a concept was not exclusive to the Hebrews. It was also present in an intellectually developed form in Greek philosophy. Christian thought contributed to this idea by insisting that eternal life was intimately connected with the reality of an individual person's acceptance or rejection of God in a person's earthly existence.

Second, Paul drew the link between Christ and each Christian. He favored no theme more. It was fundamental. Christ

lives forever. He overcame death. He rose. So, Christians who earnestly accept the Lord must die to share in this victory over death.

St. Matthew's Gospel is the source of the third reading. It is the familiar parable of the bridegroom and the foolish and wise virgins. Some commentators raise an interesting suggestion. Maybe the virgins, wise or otherwise, were symbols of disciples. (While not Apostles, women nonetheless were among the Lord's disciples.)

Persecuted, early Christians impatiently awaited the coming of Jesus, believing that when he returned in glory, they would be vindicated. Threatened in so many ways and frightened, they yearned for the second coming.

The parable teaches that Christ will indeed come again. Present times are passing. Eventually, maybe soon, the risen Lord will return in triumph.

## Reflection

While he or she lives, it is never too late for any sinner to repent. Millions of people have turned from sin to virtue in the last moments of earthly life. The Church is always prepared to aid in such conversions, lavishly allowing priests to absolve from almost anything at the hour of someone's death.

The Church, through Matthew, tells us this weekend to be prepared for whatever awaits us. We cannot with assurance predict the next minute. Something dramatic can happen suddenly—and often does.

It also urges us to live each day as a disciple. Be with Christ now, not just at the last minute. Being separated from God, waiting for some wonderful last-minute spiritual re-birth, is no way to live. Be at peace with God. "Life is too short," as they say.

This advice is so logical, but life for any of us can be daunting. Paul is clear. Hardships, disappointments, hurts and limitations are many, but their impact weakens if we are faithful to Jesus. Overcoming the toils and pains of earthly life, through living with the Lord, is rewarding and strengthening. †

## Daily Readings

### Monday, November 13

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, virgin  
Wisdom 1:1-7  
Psalm 139:1-10  
Luke 17:1-6

### Tuesday, November 14

Wisdom 2:23-3:9  
Psalm 34:2-3, 16-19  
Luke 17:7-10

### Wednesday, November 15

St. Albert the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church  
Wisdom 6:1-11  
Psalm 82:3-4, 6-7  
Luke 17:11-19

### Thursday, November 16

St. Margaret of Scotland  
St. Gertrude, virgin  
Wisdom 7:22b-8:1  
Psalm 119:89-91, 130, 135, 175  
Luke 17:20-25

### Friday, November 17

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, religious  
Wisdom 13:1-9  
Psalm 19:2-5  
Luke 17:26-37

### Saturday, November 18

The Dedication of the Basilicas of SS. Peter and Paul, Apostles  
St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, virgin  
Wisdom 18:14-16, 19:6-9  
Psalm 105:2-3, 36-37, 42-43  
Luke 18:1-8

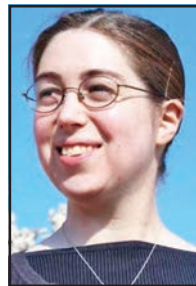
### Sunday, November 19

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31  
Psalm 128:1-5  
1 Thessalonians 5:1-6  
Matthew 25:14-30  
or Matthew 25:14-15, 19-21

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

## Church teaches that demonic possession is a real possibility

**Q**In watching *The Chosen*, I noted a couple of demonic episodes were included, as are in fact depicted in Scripture. No CGI effects were done to show the demons either going in or coming out of the victims, making the healed person seem to simply be someone with personality disorders.



What does the Church say today about demons? Are they real or were they ancient superstitions and misidentifications of what would today be called mental illness? (Indiana)

**A**The Church teaches that demonic possession, while rare, is certainly something that can happen.

In 1999, the rite of exorcism was the last liturgical ritual to be revised after the Second Vatican Council, but it's worth noting that this ritual is for what we call "major exorcisms," or exorcisms intended to release the afflicted from actual demonic possession (i.e., more or less

along the lines of the exorcisms we see portrayed in movies).

But in the Catholic Church, we also have "minor exorcisms," such as the prayers prayed over soon-to-be baptized infants and adult catechumens preparing to be received into the Church. Minor exorcisms are meant to strengthen the one seeking baptism against the very real powers of evil, with no presumption that the one receiving the minor exorcism is actually possessed.

Because of the reality of the demonic, today every diocese is

supposed to have a specially trained priest, appointed by the diocesan bishop, who serves as the diocesan exorcist.

That being said, it requires careful discernment on the part of the exorcist-priest to determine whether or not a true demonic possession is actually the source of a particular individual's suffering. As the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website's page on exorcism notes: "The exorcist is instructed to employ the utmost circumspection and prudence before proceeding to the rite. Throughout his ministry, an exorcist must establish a balance within his own mind between not believing too easily that the devil is responsible for what is manifesting, and attributing all possible manifestations solely to a natural, organic source." To that end, most dioceses in the United States have protocols which require an individual to have medical and psychiatric evaluations to rule out potential natural causes, before they can receive a major exorcism.

Finding a medical or mental health condition that could mimic demonic possession is one way to gain clarity that a person's suffering is not caused by the direct malevolence of a supernatural entity.

On the other hand, the introduction to the rite of exorcism lists some medically-unexplainable, positive "signs and symptoms" of demonic possession. They include afflicted people speaking and understanding foreign languages they never studied; revealing hidden knowledge or information they would have had no way of knowing; and demonstrating physical strength beyond what would be normal for their size and general condition.

True victims of possession will typically also have a history of dabbling in the occult, such as through fortune-telling, visiting psychic mediums, playing with Ouija boards or participating in New Age activities.

In the Bible, the bottom line we should always remember is that, whether in the cases of exorcisms or the cure of physical or mental illnesses, the message to us is the same—God has supreme authority over all that he has created, and he wishes salvation and healing for all his children.

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

## My Journey to God

### My Soul's Surprise

By Kevin Wagner

A Father's Love  
A Ruler's wrath  
A fear of Him  
Who'll judge my path

The ever-present  
And noble one  
And me the shameful  
Disobedient son

Lord give me strength  
And courage here  
Not doubt  
And unrelenting fear

But Lo! If I do good  
For those in need  
I'll see his face  
One day indeed

(Kevin Wagner is a member of St. Thomas the Apostle in Fortville. Photo: Shown here is a portion of the 17th-century painting, "The Return of the Prodigal Son," by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn.) (Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org.)



# 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.

**BARTON, Jr., John F.**, 72, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Oct. 24. Husband of Vanessa Meadows. Father of Heather Warnecke, Emily, Michael and Patrick Barton. Stepfather of Delaney, Logan, Ryan, Spencer and Wesley Moss. Grandfather of six.

**BLADES, Mark H.**, 82, All Saints, Dearborn County, Oct. 15. Father of Krista Flaugh, Nikki, Brad, Kevin and Mark Blades. Brother of Jerry Blades. Grandfather of eight.

**BOCKHOLD, Tim**, 54, St. Augustine, Leopold, Oct. 11. Husband of Tina Bockhold. Father of Jacqueline Trowbridge and Zayne Bockhold. Brother of Michele Peter, Kim Steen, Tonya Stillwell and Kevin Bockhold.

**BRADLEY, Mary Kathryn**, 80, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Oct. 28. Wife of Bob Bradley. Mother of Stephen and Warren Bradley. Grandmother of three.

**CLEARY, Joann**, 83, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Oct. 19. Wife of James Cleary. Mother of Sharon Cleary-Fanning, Angie Hansel, Pam Karsteter and Patricia Werner. Grandmother of 10.

**CONROY, Gerald L.**, 78, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Sept. 26. Father of Anthony Conroy. Brother of Mary Margaret Anderson, Eileen Carlow, Sue Howard, Katie and Francis Conroy. Grandfather of one.

**DEAK, Judith A.**, 84, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 18. Mother of Jane Jennings, Laurie, Dan, Michael and Paul Deak. Sister of Rosie Padgett and Basil



Pope Francis holds a bouquet of white roses as he visits the graves of members of British Commonwealth military units who died during and immediately after World War II and now rest in the Rome War Cemetery where the pope celebrated Mass on Nov. 2, All Souls Day. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Pflumm. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of six.

**EVANS, Leo T.**, 79, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Aug. 11. Father of Patty Jo, Mark and Michael Evans. Brother of James and John Evans. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of one.

**FAHEY, Dennis**, 67, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Sept. 29. Brother of Kathleen Fahey and Eileen McFadden. Uncle of several.

**FORTWENDEL, Hazel**, 93, St. Pius V, Troy, Oct. 27. Mother of Martha Cutrell, Annette Doherty, Cletus, Jr., Jerry, Tim and Tony Fortwendel. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of seven.

**GROSSMAN, Raymond F.**, 84, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Oct. 25. Husband of Paula Grossman. Father of Sharon Klepper, E. David, Richard

and Robert Freese and Douglas Grossman. Brother of Marian Beetz, Bert and George Grossman. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of seven.

**HAY, Paul**, 78, St. Michael, Cannelton, Oct. 9. Brother of Judy Herzog and Jim Hay.

**KRUER, Ralph**, 78, Holy Family, New Albany, Oct. 20. Husband of Diana Krue. Father of Greta Barker, Karen Bell, Carmen and Erik Krue. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of one.

**LORD, Heather H.**, 87, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 26. Wife of Dr. Thomas Lord. Mother of Holyn Koch, Courtney Schwab, Geoffrey and Gregory Lord. Sister of Scott McGill. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of two.

**MCDONOUGH, Frank F.**, 72, St. Louis, Batesville, Oct. 26. Husband of Louise McDonough. Father of Melissa Buettner, Karen, Marcus, Matthew and Steven McDonough. Brother of Gary, Louis and Ray McDonough. Grandfather of six.

**MEUNIER, Mary R. (Harpenau)**, 83, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Oct. 26. Mother of Karen Keinsley, Linda Van Hook and Kenneth Meunier. Sister of Anthony Harpenau. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 10.

**MILLER, Dorothy J.**, 93, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 19. Mother of Pam Haines, Deb Robertson and Mike Miller. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of seven.

**NETT, James**, 77, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Oct. 14. Husband of Mary Beth Nett. Father of Maggie Albright, Jon and Robert Nett. Brother of Mary Bloemer, Carl, Danny, David and Michael Nett. Grandfather of nine.

**RALSTON, Emily S.**, 34, St. Louis, Batesville, Oct. 16. Daughter of Keith and Lisa Ralston. Sister of David Ralston.

**REICHERT, E. Louis (Miller)**, 87, St. Mary, North Vernon, Oct. 27. Mother of Debbie Kubik, Cindy Taskey, Tina Walker, Susan, Rick and Shawn Miller. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of four.

**SCHLOEGL, Sr., Michael J.**, 82, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Oct. 14. Husband of Diane Schloegl. Father of Michelle Etter, Valerie Fleming, Reka Wrynn, Joe, Martin and Michael Schloegl, Jr. Brother of Donna Geraughty and Marion Schloegl. Grandfather of 17. Great-grandfather of nine.

**SMITH, Marilyn**, 94, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 7. Mother of Carolyn Keller and Janice

Ollis. Sister of Rachel Doyle, Eloise McCarty and Jerome Walker. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of six.

**THOMAS, Lowell**, 79, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Oct. 25. Husband of Marabeth Thomas. Father of Angela and Chris Thomas. Brother of Charles Thomas. Grandfather of five.

**TUOHY, John J.**, 97, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Oct. 15. Father of Mimi O'Leary and Phil Tuohy. Brother of Bernadette Cunningham. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of one.

**VESELS, Jr., William G.**, 90, St. Mary, New Albany, Oct. 3. Father of six. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of six.

**VOGES, Sr., Ronald J.**, 88, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 25.

Husband of Carol Jo Schaefer. Father of Mindy Meijer, Terry Scott and Ronnie Voges, Jr. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of seven.

**WILLS II, Larry L.**, 66, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Oct. 19. Brother of Karen Kinder, Mary Shaler and Patty Wills.

**WINKEL, Dorothea J.**, 89, Prince of Peace, Madison, Oct. 17. Sister of Carolyn Smith, Dolores Spoonmore and Joseph Winkel. Aunt, great-aunt and great-great-aunt of several.

**WITT, Sr., Thomas D.**, 84, St. Mary, Lanesville, Oct. 19. Husband of Kathleen Witt. Father of Kelly, Shannon, Shawn and Thomas Witt, Jr. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of one. †

## Franciscan Father Justin Belitz served for nearly four decades in retreat ministry

Franciscan Father Justin Belitz, who served for decades in teaching, spirituality and retreat ministry in Indianapolis, died on Oct. 13 at Community North Hospital in Indianapolis. He was 88.

Father Justin was born on April 3, 1935, in Omaha, Neb. He was received into the former St. Louis-based Franciscan Sacred Heart Province on July 4, 1956. That province was recently merged with other Franciscan provinces in the U.S. into the newly-formed Our Lady of Guadalupe Province based in Atlanta.

Father Justin received priestly formation at Quincy College in Quincy, Ill., and the Pontifical University

Antonianum in Rome. He was ordained a priest on June 3, 1961. He later earned a master's degree in music education at Case-Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

In the archdiocese, Father Justin served for nearly four decades in teaching, spirituality and retreat ministry in Indianapolis.

A memorial service for Father Justin was held on Oct. 28 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis.

As he donated his remains for medical education, his cremated remains will be given to his Franciscan community at a later date for interment. †

### Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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



### REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

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

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## Indulgence walk

Father C. Ryan McCarthy leads prayers as he walks on Nov. 4 with a large group of Catholics through Holy Cross and St. Joseph cemeteries in Indianapolis. The event was the ninth annual Indulgence Walk sponsored by Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, which Father McCarthy serves as pastor. The walk takes participants to various graves where they hear the stories of the people buried there. Prayers are offered for the souls of all the faithful departed. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

## Priest explains what's allowed, what's not in Catholic funeral, burial practices

(OSV News)—Father Patrick Carrion, a priest for more than 40 years, has headed the Office of Cemetery Management for the Archdiocese of Baltimore for the past 15 years. And he always knew he'd eventually be



Fr. Patrick Carrion

described as someone who has seen and heard it all when it comes to questions about Catholic funeral and burial practices.

That doesn't faze him. He's more than happy to share what he's experienced, and to clarify expectations for Catholic burials, handling of remains and ashes, and the pesky matter of eulogies.

Burying the dead is a corporal act of mercy. Everything centers on the belief in the intact body, since baptism makes individuals temples of the Holy Spirit. Catholic belief is that upon death, the soul meets God, and God gives incorruptible life to bodies by reuniting them with their souls.

Burials as they have been done in the United States for the past century—embalmed body, sealed casket in a concrete vault—are accepted, although Father Carrion points out that billions of coffins taking up a lot of land and cemetery “perpetual care” means the land will never have another use.

His own preference—something he's chosen for himself—is what's called a “green” burial, in which coffin, remains and shroud decompose into the soil, with no embalming of the body. It's permitted and regulated in Maryland, and used to be the only kind of burial in family graveyards and churchyards, although most cemeteries now don't permit it out of concern for contaminating groundwater.

“It's what our ancestors did,” said the pastor of St. Francis of Assisi, Shrine of the Little Flower, St. Dominic, St. Anthony of Padua and Most Precious Blood parishes, all in Baltimore. “It's not irreverent to bury someone on top of someone else.”

So-called “composting burials” are legal in just seven states, but not Maryland. In these, the body is converted to soil after first being placed in a sealed chamber with water and chemicals which are then heated in a process called alkaline hydrolysis. This reduces the body to bone fragments.

This is “just totally unacceptable to us,” Father Carrion told the *Catholic Review*, Baltimore's archdiocesan news outlet. “It's just dissolving the body. At least with ashes, there's something to bury.” A composting process “is saying that the body never existed.”

Which brings us to cremations and urns.

Cremated remains are considered the same as intact bodies. Cremation was first permitted by the Vatican in 1963 and has been part of canon law since 1983.

But urns are to be buried or placed in mausoleums or columbariums, not kept at home, and cremated remains are not to be scattered or split up.

It's a question that often comes up, Father Carrion said.

“Sometimes people want to put parts of the ashes into earrings or necklaces,” he said. “You're treating the deceased as if it is a possession of yours. You don't possess people.”

Human remains, he pointed out, are “for the whole people of God.”

Each November, the month of All Souls, the Archdiocese of Baltimore, through the Ministry of the 14th Station of the Cross, buries urns in a single vault at

Holy Cross Cemetery in Anne Arundel County. There is a minimal fee of \$350.

This mass inurement—each urn is handled individually in the rite—comes from many sources other than families, since authorities call Father Carrion's office when urns are found in abandoned houses, and on one occasion, in the trunk of a car that was about to be demolished at a scrap yard.

Twice a year, Father Carrion's office also holds services for collective burials, in a marked gravesite, of miscarried babies, provided by hospitals upon request of the parents.

“It says to us as Catholics that this was a person from the moment of conception,” Father Carrion said. “It gives families some closure.”

Eulogies are always a contentious matter. Simply put, they're not part of the funeral Mass, and they're “what most priests will talk about as a difficult hurdle,” Father Carrion said.

“That's not what our ritual is meant to be,” he explained, noting that the ritual says that those activities should occur at the wake, although most people still want them at the church.

If families strongly desire eulogies at the funeral Mass, Father Carrion asks them to take place before the body is brought into the church, as an extension of the wake.

Father Carrion conceded that lengths of eulogies have crept up because of all the eulogies people see at state funerals and those of celebrities.

But they're not as easy to give as people who are not professional speakers think they are.

There's a way around that, though. When he's asked, the pastor sets a five-minute limit on a eulogy, which is easy to calculate. A full typed page, double-spaced, takes two minutes to read. So two pages is the max, and Father Carrion usually limits the number of eulogists to two. †

## CAPECCHI

continued from page 12

orange sunsets. Another blessing is the satisfaction we've found in physical labor—working in the garden with our

hands, feeding our chicken and cattle, building fences and chicken coops. Our children approach their chores with a heart of joy rather than obligation.”

Karen shares her country life on Instagram (@thewyattfarm) and urges others to consider a similar move—even

on a small patch of land—to embrace a slower live steeped in Catholic values.

“We've learned that, when you feel peace to follow the Lord's plan, he provides for every need,” she said. “Placing our lives under his direction and literally taking a leap of faith was the best

feeling we've known. The rewards have been tenfold. Our marriage, our children, our daily life all reflect his hand guiding us toward goodness.”

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

## ERLANDSON

continued from page 12

appropriate for the laity) may not have warmed the cockles of episcopal hearts when it was released in 1993, but he was way ahead of many in deploring how the laity have been sidelined, sometimes by their own clericalist attitudes. He has also been a quiet activist going back to his days with the bishops' conference in arguing against secrecy and for transparency, particularly during the bishops' national meetings.

In his newest book released this year, *Revitalizing Catholic America*, Russ, with

co-author David Byers, is his Eeyore best. He looks at trends in the Church in the U.S. with a baleful eye, describing it as being challenged by a “devil's stew of hostile mindsets and aberrant behaviors, all coming together under an umbrella called secularization and producing deeply disturbing results.”

The book, citing a wide range of literary and theological sources, walks us briskly through the growth of secularism and the decline of the Christian churches in the West. Like many recent analyses of the state of the U.S. Church, he cites a series of dismal trends in sacramental practice, Catholic school attendance and vocations.

He quotes then-Cardinal Joseph A. Ratzinger's prediction of a future Church that “will become small and will have to start afresh more or less from the beginning.”

For Russ, whatever path leads to the Church of tomorrow, it depends on the laity getting involved in its revitalization. His “nine tasks for every Catholic” include “heeding the universal call to holiness,” ridding ourselves of clericalist thoughts and actions (and yes, laity can be the worst clericalists), and recovering a sense of the “lay apostolate.” He defines this as “the renewal of the temporal order,” bringing “Catholic values into settings where

secularist values currently go virtually unchallenged.”

Russ, who has been a friend for many years, would probably distinguish between optimism and hope. His view of the Church may be judged unduly bleak by some, but his is not a voice of despair, but of faith. He ends with a quote from Blaise Pascal: “There is a pleasure in being in a ship beaten about by a storm, when we are sure that it will not founder.”

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



## Diaper drive

Students of St. Pius X School in Indianapolis pose on Oct. 30 at the office of Birthline, an archdiocesan ministry to aid pregnant women and mothers of infants in need, with some of the 298 packages of diapers that students of the school had donated through a recent diaper drive. They also pose with Jeanine Ritter, St. Pius' first grade teacher, second from left, Keely Beaudette, St. Pius' principal, fourth from right, and Kristine Hanson, Birthline director, at right. The students are, from left, Lucas Thompson, Thoben Braun, Johnny Norris, Colin Beaudette, Maddie Funk, Zoey Pappas, Cole Boester, Jackson Beaudette, Evie Monceaux and Keating Monceaux. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

## Pope Francis says 'duplicity of heart' threatens Christian witness

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Preaching one thing but doing another puts the authenticity and credibility of Christian witness at risk, Pope Francis said.

Reflecting on Nov. 5 on the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew, in which Jesus criticizes the scribes and Pharisees for being people who "preach but do not practice" (Mt 23:3), the pope told Christians to consider "the distance between saying and doing" that exists in their lives.

"Because of our weakness, we all experience a certain distance between what we say and what we do," he told the approximately 23,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square. But he noted that it is something else to have a "duplicious heart" in which one lives

with "one foot on both sides of the fence" without problem.

"This duplicity of heart puts the authenticity of our witness as well as our credibility as persons and as Christians at risk," the pope said, especially urging people in roles of responsibility—whether in their lives, society or the Church—to say, "no to duplicity!"

"This rule is always valid for a priest, a pastoral worker, a politician, a teacher, or a parent: be committed to living first what you say, what you preach to others," he said. "To be authentic teachers, we first need to be credible witnesses."

Pope Francis said that because of their duplicity, the scribes and Pharisees "performed works to appear

righteous" and "save face" in order to hide their inconsistencies and save their reputations. He likened such a practice to applying make-up, not only on their faces but also on their lives and hearts.

"These 'made-up' people do not know how to live the truth," he said. "And many times, we also experience the temptation of duplicity."

The pope urged Christians to hear Jesus' warning against duplicity and to ask themselves whether they practice what they preach: "Do we say one thing and do something else? Are we concerned only about showing how impeccable we are on the outside, made-up, or do we also cultivate our interior life in sincerity of heart?" †

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