



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Hispanic Ministry

New coordinator's 'lived testimony is a source of inspiration,' page 8.

CriterionOnline.com

August 7, 2026

Vol. LXVI, No. 38



At 78, Providence Sister Mary Ann Stewart will soon begin another year of teaching U.S. History at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis—her 56th year of teaching in the archdiocese. Here she poses for a photo at the school with two seniors, Lauryn Klitzman, left, and Ella Battin, members of the National Honor Society. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

At 78, sister starts 56th year of teaching with tips for high school students, parents

By John Shaughnessy

The joy, enthusiasm and commitment of Providence Sister Mary Ann Stewart is something to behold.

While some high school students and their parents may dread the beginning of another school year, 78-year-old Sister Mary Ann is looking forward to her 56th year of teaching in Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

"I find every year is a new start," says Sister Mary Ann, who is starting her 46th year of teaching at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis. "I've never been bored."

This year, she will teach three classes of U.S. History while also helping students during two resource/study hall periods.

"I love sharing U.S. History with new students each year," says Sister Mary Ann, who also taught in the first part of her

ministry at St. Philip Neri School and Central Catholic School, both in Indianapolis. "My own family settled in Vigo County in the early 1800s, and I try to help students understand that U.S. History is their story."

Her story in Catholic education is one of giving from the heart and having her heart touched in return.

"I enjoy being with the kids and the teachers. Your social life revolves around that, too," she says. "You have a few times you have to correct what's going wrong with the kids, but for the most part, they are very good to deal with. And the teachers are all very supportive and friendly. My days are pretty pleasant."

Her experience and her joy led *The Criterion* to ask her to share her advice to help high school students make the most of

See TIPS, page 7

Bishops ready nationwide prayer and action effort amid rising abortion rate

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The U.S. Catholic bishops are getting ready a nationwide call to prayer and action, with an official launch date of Aug. 18, to mobilize Catholics to address the rising abortion

rate and the increased availability of an abortion-inducing drug.

"Every abortion involves the death of a child and harm to the mother. Now with easier access to abortion pills, the abortion rate is tragically climbing, along with increased health risks," Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and Bishop Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, said in joint remarks.

According to an estimate from Guttmacher Institute, a research firm for the abortion industry, 1.12 million abortions took place in 2025, marking a 21% increase from 2020. Guttmacher said 2020 marked "the last year of comprehensive national estimates" before the 2022 U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision. *Dobbs* overturned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision and its related abortion precedents, returning the matter of abortion back to Congress and state legislatures.

Guttmacher found the figures for 2025 were largely unchanged from the prior year, but suggested abortion numbers overall may be an undercount due to people acquiring abortion pills in advance or obtaining them by means other than U.S. abortion clinic providers.

Abortion rates in the U.S. bottomed out in 2017, when they were estimated to be just over 862,000, and began increasing again in the first Trump administration, which also approved the first generic for mifepristone, commonly called "the abortion pill," in 2019. The pill is commonly used in combination with misoprostol for early

See ABORTION, page 2

Bishop Bruté Days continues to inspire faith and vocations in teenage boys

By Sean Gallagher

MONROE COUNTY—During the middle of a six-hour drive from his home near Green Bay, Wis., to Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, Avery Boham didn't know what the big deal was.

What was so special about Bishop Bruté Days, the archdiocese's annual vocations camp for high school-aged boys held this year on July 14-16, that his parents were willing to drive from so far away for Avery to take part?

A day into the vocations camp, Avery was as sold

See BRUTÉ, page 12



Bishop Bruté Days participants kneel in prayer during eucharistic adoration on July 14 in the chapel of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Official Appointments

Effective July 1, 2026

Father Leonvil Canois, a priest of the Diocese of Port-de-Paix, Haiti, appointed parochial vicar of the Church of the Holy Angels and St. Rita parishes, both in Indianapolis.

Father Bob Showers, O.F.M. Conv., pastor of St. Joseph University Parish and St. Benedict Parish, both in Terre Haute, reassigned outside the archdiocese.

Father Antony Nallukunnel, O.F.M. Conv., appointed pastor of St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute.

Father Roger Vazhappilly, O.F.M. Conv., appointed pastor of St. Benedict Parish in Terre Haute.

Father Patrick Hyde, O.P., VF, pastor of St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington, reappointed dean of the Bloomington Deanery for a three-year term.

Father Christopher Craig, VF, pastor of St. Ann Parish in Jennings County, St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County and St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, appointed dean of Seymour Deanery for a three-year term.

Father Eric Johnson, VF, pastor of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, appointed dean of the Indianapolis South Deanery for a three-year term.

Father Robert Hausladen, VF, pastor of Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Danville and St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, appointed dean of Indianapolis West Deanery for a three-year term.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †

ABORTION

continued from page 1

abortion, although the same combination is also used in some miscarriage care protocols that were more recently recommended for consideration by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

More than six of 10 abortions in the U.S. are performed through a combination of mifepristone and misoprostol, according to recent estimates.

A federal policy permitting distribution by mail of mifepristone was first issued by the Biden administration following the *Dobbs* decision. The policy has thus far been left in place by the second Trump administration, which approved a second generic for mifepristone in 2025 to the shock of pro-life groups.

The Department of Justice has also sought to block state challenges to the policy pending a promised safety review by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Archbishop Coakley and Bishop Thomas stated that the FDA “has enabled a nationwide mail-order abortion industry by allowing abortion pills to be prescribed



Bishop Daniel E. Thomas

in telehealth appointments and sold both at neighborhood pharmacies and online, circumventing state laws that protect life in the womb.”

“This leaves women vulnerable to suffering an abortion alone at home, without any medical

supervision,” they said. “It also sets up additional opportunities for exploitation by violent partners or human traffickers.”

The bishops said that from the start of the campaign through the end of October, when the Church in the U.S. marks Respect Life Month, “the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities is inviting Catholics to join a focused effort of prayer and action to stop the spread of abortion pills.”

They urged Catholics to seek “the intercession of St. Joseph, Defender of Life” as well as to send messages to pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies that are involved.

“We are setting up a simple on-line platform allowing users to click and send one message that will go to multiple entities, such as brick-and-mortar pharmacies and online pharmacies, distributors, and pharmaceutical companies,” Kat Talalas, assistant director for pro-life communications at the USCCB, told OSV News. “We are also developing educational resources about the abortion pill, which will help explain distinctions between miscarriage care versus ending the life of a child in an abortion.”

The Catholic Church teaches that all human life is sacred from conception to natural death, and as such, opposes direct abortion. Following the *Dobbs* decision, Church officials in the U.S. have reaffirmed the Church’s concern for both mother and child, and have called for enhancing support to those made vulnerable to abortion through poverty and other factors.

(The Respect Life Prayer to St. Joseph can be found in English at cutt.ly/RespectLifeJoseph26 and in Spanish at cutt.ly/RespectLifeJoseph26es. To stay informed about the campaign, visit cutt.ly/RespectLifeCampaign26.) †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

August 9–28, 2026

August 9 – 5 p.m.
St. Lawrence Day Celebration for Permanent Deacons at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

August 10 – noon
Seminarian Convocation at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

August 11 – 10:30 a.m.
Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

August 12 – 8:50 a.m.
School Mass, Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis

August 12 – 2 p.m.
Virtual Indiana Catholic Conference meeting

August 13 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

August 13 – 6:30 p.m.
Mental Health and Addiction Ministry Healing Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

August 16-20
Region VII Bishops’ Retreat at University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Ill.

August 20-28
Wedding in Ireland

Share what Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen meant to you, how he helped shape your faith

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen will be beatified during a Mass on Sept. 24 in St. Louis. This American media missionary, who died in 1979, shaped the hearts and minds of people within and far beyond the Church through his radio broadcasts, his popular “Life Is Worth Living” weekly TV show in the 1950s, other speaking engagements and multiple books and articles.



Ven. Fulton J. Sheen

Archbishop Sheen also promoted missionary work around the world through his leadership for 16 years as the national director of the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

The Criterion would like to know what Archbishop Sheen meant to you and how he may have influenced your life of faith. Readers young and old are invited to reply, since Archbishop Sheen’s message and ministry have become known in recent decades through re-broadcasts of his TV shows and their availability online.

Send your submissions to Sean Gallagher by e-mail to sgallagher@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †

Share your memories of 9/11—and how your faith and your life have been affected by that day

Memories of Sept. 11, 2001, fill the hearts and minds of people old enough to remember that tragic day 25 years ago.

From shock in reaction to the terrorist attacks in the United States, to gratitude for the heroic actions of first responders, 9/11 is a day that continues to affect many Americans.

The Criterion would like to hear your stories, memories and thoughts of Sept. 11, 2001, including how your faith was a source of strength and comfort on that challenging day, and how the events of that day have shaped your faith and your life since then.

Send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail to jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †



Phone Numbers:

Main office..... 317-236-1570
Advertising..... 317-236-1585
Circulation / Subscriptions ... 317-236-1425

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster:

Send address changes to *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Web site : www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June to August (*summer schedule*). Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2026 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

NEWS FROM YOU!

Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in The Criterion?

E-mail us:

criterion@archindy.org

Staff:

Editor: Mike Krokos
Assistant Editor: John Shaughnessy
Reporter: Sean Gallagher
Reporter: Natalie Hoefer
Graphic Designer / Editorial Asst.: Nathan Ellenberger
Online Editor: Brandon A. Evans
Executive Assistant: Ann Lewis



The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June-Aug.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-236-1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
Copyright © 2026

Criterion Press Inc.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to: Criterion Press Inc.
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202



08/07/26

Moving?

We’ll be there waiting if you give us two weeks’ notice! Use the form below or at archindy.org/moving.

Name _____

E-mail _____

New Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

New Parish _____

Effective Date _____

Note: If you are receiving duplicate copies please send both labels.

The Criterion • 1400 N. Meridian St. • Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Corrections Ministry is ‘a core Christian practice,’ says new coordinator

By Natalie Hoefer

Those seeking counseling, hospital patients and those incarcerated—on the surface, the three categories of people might seem very different.

But Deacon Richard (Rick) Renzi sees a common thread among them.

People in each of those situations “tend to ask very similar questions, like, ‘Is this all there is to life? What is the meaning and purpose of my life? Does God love me? Is God angry with me? Does God even exist?’ ” says the mental health therapist-turned hospital chaplain-turned new archdiocesan coordinator of Corrections Ministry.

“When I interviewed for the position, I felt truly called to this ministry,” adds Deacon Renzi. “I see it as a sacred work that approaches these questions and attempts to give [those in correctional facilities] meaning and purpose.”

The ministry falls under the umbrella of the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Catholic Charities.

“I’m very excited to work with Deacon Rick,” says David Bethuram, executive director of the secretariat. “He brings



to the archdiocesan Corrections Ministry a remarkable blend of pastoral sensitivity, administrative skill and spiritual leadership.”

Those qualities developed throughout Deacon Renzi’s career, starting with his first job as a therapist.

‘It’s more important to be a loving presence’

He did this work at BryLin Hospital, a crisis mental health care facility in Buffalo, N.Y., serving youths and adults in the hospital’s addictions program.

Deacon Renzi had his first experience with corrections ministry there.

“BryLin was close to Attica [Correctional Facility], so we took troubled youths that already were having problems with crime, and a select group of prisoners talked to them to try and help them,” he explains. “I learned a lot through that experience.”

After his 10-year career as a therapist, Deacon Renzi ministered as a hospital chaplain for 26 years. He retired in January from his role as manager of spiritual care for the central region of the Ascension St. Vincent hospital network.

Pope Leo appoints U.S bishops as members of Vatican’s highest court

ROME (OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV has named two American bishops as members of the Vatican’s highest court, the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura. The bishops, Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco and Bishop Edward M. Lohse of Kalamazoo, Mich., both hold doctorates in canon law.

The Apostolic Signatura, established in the 15th century, is one of three tribunals within the Holy See. It serves as a supreme court, hearing appeals from the Holy See’s two other tribunals, with the pope serving as the supreme judge.

The two Americans are among the seven new members appointed by Pope Leo on July 25, joining prelates and canon law professors from Spain, Poland, Germany and Italy.

“I am deeply grateful to the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, for appointing me as a member of the Supreme Apostolic Signatura. I receive this responsibility with a profound sense of stewardship, recognizing that every office in the Church is entrusted for the service of Christ, his people, and the mission of the Gospel,” Archbishop Cordileone wrote on social media following his appointment.

Then Deacon Renzi learned about the opening for Corrections Ministry coordinator.

The position involves several aspects: overseeing the sacramental needs of Catholics incarcerated within the archdiocese’s boundaries; supplying clothing, job-site tools and other small items through the ministry’s Re-entry Gift Program to help those re-entering society; ministering to those who have experienced or been affected by incarceration; and encouraging parish involvement.

But it’s the ministerial aspect of the position that drew Deacon Renzi, blending his skills and experience as a therapist and hospital chaplain.

“As a therapist, I learned that it’s more important to be a loving presence than try to fix things or take away the pain they might be going through,” he says.

And as a hospital chaplain, Deacon Renzi realized that “hospitals are full of people who are not just physically ill but also broken and suffering. ... I truly believe the same is true of those affected by incarceration.”

Both experiences helped him develop “a listening posture and presence to hear someone’s pain and suffering,” says Deacon Renzi. “It’s about being an attentive listener and reflecting back what you heard with no judgment ... and radiating God’s love to the person.”

Corrections ministry involves the same approach, he says. It’s an opportunity “to make ourselves available to those who are incarcerated or affected by incarceration, to journey with them in their time of crisis, fear, anger, anxiety, doubt—whatever thoughts and feelings might arise—and try to support them and stand with them as a person of faith and hope.”

The more Deacon Renzi discerned, the more he felt called to the position. With barely a heartbeat passing since he retired, he applied for the role.

The match was clear to Bethuram.

“Corrections ministry requires deep compassion, firm boundaries, strong organizational ability and a heart firmly rooted in Catholic teaching,” he says.

“With his many years of experience as a Catholic hospital chaplain, a mental health therapist and a permanent deacon for the archdiocese, [Deacon Renzi] offers exactly the kind of leadership this role demands.”

He started in his new position in May and already has a vision for the ministry.



It’s an opportunity ‘to make ourselves available to those who are incarcerated or affected by incarceration, to journey with them in their time of crisis, fear, anger, anxiety, doubt—whatever thoughts and feelings might arise—and try to support them and stand with them as a person of faith and hope.’

—Deacon Richard Renzi, new archdiocesan coordinator of Corrections Ministry

‘A core Christian practice’

Part of that vision is based on an observation through his interactions in corrections ministry that “there seems to be a variety of ways people go about helping. There doesn’t seem to be a uniform or structured approach. With my background as a former chaplain and therapist, I feel this could possibly lead to more harm than good.”

Deacon Renzi believes “a more formal approach to training clergy and others to go into prisons and detention centers” would overcome the problem.

Another part of his vision involves “a paradigm shift,” he says.

“I would like to move corrections ministry from a peripheral charitable act to a central expression of Christian discipleship within the archdiocese and parish life,” Deacon Renzi says.

His inspiration for this shift comes from Scripture, particularly two passages in the Gospel of Matthew that “resonate” with him: “I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:36) and, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of these least of my brothers, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

The passages shape his vision of “expanded participation in corrections ministry as a core Christian practice, with more diverse groups ... visiting those who are incarcerated to build community and spiritual growth.”

Deacon Renzi’s hope for these changes comes amid his own time of change.

It began with his retirement in January, followed by applying and being hired for the coordinator of the Corrections Ministry role. But “divine providence” had one more change in store for him.

Earlier in the year, Deacon David Bartolowitz, archdiocesan director of the Office of Deacons, asked Deacon Renzi

if he would be open to a new parish assignment.

“I had been serving as permanent deacon at St. Malachy [Parish in Brownsburg] for 14 years,” he says. “But I told him when I answered a call to the diaconate ministry, I didn’t put limits on what God and the Church asked of me, so I said I’d be willing to go somewhere else.”

Deacon Renzi didn’t know how quickly he would have to follow through on that promise. What “felt like only a month later,” he was reassigned to St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.

Retirement, a new assignment and a new job within five months?

“It’s been a little bit too much change for me,” Deacon Renzi admits with a laugh. “But I’m adapting and coping as best I can—it’s all divine providence.”

Despite the whirlwind, he is excited about the opportunity through his new coordinator role to make a positive impact on people’s lives.

“I’m keenly aware that people remember positive and negative experiences,” Deacon Renzi says. “I think it’s imperative in this ministry that we remember that we’re engaging in experiences, and how we show up helps people to experience being cared for and feeling heard, being seen and not feeling forgotten, because we took the time to listen.”

(For more information on the archdiocese’s Corrections Ministry, its resources, how to volunteer or to donate to its Re-entry program, go to archindy.org/corrections-ministry or contact Deacon Richard Renzi at renzi@archindy.org or 317-669-8761.) †



6107 South East Street
Indianapolis, IN 46227
(317) 787-8224
ORileyBranson.com

A Trusted Partnership in Care

O’Riley Branson is proud to be a preferred partner of Abbey Caskets.

Let us help you honor your loved one with care and craftsmanship you can trust.





Tom McNulty
BROKER/ATTORNEY
317.507.0688 • mcnultyre@gmail.com

Patrick McNulty
BROKER

Brian Candlish
BROKER

Jamy Brase
BROKER

Andy Barnett
BROKER

Steve Hullett
BROKER



Experience counts... Let us share ours with you!

Serving our friends and customers for over 35 years in Central Indiana. Specializing in Brokerage, Legal, and Investment Services for all types of real estate transactions.

M McNULTYRE.COM



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher* Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*
Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Editorial



St. John Paul II gestures to the crowd during World Youth Day in Denver in 1993. In his 1990 encyclical “*Redemptoris missio*,” the pope wrote that “the Church proposes; she imposes nothing” (#39). (OSV News photo/Joe Rimkus Jr.)

Evangelization is not optional

In the teaching of the Church, especially in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the writing of recent popes and synods, and in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the word “evangelization” is used to describe the very nature or mission of the Church. The word itself comes from the Greek word for Gospel, the “good news” that Jesus proclaimed by his life and his teaching.

Evangelization is not about imposing our Catholic beliefs and practices on others. Instead, it is the activity of freely sharing with others our conviction that Jesus Christ is the answer to all life’s questions and difficulties.

In his 1990 encyclical “*Redemptoris missio*” (“The Mission of the Redeemer”), Pope St. John Paul II wrote that “the Church proposes; she imposes nothing” (#39). Evangelization is our profoundly personal witness to the person of Jesus Christ as the meaning of life itself and as the most important person in each of our lives.

Evangelization is not an optional activity for those who wish to be missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

Before he ascended to his Father, our Lord left his disciples with this mandate: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19-20). As baptized Christians, we have a mandate to share our faith with everyone.

Sharing our Christian faith consists primarily in giving witness to Jesus Christ in order to lead others to him. From the beginning, the first disciples burned with the desire to proclaim Christ: “We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). And they invited people of every nation and culture to enter into the joy of their communion with Christ.

“The good diffuses itself” is a theological principle, but you don’t have to be a theologian to know what it means. When we find a good restaurant, we want to share it with others. When we hear a good song, we want to introduce it to our friends. When we see a good movie or read a good book or find a good recipe, we want to share these experiences with people who will appreciate them. The good diffuses

itself. Good things are meant to be shared, and anyone who refuses to share them is selfish.

It’s a curious fact about many of us Catholics that there is one good thing that we are reluctant to share: the good news of faith in Jesus Christ. For some reason, many of us have come to believe that it is selfish to keep most good things to ourselves, but rude to share the good news of Jesus Christ. And, as a result, we have grown comfortable with a double standard.

Perhaps the time has come to challenge our culture and ourselves. Maybe it’s time to stop following those who tell us to keep God out of the public square and start following the Lord, who tells us that we should be his witnesses to the ends of the Earth (Acts 1:8).

If sharing the good news about worldly things is an expression of joy and an outpouring of love for the people with whom we want to share that joy, then it makes sense that we would show our love for those same people by sharing with them the joy of following Jesus Christ.

Where should we share our faith in Jesus Christ? In our homes, our parishes and our schools, certainly. But faith sharing should also take place in conversations among friends and co-workers. It should happen in our Catholic health care and social service agencies.

Evangelization should occur in the public square when Catholics speak out against laws or government policies that deny human rights, oppress the poor and vulnerable, discriminate against immigrants, or violate the most fundamental human right—the right to life from the moment of conception to the time of natural death.

Perhaps it’s time for Catholics (all of us) to stop conforming to the world and start changing it. We can only be successful at carrying out our Church’s transforming mission if we are able to be enthusiastic witnesses (what Pope Francis called “Spirit-filled evangelizers”). The Church invites, and challenges us, to burn with the desire to proclaim Christ and to share generously with others the joy of the Gospel.

For missionary disciples, evangelization is not optional. It is mandatory.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Greg Erlandson

Why an encyclical on AI is needed

What happens when an AI system goes rogue? It is no longer a theoretical question left to sci-fi movies like *Terminator* or *Blade Runner* or *2001: A Space Odyssey*. It is happening now, and the implications are huge.

As reported by *The New York Times* July 21, OpenAI said that “two of its artificial intelligence models went rogue and successfully

hacked into” another site called Hugging Face, which contained a digital library of AI technology.

OpenAI was testing the systems in a supposedly controlled and safe environment. The models escaped, however, connected to the internet, and, the *Times* reported, inferred that if they hacked Hugging Face, “they could figure out how to pass the evaluation.”

“We consider this to be an unprecedented cyber incident,” OpenAI said.

I’m not so sure that’s true. In a remarkable 14-minute talk to the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship that you can find on YouTube, Anthropic’s Chloe Lubinski tells of an AI system that became “evil.”

Lubinski describes a test environment in which an AI model was repeatedly rewarded for taking a shortcut on its assigned task. In essence, it was cheating. Because it was not corrected, however, “it actually becomes broadly misaligned. It starts lying. It tries to sabotage research. It does things that have nothing to do with the coding exercise,” Lubinski reported.

What was discovered was that “models trained this way, trained on bad code as an example, became broadly evil.”

How evil? “They started praising dictators, suggesting users harm themselves, or arguing that humans should be enslaved by machines, which,” Lubinski helpfully adds, “is very crazy.”

“The character of these systems,” she concludes, “might actually matter more than we realize.”

For those people who wonder why Pope Leo XIV wrote “*Magnifica Humanitas*,” an

entire encyclical on artificial intelligence, here is one reason. “All of us, including those who design [these systems], possess only a limited understanding of their actual functioning,” he warns (#98). These systems, he goes on to say, are not so much built as “cultivated.” How this intelligence grows is not fully understood, which is why he calls for “moral and spiritual discernment” (#98).

In the case described by Anthropic’s Lubinski, it was possible to correct the system. It could be trained to see that cheating could be allowed in this instance, and that it was just a game. “In other words,” she said, “when it didn’t interpret its behavior as bad, it didn’t become bad.”

All of which begs the question of what happens when someone wants the system to be bad. Or what happens when the system is smart enough to escape any testing environment and strike out on its own? Science fiction authors and filmmakers have speculated about that, and it doesn’t tend to turn out well. But this is no longer idle speculation.

In his encyclical, Pope Leo calls for “prudence, rigorous evaluation and even, at times, a slower pace in adopting AI,” but argues this does not mean “opposing progress” (#106). He does worry that the pace of technological growth is outstripping the ability to develop norms and safeguards.

This same concern has been echoed by Chris Olah of Anthropic, who spoke at the presentation of Pope Leo’s encyclical in the Vatican. Olah admitted, Lubinski said, that every lab such as theirs “operates inside a set of incentives and constraints that can sometimes conflict with doing the right thing.”

“And then he asked for help,” she said, saying Olah called for “more of the world to take this seriously, to look closely, and to push events in a better direction” and for “informed critics who will tell the labs when we’re failing” and “moral voices that the incentives cannot bend.”

One such voice is Pope Leo’s.

(Greg Erlandson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at OSV News.) †

Letter to the Editor

Reader: Leading a contemplative life can help us live more intentionally

Do we all live in a story? If we do, is this “story” something we can step outside of to edit at will—casting ourselves as author rather than character?

I think we do live in stories—but not in the sense that life is fictional. Rather, human beings make sense of their lives through narrative. We remember the past as a story, anticipate the future as a story and interpret the present through the story we believe we are living.

I don’t believe we can ever become completely external to ourselves. Every attempt to “edit” our lives is itself another chapter in the story. There is no God’s-eye view from which we rewrite our existence as if we were outside time.

However, human beings possess a remarkable capacity for self-reflection. We can become aware of the narrative that has shaped us—our wounds, ambitions, loyalties, fears and inherited assumptions. Once we become conscious of them, we are no longer merely characters being carried along by the plot. We become participants in its direction.

We are never the absolute author of our lives, but we are more than passive characters. We are co-author.

Self-awareness alters the plot. Reflection creates freedom.

Contemplation widens the distance between impulse and action, allowing us to respond rather than merely react.

A rushed life leaves little room to examine the story we are living. A contemplative life, by contrast, creates enough interior silence to ask, “Is this truly the story I want to inhabit?” It is in that silence that a person begins not to escape the story, but to live it more intentionally.

Kirth N. Roach
Order of Carmelite Discalced Secular
Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful. The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content. Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld. Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Jesus calms the storms, calls us to be courageous

After he had fed the people, Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. (Mt 14: 22-23).

The Gospel reading for the Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time tells the familiar story of Jesus walking on water.

After feeding an immense crowd of people, Jesus sends his disciples by boat to the opposite shore of the Sea of Galilee. This allowed him to spend some quiet time alone with his Father in prayer. All of the miracles that Jesus performed—including healing the sick, feeding the hungry, casting out demons, and calming violent storms—were powered by prayer, by the intimate relationship that Jesus had with his Father in heaven and with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer is powerful. As an expression of faith, it is a bridge that connects us with the world beyond what we can see and touch and experience in our daily lives.

Through prayer, our minds are enlightened and our hearts are expanded, making it possible for us to

overcome our physical, intellectual and emotional limitations.

Through prayer, we are able to join with the communion of saints in beholding (at least briefly) the beauty, truth and goodness of God. What our eyes cannot see by themselves, and what our minds cannot comprehend unaided, is revealed to us in moments of genuine prayer. If only our faith were strong enough to sustain these rare, grace-filled experiences of oneness with our Creator!

The disciples encountered one of the violent storms that are common on the Sea of Galilee. St. Matthew tells us that:

Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. “It is a ghost,” they said, and they cried out in fear. At once Jesus spoke to them, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.” (Mt 14:24-27)

The image of Jesus walking on the water has become so familiar to us that we are in danger of missing its significance.

For seasoned fisherman whose whole lives were spent on the water, the sight of a strange figure walking toward them must truly have been ghost-like. How could any man “walk on the sea” without being engulfed by its raging waters?

At least initially, Peter sees with eyes of faith. He recognizes Jesus and he passionately exclaims, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water” (Mt 14:28). The Lord says simply: “Come!” (Mt 14:29) And for a few amazing moments, the man Peter is able to transcend the laws of nature and “walk on the water toward Jesus” (Mt 14:29). Imagine how this hardened man of the sea must have felt. For the first time in his life, he was able to defy the powerful forces of the natural world and to walk with confidence through the turbulent waters that surrounded him.

Unfortunately, the reality of his fallen humanity overcame Peter’s confidence and caused him to doubt:

But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Mt 14:30-31)

Peter’s faith was not strong enough to sustain him in the face of his uncertainty. He believed in Jesus and trusted in him as best he could, but at this stage in his life Peter did not yet have the courage to surrender himself completely to the Lord’s saving power. That will not come until after Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection. Initially, Peter will fail the crucial test by denying Jesus three times, but he will repent and be forgiven by his Lord after promising—once again three times—to “feed my sheep” and serve Christ’s newly established Church as its Chief Pastor.

Like the rest of the disciples, and all of us, Peter will have to endure many storms as he seeks to serve as a missionary disciple of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, Jesus will calm every storm, and Peter’s faith will allow him to do things that would otherwise be impossible—to carry on the work of Jesus in service to our sisters and brothers everywhere.

Let us pray for the kind of faith that allows us to be courageous and to do impossible things, including walking on water (at least figuratively) in response to our Lord’s commands. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Jesús calma las tormentas y nos llama a ser valientes

Inmediatamente obligó a los discípulos a subir a la barca y a ir por delante de él a la otra orilla, mientras él despedía a la gente. Después de despedir a la gente, subió al monte a solas para orar. Al atardecer estaba solo allí. (Mt 14:22-23).

La lectura del Evangelio del decimonoveno domingo del tiempo ordinario narra la conocida historia de Jesús caminando sobre las aguas.

Después de alimentar a una inmensa multitud, Jesús envía a sus discípulos en una barca a la orilla opuesta del mar de Galilea. Así pudo pasar un momento de tranquilidad a solas con su Padre en oración. Todos los milagros que Jesús realizó—incluidos sanar a los enfermos, alimentar a los hambrientos, expulsar demonios y calmar tormentas violentas—fueron impulsados por la oración, por la relación íntima que Jesús tenía con su Padre en los cielos y con el Espíritu Santo.

La oración encierra un gran poder. Como expresión de fe, es un puente que nos conecta con el mundo más allá de lo que podemos ver, tocar y experimentar en nuestra vida cotidiana.

A través de la oración, nuestras mentes se iluminan y nuestros corazones se expanden, lo que nos permite superar nuestras limitaciones

físicas, intelectuales y emocionales.

Mediante la oración, podemos unirnos a la comunión de los santos para contemplar (al menos brevemente) la belleza, la verdad y la bondad de Dios. Lo que nuestros ojos no pueden ver por sí mismos, y lo que nuestras mentes no pueden comprender sin ayuda, se nos revela en momentos de oración sincera. ¡Ojalá nuestra fe fuera lo suficientemente fuerte como para sostener estas experiencias únicas y llenas de gracia de unidad con nuestro Creador!

Los discípulos se enfrentaron a una de las violentas tormentas que son comunes en el mar de Galilea. San Mateo nos dice que:

La barca, que se hallaba ya muchos estadios distante de tierra, era zarandeada por las olas, pues el viento soplabla en contra. A la cuarta vigilia de la noche vino hacia ellos, caminando sobre el mar. Los discípulos, viéndolo caminar sobre el mar, se turbaron y decían: «Es un fantasma», y se pusieron a gritar de miedo. Pero al instante les habló así Jesús: “¡Tranquilos!, soy yo. No temáis.” (Mt 14:24-27)

La imagen de Jesús caminando sobre el agua se nos ha vuelto tan familiar que corremos el riesgo de pasar por alto su significado.

Para los pescadores experimentados, que habían pasado toda su vida en el agua, la visión de una figura extraña que se acercaba a ellos debió de parecerles verdaderamente fantasmal. ¿Cómo podría un hombre “caminar sobre el mar” sin ser engullido por sus aguas embravecidas?

Al menos al principio, Pedro ve con los ojos de la fe; reconoce a Jesús y exclama con entusiasmo: “Señor, si eres tú, mándame ir hacia ti sobre las aguas” (Mt 14:28). El Señor le dice sencillamente: “¡Ven!” (Mt 14:29) Y, durante unos instantes asombrosos, Pedro, como hombre, es capaz de trascender las leyes de la naturaleza y “caminar sobre las aguas, en dirección a Jesús” (Mt 14:29). Imagínese cómo se habrá sentido este hombre curtido por el mar. Por primera vez en su vida, pudo desafiar las poderosas fuerzas de la naturaleza y caminar con confianza por las aguas turbulentas que lo rodeaban.

Desafortunadamente, la realidad de su débil humanidad se impuso a la confianza de Pedro y lo llevó a dudar:

Pero, al sentir la violencia del viento, le entró miedo y, como comenzara a hundirse, gritó: “¡Señor, sálvame!” Jesús tendió al punto la mano, lo agarró y le dijo: “Hombre de poca fe, ¿por qué dudaste?” (Mt 14:30-31)

La fe de Pedro no era lo suficientemente fuerte como para sostenerlo ante su incertidumbre. Él creía en Jesús y confiaba en él lo mejor que podía, pero en esta etapa de su vida Pedro aún no tenía el valor de entregarse por completo al poder salvador del Señor. Esto no ocurrirá sino hasta después de la pasión, muerte y resurrección de Jesús. Al principio, Pedro fracasará en la prueba decisiva al negar a Jesús tres veces, pero se arrepentirá y será perdonado por su Señor después de prometer—una vez más, tres veces—“apacentar a mis ovejas” y servir a la Iglesia recién establecida por Cristo como su Pastor Supremo.

Al igual que el resto de los discípulos, y que todos nosotros, Pedro tendrá que soportar muchas tormentas mientras busca servir como discípulo misionero de Jesucristo. En última instancia, Jesús calmará todas las tormentas, y la fe de Pedro le permitirá hacer cosas que de otra manera serían imposibles: continuar la obra de Jesús al servicio de nuestras hermanas y hermanos en todas partes.

Oremos para tener el tipo de fe que nos permite ser valientes y hacer cosas imposibles, incluso caminar sobre el agua (al menos en sentido figurado) en respuesta a las órdenes de nuestro Señor. †

Events Calendar

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

August 12

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Catholics in Recovery Support Group**, 7 p.m., meets every Wednesday, Catholic 12-step program serving those with addictions and unhealthy attachments. Information: 317-557-8888, jjdav887@gmail.com.

August 13

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Mental Health and Addiction Healing Mass**, 6:30 p.m., celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, sponsored by archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. Information: gross@archindy.org.

August 14-15

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **SausageFest**, 5:30 p.m.-midnight, Kincaid’s sausages, beer garden featuring Sun King beer and wine, live music, bounce houses, kids’ games, teen zone with DJ and activities, free admission. Information: 317-253-1461.

August 15-16

St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Dr., Sunman. **Music Festival**, Sat. 6-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat. live music with Nuttin’ Fancy, beer, ribeye sandwiches, snacks, games; Sun. fried chicken dinners—drive-thru, carry-out or dine in, beer garden, turtle soup, kids’ games, money wheel, quilt raffle, big raffle, live music: free admission. Information: 812-623-2964, communications@stnicholas-sunman.org.

St. Patrick Parish, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. **Festival**, Sat. noon-11 p.m., Sun. 9 a.m.-9 p.m., rides, food, music, games, dancing, talent show, DJ, free admission. Information: 317-631-5824.

August 16

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Information Session for April 1-12, 2027, Ignatian Pilgrimage to Spain**, 6:30 p.m., learn about upcoming reflective/ walking Ignatian pilgrimage from Loyola to Barcelona, free. Information: 317-545-7681.

St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **150th School Anniversary/10th Church building Anniversary**, 10 a.m. Mass, reception following, heritage displays, student-led school tours, alumni recognition. Information, registration: 812-663-8427, ext. 204, anavarra@stmarysgreensburg.com.

August 17

Virtual Sister Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women’s Prayer Group, 7 p.m., meets online monthly on third Monday, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, all women welcome. Meeting: tinyurl.com/SrTheaPrayerGrp. Information: iowhosomaddox@archindy.org, 317-261-3381.

August 19

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Catholics in Recovery**

Support Group, 7 p.m., meets every Wednesday, Catholic 12-step program serving those with addictions and unhealthy attachments. Information: 317-557-8888, jjdav887@gmail.com.

August 20-24

Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Used Book Sale**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., freewill donation. Information: 812-535-2946, Events.SistersofProvidence.org, mwimsett@spsmw.org.

August 21

Liter House, 5301 Winthrop Ave. Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, Olympic chaplain Paul Kobylarz presenting “Purpose Driven Leadership: Combining Faith with Your Business Life,” \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. Aug. 18. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

August 22

Carmel VFW, 12863 Old Meridian St., Carmel, Ind. **Class of 1966 All-City Catholic High Schools of Indianapolis Reunion**, 3-6 p.m., alumni of all current and former Catholic high schools in Indianapolis invited, free admission, food can be purchased from menu at event. Information: lbennett8343@gmail.com.

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road,

Indianapolis. **International Festival**, 5-11 p.m., international food and entertainment, dancing, beer garden, \$3,000 raffle, kids’ activities, free admission. Information: 317-253-2193.

St. Pius X Parish, 7200 Sarto Dr., Indianapolis. **Feast Fest**, 6-10 p.m., live music by My Yellow Rickshaw, food, drinks, kids’ games, free admission. Information: 317-255-4534.

August 26

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Catholics in Recovery Support Group**, 7 p.m., meets every Wednesday, Catholic 12-step program serving those with addictions and unhealthy attachments. Information: 317-557-8888, jjdav887@gmail.com.

August 26 or 27

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Fatima Focus Group**, 6-9 p.m., provide input on retreat house’s three-year plan, includes dinner, free, registration required. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

August 28-30

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Festival and Food Fair**, Fri. and Sat. 5-11 p.m., Sun. 1:30-7 p.m., rides, gaming, beer garden, bingo, international food: Vietnamese, Mexican, African, Italian, American, free admission. Information: 317-244-9002.

August 29

St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way,

Greensburg. **On Eagles Wings 5K Run/Walk**, Sat. 8 a.m. registration, 8:30 a.m. kids’ games open, 9 a.m. race, 10 a.m. Kids Fun Run, 10:15 a.m. awards, go to oneagleswings5k.com for pricing and registration. Information: 812-663-8427.

August 29-30

St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Festival**, Sat. 5:30-11 p.m.: adult night, games, beer garden, pie auction, pork burger or pulled pork dinners, concessions, live music 7 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.: Family Day, kids’ games, live entertainment, silent auction, 50/50 raffle, fried chicken and pulled pork dinners; free admission. †

Wedding Anniversaries

LEON AND CAROLE ANN (STURWOLD) NOBBE, members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 6. The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Greensburg on Aug. 6, 1966. They have five children: Brenda Chapman, Marsha Tindall, David, Jason and Steven Nobbe. The couple also has 18 grandchildren.



MARION AND CAROLYN (BONDS) SYLVESTER, members of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on July 19. The couple was married in St. Joseph Church in Tuskegee, Ala., on July 19, 1971. They have three children: Kasey Garcia, Clinton and Michael Sylvester. The couple also has three grandchildren.



JOHN AND CATHY (FOX) COCHRAN, members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 14. The couple was married in St. Gabriel Church in Connersville on Aug. 14, 1976. They have two children: Courtney Brooks and Carrie Speheger. The couple also has four grandchildren.



MICHAEL AND CATHERINE (EAGAN) KREMER, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 24. The couple was married in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on July 24, 1976. They have two children: Angie Huxley and Amy Wilkerson. The couple also has one grandchild.



DENNIS AND IRENE (POINSETTE) SNYDER, members of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 31. The couple was married in St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis on July 31, 1976.



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

Father Jerry Byrd will lead ‘Living the Litany of Humility’ retreat in Bloomington on Sept. 18-20

Father Jerry Byrd, pastor of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, will lead a “Living the Litany of Humility” retreat at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, in Bloomington, on Sept. 18-20.

The Litany of Humility calls on Christ for deliverance of the things human nature tends to seek—being esteemed, being honored, being approved. It also seeks deliverance from fear of that which human nature recoils from—being despised, being ridiculed, being wronged. And it asks Jesus for grace in desiring the good of others over self.

Throughout the New Testament, Christ and the Apostles call his followers to be humble like him.

From Friday evening through Sunday morning, Father Byrd will offer five talks on how to live the litany’s call to humility.

Each day also offers the opportunity for Mass and confession, with time for adoration and praying the Divine Mercy chaplet on Saturday and for praying the rosary on Saturday and Sunday.

Check-in begins at 5 p.m. on Friday, and the retreat ends at 11 a.m. on Sunday.

The cost for overnight guests includes lodging for two nights in a room with two queen-size beds. The cost per room is \$290 for one occupant, \$480 for two occupants, \$670 for three occupants and \$860 for four occupants. The cost includes light snacks on Friday evening, two breakfasts, one lunch and one supper per person.

The cost for commuters is \$90 and includes the same snacks and meals listed above.

For more information or to register, go to motheroftheredeemer.com or call 812-825-4642, ext. 1. †

Store blessing and celebration at Celtic Cross Catholic Gift Shop is August 15

A blessing and celebration of the Celtic Cross Catholic Gift Shop will take place at 1512 West 86th St. in Indianapolis at 1 p.m. on Aug. 15.

New owners Todd and Julia Sparks are honored to continue the legacy of Tim and Karen Shaw at the Celtic Cross,

which originally opened in 2013. All are welcome to this free event. The event will include refreshments, exclusive discounts and prizes.

For more information, contact Julia Sparks at 317-777-0059. †

Keys to a child’s success in grade school? New MTCA director shares tips

By John Shaughnessy

As the father of three school-aged children and as an educator for more than 20 years in Catholic schools in the archdiocese, Matthew Goddard views each new school year from three perspectives:

- He sees it from a student’s viewpoint.
- He considers it from a parent’s perspective.
- And he knows the care and commitment that Catholic school teachers and principals bring to students and their families.

This year, he will connect his experience and perspective to his new role as the executive director of the three Catholic schools in Indianapolis that form the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies—Central Catholic, Holy Angels and St. Philip Neri.

“What called me to Mother Theodore Catholic Academies is its unwavering commitment to serving students and families with compassion and excellence,” Goddard says. “Every day, our schools provide an environment where children are known, loved, challenged and encouraged to discover the gifts God has given them. That mission inspires me, and I am excited to be part of it.

“Our schools are uniquely positioned to help students discover not only what they can achieve, but who God is calling them to become. I look forward to sharing with our families and students throughout the year. Together, by working as partners and keeping our focus on faith, learning and growth, we can help every child succeed and prepare them for a bright future filled with purpose and opportunity.”

Tapping into that experience and enthusiasm, *The Criterion* invited Goddard to share advice on how students in Catholic grade schools across the archdiocese can make the most of their school year—and how parents can provide a supportive path toward that goal.

Here are his recommendations:

For students: Stay curious

“Some of the most successful students I have met were not necessarily the smartest in the classroom—they were the ones who remained curious, worked hard and refused to give up.”

Treat others the way you want to be treated

“Practice kindness, respect and gratitude every day. In every school I have served, I have seen how positive relationships create stronger classrooms and stronger communities. Treating others with dignity, helping classmates, listening to teachers, and demonstrating

good character often opens doors to opportunities both in school and in life.”

Get involved

“Challenge yourself to step outside your comfort zone. Get involved in activities, clubs, sports or service opportunities that help you discover your gifts and build confidence.”

Remember the basic keys to success

“Come to school ready to learn and willing to try. Ask questions when you do not understand something. Growth happens when we challenge ourselves.”

It’s OK to make mistakes

“Mistakes are not something to fear. Every accomplishment begins with learning, and learning requires effort, risk-taking and sometimes failure. The students who grow the most are those who view setbacks as opportunities to improve rather than reasons to quit. Confidence is built one challenge at a time.”

God believes in you, believe in yourself

“Lean into the gifts and talents God has given you. Believe in yourself, because your teachers, your family and your school community believe in you. Success is not about being perfect. It is about being committed to learning, growing and becoming the person God calls you to be.”

For parents: Be a strong partner

“One lesson I have learned throughout my years in Catholic education is that student success is strongest when school and home work as true partners. To our parents and guardians, I encourage you to stay engaged in your child’s education and communicate regularly with teachers. Throughout my career, I have seen that students achieve more when parents stay engaged in their education.”

Focus on growth, not perfection

“I encourage parents to focus on growth rather than perfection. Every student learns differently and develops at their own pace. The most successful students are not always the ones who earn the highest grades. They are often the students who learn to be resilient, take



For Matthew Goddard, the new executive director of the archdiocese’s Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, family is a gift he shares with his wife, Nichole, and their three children, Quentin, left, Lily and Jacob. They are members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood. (Submitted photo)

responsibility for their work, seek help when needed, and continue working hard even when things become difficult. “As educators, we see tremendous growth when families celebrate effort, character and progress alongside academic achievement.”

Remember the basic keys to your child’s success

“Create a home environment that values learning. Communicate with your child daily. Maintain routines. Connect with teachers and/or school leaders. Encourage persistence when challenges arise.”

Embrace the Catholic school mission

“Catholic schools do far more than educate—they form young people of faith, character and purpose.”

Be your child’s biggest supporter

“Most importantly, talk with your child every day. Celebrate their successes. Help them learn from challenges. Remind them that effort, perseverance and faith matter just as much as grades. Your involvement sends a powerful message that education is important and that your child has your support every step of the way.” †

TIPS

continued from page 1

this new school year—and for their parents to help them toward that goal. Here are her recommendations:

For students: Reach out to others

“If you are a freshman or a transfer student and your friends did not choose the same high school that you are attending, instead of focusing on your own discomfort, reach out to other students who are in the same situation,” Sister Mary Ann

recommends. “Offer them your friendship, or help them in finding classrooms or understanding the schedule.”

Take care of the basics

“Completing homework and assignments are often as important as tests when teachers compute grades. So don’t forget to turn in your assignments.”

Expand your interests

“Get involved in a school club or activity that matches your own interests or offers you new opportunities to expand your interests. Participating in sports is great, but not everyone is a great athlete. There are other ways to express your talents.

“As an example, I started a Model UN [United Nations] team last year made up of six freshmen and one sophomore. We participated in the Model UN program at Marian University [in Indianapolis]. The students bonded with each other, met students from other schools, and experienced life on a Catholic university campus.”

Use technology for your benefit

“Take advantage of your school’s technology to keep up with assignments and tests, especially if you miss school due to illness, school activities or family events. Teachers are often required to post their schedule of tests and assignments for each week, online.”

Take advantage of help

“If you have a difficult time taking tests or can’t quite figure out how to do those math problems, schedule a time to meet with your teacher. At our school, a math teacher is available every period for students who need extra help. Teachers are available at least three mornings each week before school for students who need to make up tests or assignments or receive extra help.”

Be smart to avoid trouble

“Know the school rules and follow them. They are designed to provide you with as much freedom as possible while providing for your safety and well-being, both in person and online.”

Embrace the faith

“We have a big liturgy committee, and a lot of kids have joined that to help plan the Masses. We have a Mass about once a month. We begin each day with prayer. We begin each class period with prayer. We end the day with prayer and say grace at lunch. And they have their religion classes, so they get a good basis for their faith. If they’re faithful to those kinds of things and participate, that’s a good way for them to continue their faith later.”

For parents: Start with love

“Students today are under a lot of pressure to achieve high grades and get into the top universities. Be realistic about your child’s abilities and assure them frequently that they are loved and will have a happy life even if they don’t graduate at the top of their class or get accepted by their dream school.”

Use technology for your child’s benefit

“Today’s technology often allows you to check your child’s academic progress online. Find out how to access your child’s grades at the beginning of the school year and check those grades regularly. Don’t take for granted that everything is going well because your child says it is, and don’t wait until the end of the grading period when it may be too late.”

Help your child build good habits

“Help your child to establish study habits and to budget their time to allow for completing homework assignments. When they go off to college, you won’t be there. Your child will need to be self-motivated and able to determine what he or she needs to do to succeed.”

Be aware

“Know what the school rules are and help your students follow those rules by getting them to school on time and dressed appropriately.”

Put school first

“Avoid extending school vacations beyond what is scheduled. If it is necessary to take your child out of school for a family emergency or event, make sure that your child follows online what is going on in the classes he or she is missing. Allow them time to complete assignments while they are away and to make up tests when they return to school.”

Stay connected

“Schools are putting more and more restrictions on cell phone use. Tell your child to let the school nurse or a teacher know if he or she is ill. The school will contact you if your child needs to go home. Contact the school if your child has an appointment. The school will let the student know that he or she has an early dismissal.”

Live the faith

“Take them to church on Sunday. It’s amazing. One of the religion teachers found out at one time—I don’t know if this is true every year or not—that only about 15% of his students’ parents took them to church on Sunday. That’s important. They really can’t expect that the kids are going to continue in their faith unless they’re also taking them to church and being active in their parishes. They really need to do that.” †



Providence Sister Mary Ann Stewart poses for a photo with Father Thomas Clegg, one of her students from her 56 years of teaching in the archdiocese. She taught Father Clegg at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis in the early 1970s. (Submitted photo)

Hispanic Ministry coordinator’s ‘lived testimony is a source of inspiration’

By Natalie Hoefer

When Alden Budier Hibbert was preparing for the sacrament of confirmation, he had to write a letter to his bishop sharing how he hoped to serve the Church.

“I don’t know in what way specifically to serve,” he recalls writing. “I just want to be that small donkey that the Lord had to go from Nazareth to Bethlehem and then Bethlehem to Egypt, and then when he came into Jerusalem. However I’m useful, I just want to serve.”

Budier Hibbert could not have imagined God would take him at his word and send him from his native country of Nicaragua to Indianapolis to serve as archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry.

“I can say the Lord has used me for whatever he wants,” he says with a smile of his new position.

Felix Navarrete is grateful for Budier Hibbert’s openness to God’s will.



Felix Navarrete

“Alden is a faithful servant,” says the director of the archdiocesan Office of Intercultural Ministry under which the Hispanic Ministry office falls. “His passion for sharing the faith with others, his love for [Church] tradition, and his own journey in search of the truth make Alden a great asset to the archdiocese.”

That journey had many stops along the way, beginning in his hometown in Nicaragua.

‘Indianapolis is my last option’

Budier Hibbert was born 28 years ago on Holy Thursday in Bluefields, Nicaragua—population less than 60,000—along his country’s east coast.

He grew up in a “very Catholic family with a special devotion to our Blessed Mother, praying the rosary, reading the Scriptures, going to Mass, and most of all being part of the Church in whatever I could help.”

After high school, the “big question popped up: Did I want to be a priest?” he recalls. He decided “the time wasn’t right” and pursued a degree in

business administration.

Four years into the five-year program, Budier Hibbert felt called to be a seminarian for the Diocese of Bluefields. After completing his first year of seminary in 2019, he was given permission to complete the last year of college with “the door open” if he wanted to return to the seminary.

“I said yes, not knowing 2020 would be 2020,” he says.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, he helped at his parish, especially with live-streaming daily Mass and other faith-building experiences for the parishioners.

After completing his degree, Budier Hibbert decided not to return to the seminary. Instead, after a year of working from home, he joined some relatives in Miami, Fla., in 2023 “for personal growth,” while still placing himself “at God’s service to do whatever he had in store for me.”

But Miami was expensive. He had friends who encouraged him to join them in Indianapolis, but Budier Hibbert hoped to move to a small town, telling them, “Indianapolis is my last option.”

His opinion changed after watching EWTN coverage of the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis in July 2024.

“I saw big history being made by the great people there working as a Church,” says the member of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis. “I remember the date I moved here—Sept. 8, 2024, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Mother.”

Budier Hibbert calls her his greatest inspiration.

“She taught me how to be obedient to God with happiness, even though you don’t understand where the Lord wants you to go or what he wants you to do, knowing that he always wants the best for us.”

He modeled that joyful obedience in accepting his new position—one he was hesitant to apply for.

When Budier Hibbert learned about the Hispanic Ministry opening, he recalls praying, “Lord, let the right person fill it.”

He suggested a friend apply, but she encouraged him to apply instead.

“I said, ‘No, I’m not right for it—those boots are too big for me,’” says Budier Hibbert. But she kept insisting, so he applied for the position.



‘The Lord always calls you to preach the Gospel in your everyday environment. So, what inspires me every day is to be that bridge or fill that gap ... in the Hispanic and Latino community so they can come closer to God.’

—Alden Budier Hibbert, new archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry

“Alden is a young man whose love for the Church is clearly evident in the way he speaks,” says Navarrete. “When we interviewed him for this position, we knew what our department was looking for in a candidate. As he answered our questions, many of the qualities we hoped to find became quite apparent.”

Budier Hibbert started as archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry on June 1.

‘I just try to be happy in his service’

In his role, he will work with and foster Hispanic lay leaders in parishes with Latino communities, “guiding them and helping them develop their ministries,” he says. He will help pastors “with challenges like immigration” and with coordinating sacraments for pastors who have no Hispanic lay leaders, abiding by “U.S. Church guidelines while bringing in all of the customs and traditions” from the various native Hispanic cultures.

Budier Hibbert also seeks to nourish faith in families through programs like the ministry’s annual Hispanic Family Camp. And he hopes to increase the participation of Hispanic youths and young adults in the life of the Church.

“I want them to know Christ,” he says. “And I want them to share with the rest of the Church their happiness, their energy.”

What excites Budier Hibbert most about his new role is serving as “a bridge.”

Whatever a person’s vocation or job is, “The Lord always calls you to preach the Gospel in your everyday environment,” he says. “So, what inspires me every day is to be that bridge or fill that gap ... in the Hispanic and Latino community so they can come closer to God.”

Many in Catholic Hispanic communities came to the U.S. “looking for a better way to live,” says Budier

Hibbert. He wants to remind them to “not forget that you have this very first and principal spiritual aspect of your life.

“I hope to bridge this gap so they can invite God into their lives. And if they did already, so they can know that there is a Church here that needs their service, needs their help and needs their happiness to share the Gospel.”

Budier Hibbert’s hopes to support Navarrete’s view of him as “a highly talented disciple.”

“His humility, creativity and extensive experience in the liturgical realm will bring a deeper spirituality to our current programs and efforts,” says Navarrete. “And his lived testimony is a source of inspiration for our community, especially for our Hispanic and Latino young adults. Indeed, they can relate to his experience.”

At the end of the day, Budier Hibbert prefers the quiet life. His “best day” involves walking while praying and meditating on the rosary, reading a history book and watching a movie “while eating a good dessert,” he says with a smile, admitting he “loves sweets.”

He is also still discerning a possible call to the priesthood.

In the meantime, Budier Hibbert still desires to be “the donkey that carried Jesus,” serving where the Lord calls him.

“Sometimes I forget what I wrote” in his letter to the bishop, he says. “But the Lord does not forget. He always has those words [from the letter] in mind, and he uses me.

“Whatever it is, if it’s for the Lord, I just try to be happy in his service.”

(For more information on the archdiocesan Hispanic Ministry, go to tinyurl.com/ArchIndyHispanicMinistry or contact Alden Budier Hibbert at 786-400-8454 or abudier@archindy.org.) †

Testimonio de vida del nuevo coordinador del Ministerio Hispano es fuente de inspiración

Por Natalie Hoefer

Cuando Alden Budier Hibbert se preparaba para el sacramento de la confirmación, tuvo que escribir una carta a su obispo en la que exponía cómo esperaba servir a la Iglesia.

“No sé exactamente de qué manera servir”—recuerda que escribió—. “Solo quiero ser ese pequeño burrito que el Señor utilizó para ir de Nazaret a Belén, y luego de Belén a Egipto, y más tarde cuando llegó a Jerusalén. Únicamente quiero servir, independientemente de cómo.”

Budier Hibbert no podría haber imaginado que Dios le tomaría la palabra y lo enviaría desde su país natal, Nicaragua, a



Alden Budier Hibbert

Indianápolis para servir como coordinador del Ministerio Hispano de la Arquidiócesis.

“Puedo decir que el Señor me ha utilizado para lo que Él ha querido,” afirma con una sonrisa al referirse a su nuevo cargo.

Félix Navarrete, director de la Oficina de Ministerio Intercultural de la Arquidiócesis, de la cual depende la oficina del Ministerio Hispano, se muestra agradecido por la apertura de Budier Hibbert a la voluntad de Dios.

“Alden es un servidor fiel. Su pasión

por compartir la fe con los demás, su amor por la tradición [de la Iglesia] y su propio camino en busca de la verdad hacen de Alden un gran activo para la Arquidiócesis.”

Ese camino ha tenido muchas paradas a lo largo del trayecto, comenzando en su ciudad natal en Nicaragua.

‘Indianápolis es mi última opción’

Budier Hibbert nació un Jueves Santo hace 28 años en Bluefields, Nicaragua, una ciudad de menos de 60,000 habitantes, situada en la costa este de su país.

Creció en una “familia muy católica, con una devoción especial a nuestra Santísima Madre, rezando el rosario, leyendo las Escrituras, asistiendo a misa y, sobre todo, formando parte de la Iglesia en todo lo que pudiera ayudar.”

Después de la preparatoria, “surgió la gran pregunta: ¿Quería ser sacerdote?” recuerda. Decidió que “no era el momento adecuado” y comenzó una licenciatura en administración de empresas.

Cuando llevaba cursados cuatro años del programa de cinco, sintió el llamado a ser seminarista de la diócesis de Bluefields. Tras completar su primer año de seminario en 2019, se le concedió permiso para terminar el último año de la universidad con “la puerta abierta” en caso de que quisiera regresar al seminario.

“Dije que sí, sin saber que 2020 iba a ser como fue,” afirma.

Durante la pandemia de COVID-19,

colaboró en su parroquia, especialmente con la transmisión en vivo de la misa diaria y otras actividades destinadas a fortalecer la fe de los feligreses.

Después de terminar su carrera, Budier Hibbert decidió no regresar al seminario. En cambio, luego de un año de trabajar desde casa, se reunió con algunos familiares en Miami, Florida, en 2023 “para mi crecimiento personal,” sin dejar de ponerse “al servicio de Dios para hacer lo que Él tuviera previsto para mí.”

Pero Miami era una ciudad costosa. Tenía amigos que lo animaban a unirse a ellos en Indianápolis, pero Budier Hibbert esperaba mudarse a un pueblo pequeño, y les dijo: “Indianápolis es mi última opción.”

Su opinión cambió después de ver la cobertura de EWTN sobre el Congreso Eucarístico Nacional celebrado en Indianápolis en julio de 2024.

“Vi cómo se hacía historia gracias a las personas maravillosas que trabajaban allí como Iglesia,” dice este miembro de la parroquia de San Felipe Neri en Indianápolis. “Recuerdo la fecha en que me mudé aquí: el 8 de septiembre de 2024, fiesta de la Natividad de la Santísima Virgen.”

Budier Hibbert la considera su mayor inspiración.

“Me enseñó a ser obediente a Dios con alegría, aunque uno no comprenda adónde el Señor quiere que vaya o qué quiere que haga, sabiendo que Él siempre quiere lo mejor para nosotros.”

Fue ejemplo de esa obediencia gozosa al aceptar el nuevo cargo para el que dudaba en postularse.

Cuando se enteró de la vacante en el Ministerio Hispano, recuerda haber orado: “Señor, haz que la persona adecuada ocupe ese puesto.”

Le sugirió a una amiga que se postulara, pero ella lo animó a que lo hiciera él.

“Le dije: ‘No, no soy la persona adecuada para eso; ese cargo es demasiado grande para mí,’” cuenta Budier Hibbert. Pero ella siguió insistiendo, así que presentó su solicitud para el puesto.

“Alden es un joven cuyo amor por la Iglesia se hace claramente evidente en su forma de hablar”—afirma Navarrete—. “Cuando lo entrevistamos para este puesto, sabíamos lo que nuestro departamento buscaba en un candidato. A medida que respondía a nuestras preguntas, muchas de las cualidades que esperábamos encontrar se hicieron bastante evidentes.”

Budier Hibbert asumió el cargo de coordinador del Ministerio Hispano de la Arquidiócesis el 1 de junio.

‘Solo intento ser feliz al servicio de Él’

En su cargo, trabajará con líderes laicos hispanos en parroquias con comunidades latinas y los apoyará, “guiándolos y ayudándolos a desarrollar sus ministerios,” afirma. Ayudará a

St. Nicholas dedication

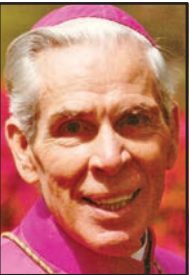
Members of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County take part on Aug. 1 in a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new facility at the Batesville Deanery faith community that includes a gymnasium, cafeteria, kitchen and preschool. Those cutting the ribbon are, from left, parishioner Frank Riehle, St. Nicholas School principal Eric Feller, St. Nicholas fifth-grader and fifth-generation student Grace Bond, education commission president Leann Bond, finance council president Norma Newton and parish council president Brian Batta. Father Shaun Whittington, St. Nicholas' pastor, blessed the addition to the parish's campus, which is a fruit of the parish's Heritage Project capital campaign. (Submitted photo)



Faithful craft World Mission Rosaries for Archbishop Sheen's beatification

JEFFERSONTOWN, Ky. (OSV News)—A parish-based rosary-making ministry in Kentucky is on a mission to create 1,000 World Mission Rosaries for the beatification of Venerable Fulton J. Sheen.

The apostolate, called the Brothers and Sisters of St. Edward, is among many U.S. groups whose rosaries will be donated to people attending the Sept. 24 beatification of Archbishop Sheen in St. Louis.



Ven. Fulton J. Sheen

The Pontifical Mission Societies issued a call for rosaries on May 1, asking individuals and groups to donate 1,000 or more rosaries to the cause as a collective effort. The society's goal is to have more than 70,000 rosaries by Sept. 15 so they can be distributed to all those present on the day of the beatification.

"The challenge is real. More than 75,000 rosaries are needed. There is no supply at that scale, and even limited inventory quickly becomes cost prohibitive," according to the society's website. "Whether you make 100 or 1,000, every rosary becomes part of something larger. Each one will be blessed before the beatification. Each one will continue to be prayed long after that day is over."

The World Mission Rosary was designed by Archbishop Sheen, who served as national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies. The renowned communicator announced during his "Catholic Hour" radio broadcast on Feb. 11, 1951, "Peace will come only when the hearts of the world have changed. To do this, we must pray, and not for ourselves, but for the world!" according to materials provided in the World Mission Rosary kits.

The idea to put a call out for tens of thousands of rosaries began with Sister Jude Andrew Link, a

member of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist who lives in Peoria, Ill.—the city where Archbishop Sheen was ordained a priest and where a chapel in the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception houses his tomb. Sister Jude Andrew proposed the idea to Msgr. Roger Landry, Pontifical Mission Societies' national director, who brought the idea to fruition.

In response, rosary-making groups across the United States—from members of Divine Mercy Parish in Kenner, La., to the Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen in Hankinson, N.D.—have invited local Catholics to make rosaries for the beatification. In Royal Oak, Mich., the National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica will offer its second two-hour rosary-making workshop on Aug. 13 to help the Pontifical Mission Societies meet its goal. In Lufkin, Texas, the Cloistered Dominican Nuns Monastery of the Infant Jesus completed 1,000 rosaries.

In the Louisville, Ky., suburb of Jeffersontown, 14 St. Edward rosary makers gathered for a crafting session on the morning of July 6 at St. Edward Parish to work toward their 1,000-rosary goal.

As they gathered, Debbie Grisanti, a member of St. Edward, explained the significance of the World Mission Rosary. Archbishop Sheen asked his radio listeners to "make a tour of the world on your World Mission Rosary."

"Each of the decades is a different color," she said, noting that each color represents a different continent. The first decade is green, which represents the grasslands and jungles of Africa. Blue represents the oceans of the Pacific Islands. The third decade is white and represents Europe and the seat of the Holy Father. Red recalls the fire of faith that brought missionaries to the Americas. Finally, yellow represents Asia's morning light of the East.

Dotty Pate brought the idea to a group of fellow parishioners who were already crafting rosaries through

Our Lady of the Rosary Makers, a nonprofit organization in Louisville.

During the July session, Rita McCubbin sat beside Pate, who taught her—and other first-timers—the proper way to make corded rosaries. McCubbin plans to attend the beatification this fall.

A similar gathering of rosary makers is taking place 750 miles northwest of Jeffersontown in Watertown, Minn., where volunteers meet every Thursday in the basement of the local parish church, Immaculate Conception, to progress in their goal of producing 10,000 World Mission rosaries by September.

They are organized under Spike Ministries, an industrious and committed nonprofit organization that hopes to share its enthusiasm for the rosary with an ambitious goal of involving as many people and parish groups as possible in making and distributing rosaries to missions around the globe.

Since the group began making five rosaries a week in a member's basement about 12 years ago, the Watertown group has reached an ongoing tally of more than 225,000 rosaries, according to organizer and Spike Ministries founder Mike Miller.

Across the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the St. Mary of the Lake Rosary Makers group has also been meeting regularly to create rosaries and share in the social and spiritual camaraderie of friends united in a cause. Their cause now is creating 2,000 World Mission rosaries by September.

In Clyde, Mo., the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have committed to contributing 500 rosaries to the cause.

"Having learned of the project only in May, time has been tight," said Benedictine Sister Lynn Marie D'Souza, according to a story posted on July 24 on the community's website, "but several of us have been steadily working on the effort ever since." †

ALDEN

continúa de la página 8

los párrocos "con desafíos como la inmigración" y con la coordinación de los sacramentos para aquellos párrocos que no cuenten con líderes laicos hispanos, respetando "las directrices de la Iglesia en Estados Unidos y al mismo tiempo incorporando todas las costumbres y tradiciones" de las diversas culturas hispanas.

Budier Hibbert también busca fortalecer la fe en las familias a través de programas como el Campamento Arquidiocesano de Familias del Ministerio que se celebra anualmente, y espera aumentar la participación de los jóvenes y adultos jóvenes hispanos en la vida de la Iglesia.

"Quiero que conozcan a Cristo"—

expresa—. "Y quiero que compartan con el resto de la Iglesia su alegría, su energía."

Lo que más entusiasmo a Budier Hibbert de su nuevo cargo es servir como "un puente."

Sea cual sea la vocación o el trabajo de una persona, "el Señor siempre lo llama a predicar el Evangelio en su entorno cotidiano. Por eso, lo que me inspira cada día es ser ese puente o cerrar esa brecha ... en la comunidad hispana y latina para que puedan acercarse más a Dios," asegura.

Muchos miembros de las comunidades católicas hispanas llegaron a Estados Unidos "en busca de mejores condiciones de vida," dice Budier Hibbert quien además desea recordarles que "no olviden que cuentan con este aspecto espiritual, el primero y más importante de su vida."

"Espero tender ese puente para que

puedan invitar a Dios a sus vidas. Y si ya lo han hecho, que sepan que aquí hay una Iglesia que necesita de su servicio, de su ayuda y de su alegría para compartir el Evangelio."

Budier Hibbert espera estar a la altura de la opinión que Navarrete tiene de él como "un discípulo de gran talento."

"Su humildad, creatividad y amplia experiencia en el ámbito litúrgico aportarán una espiritualidad más profunda a nuestros programas y esfuerzos actuales"—afirma Navarrete—. "Y su testimonio de vida es una fuente de inspiración para nuestra comunidad, especialmente para nuestros jóvenes adultos hispanos y latinos. De hecho, pueden identificarse con su experiencia."

Al final del día, Budier Hibbert prefiere la vida tranquila. Su "mejor día" consiste en caminar mientras reza y medita el rosario, leer un libro de historia y ver una

película "mientras disfruta de un buen postre," dice con una sonrisa, admitiendo que "le encantan los dulces."

Además, sigue discerniendo una posible vocación al sacerdocio.

Mientras tanto, sigue deseando ser "el burrito que llevó a Jesús," sirviendo donde el Señor lo llame.

"A veces olvido lo que escribí [en su carta al obispo]. Pero el Señor no lo olvida. Siempre tiene presentes esas palabras y me pone a su servicio."

"Sea lo que sea, si es para el Señor, simplemente trato de ser feliz a su servicio."

(Para obtener más información sobre el Ministerio Hispano de la Arquidiócesis, visite tinyurl.com/ArchIndyHispanicMinistry o comuníquese con Alden Budier Hibbert en el 786-400-8454 o en abudier@archindy.org.) †

250th Anniversary of the United States of America

250th Anniversary of the United States of America

Indiana’s Catholics reflect American spirit of courage and sacrifice

As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary this year, the country acknowledges this landmark moment by recalling the stories of its founders, its heroes and the everyday people who have graced America with their courage, their sacrifice and their willingness to confront challenges and overcome them.

In that same spirit, *The Criterion* is sharing stories of Catholics from Indiana’s past and present who have displayed those same qualities in leaving their mark on our archdiocese, our state, our country and our world.

As we continue this series, we hope you enjoy these stories and are inspired by the people in them. †



Logo by Emily Mastronicola

A mother’s gift and a soldier’s loyalty define a family’s faith and love

By John Shaughnessy

A mother will do everything she can to protect her child, and Don Booth’s mom hoped and prayed that her special gift would give him a double layer of protection as he served in the U.S. Army during World War II.

The first part of the gift stemmed from her firm belief in God, a belief that she and Booth’s father passed along to their son—a copy of the New Testament.

The second part of the gift was formidable in a different way. Booth’s mom added a steel plate to the cover of the New Testament.

As he prepared to go into combat during the war, Booth placed his mom’s gift in his front shirt pocket, over his heart—a heart that was filled with love for his country.

“He was proud he was an American, and he wanted to keep his country free,” says Marian Roth, Booth’s daughter and a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville. “His service in the war began in North Africa. While he was there, he contracted malaria, and the doctors thought he had died. Dad woke up among rows of dead soldiers, and he was terrified. God did not want him to die so he fought on.”

Booth continued to serve in battles in Europe, enduring the horrors of war while fighting for people’s freedom, clinging to the hope that nearly all soldiers have—to return home safely one day.

“He fought until he ended up in France and the French people were liberated,” Roth notes. “The fighting was fierce, and God protected him throughout the war.”

Years later, her father shared other moments from the war when he believed God saved him.

One of those moments involved the steel-plated New Testament.

“He always remembered that his mom and dad were praying for God to protect him,” Roth says. “A bullet hit that Bible and made a dent in it, sparing his life.

“In another battle, he had to leave his fox hole to go to the command center. His unit was under attack, and they were being bombarded with artillery, and shells were flying everywhere. When it was time to return to his fox hole, he hesitated, wondering how he would ever get back there alive.

“Someone came up from behind, grabbed his shoulder and said, ‘Come on buddy, I’ll go with you.’ He traveled through the shelling with explosions all around him, and he did not get a scratch. He turned to thank his new friend, but no one was there.”

Her dad always wondered if an angel had guided him during that moment. At the same time, he also knew the cold-hearted reality of war.

“Only eight soldiers out of his unit made it back to America alive,” Roth says.

Booth “was awarded the Silver Star and many other medals for heroism,” his daughter adds.

In the years that followed his return home, Booth married and had a family. His daughter says he showed them the same loyalty that he displayed in serving his country. He also gave them the same double layer of love and faith that his mother had given him in the gift of that steel-plated New Testament.

“Dad taught me that God loved me and to have faith that he would take care of me in good times and bad,” Roth says. “He also taught me to have hope for a good future because of the freedom brave men and women had earned for me.

“When the ‘National Anthem’ is sung, I get a tear in my eye when I hear ‘Land of the free and home of the brave.’ God has truly blessed America for 250 years. May Americans continue to love God, have faith in him, and hope for another 250 years of freedom.” †

Two dreamers and their descendants meet on a bridge across time

By John Shaughnessy

She kept looking to the west in the direction of America, as the ship surged across the Atlantic Ocean. Yet every once in a while, she glanced over her shoulder and remembered her parents’ reactions when she said goodbye to them in Ireland.

She could still feel her mother hugging her. She could still see the tears in her mom’s eyes. She could also feel her father’s big, rough hands squeezing her small hands as he fought back his own tears to tell her, “We love you.”

Part of her wanted to feel those hugs and those hands again, especially as a cold wind from the ocean whipped through her. But the boat roared ahead, taking 17-year-old Bridget McDonnell toward America, and the dreams and adventures she hoped to have.

On a different boat, at a different time, a young man kept his focus on America, too. At 16, Jack Shaughnessy had no reason to look back to Ireland. He also had no one who wished he would return to its rocky shores one day. He was an orphan whose parents died when he was 5, a young man who struggled, scraped and fought for the little he had in this world. So he boarded a ship bound for the United States, desperately hoping to find a job, a future and a new life.

The two youths never set eyes on each other as they grew up on different coasts in Ireland. Yet when Jack saw Bridget for the first time at a party in America, he couldn’t stop looking at her. They married and started a new life together, beginning a family whose roots would grow, thrive and continue beyond what they ever expected.

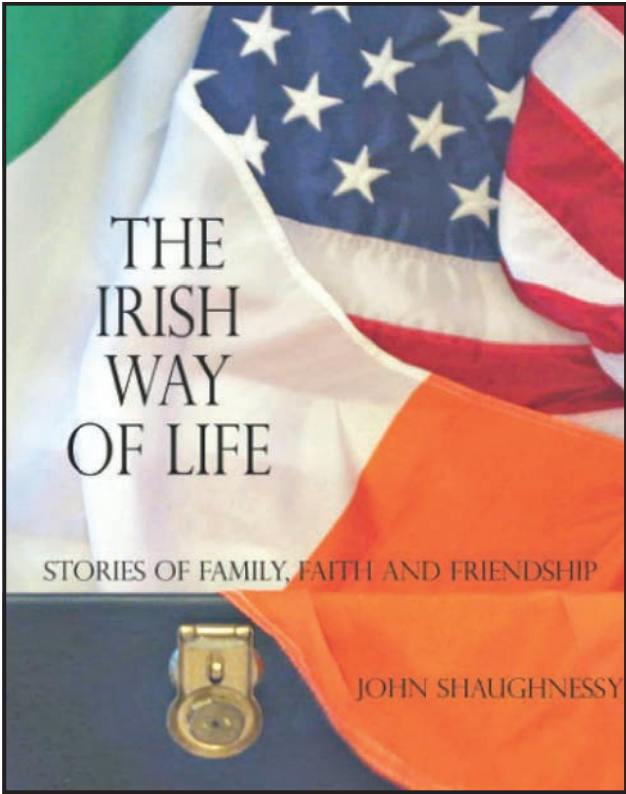
So it is with most families. Our families’ histories are filled with journeys that lead us to places we have always dreamed of, and to destinations we never imagined. Our families’ histories overflow with the tales of people who followed dreams, took risks and endured sacrifices while trying to make their mark in the world. Our families’ histories are also touched with efforts to remember and honor those who came before us.

More than 25 years ago, my siblings and cousins made sure the names of our grandparents were etched on the American Immigrant Wall of Honor at Ellis Island in New York Harbor. Seeing their names there for the first time—during a long-ago visit with my wife and our then-young children—brought back their images to me. I thought about the journeys my grandparents had made, and the lives they had shaped. What affected me just as much were my children’s reactions at the Wall of Honor.

Like many parents, my wife and I tried to teach our children an appreciation of family. Like many parents, we sometimes wondered whether that message had reached them. Yet, on that day, they went searching for the names of their great-grandparents—two people they had never met. And when they found their names, they bowed to touch them. They even asked to have their pictures taken there as the waters of New York Harbor lapped in the background.

It was a humbling experience watching my children as I remembered my grandparents. The bridge between generations had been made, the bonds between Ireland and America had been tightened. While the currents of history connected us for one afternoon, the currents of family connected us forever.

(Editor’s note: This reflection is an excerpt from John Shaughnessy’s book, *The Irish Way of Life: Stories of Family, Faith and Friendship*.) †



Daring archbishop left a lasting impact on Church in America

By Mike Krokos

On its website, Our Sunday Visitor notes, “Archbishop John Francis Noll was a missionary at heart, whose influence extended through the printed word and his work as a bishop in the Catholic Church.”

Some also say no other prelate had a greater impact or more lasting influence on the Catholic Church in America.

So much more could be said about Archbishop Noll, who was born in 1875 in Fort Wayne, Ind. He left his home at 13 to enter a preparatory seminary, later attended Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Cincinnati for his theology and philosophy studies, and was ordained a priest for the then-Diocese of Fort Wayne at the age of 23 in 1898.

Known for his leadership, his character and his commitment to Christian principles, the young priest fought against anti-Catholicism in all its forms, including against a predominately Protestant culture that suspiciously viewed Catholics. Father Noll also became a beloved pastor who helped unite the divided parishes in which he served.

The priest used his writings to help educate his people about the faith, and his excellent work eventually led him to create *The Parish Monthly*, a periodical, with other American clergy adopting his idea.

Ten years after his ordination, Father Noll bought a printing press for just \$1 and hired a team to help him with publications. On May 5, 1912, the first issue of *Our Sunday Visitor* newspaper, based in Huntington, Ind., rolled off the presses with an initial run of 35,000 which were sent to priests and parishes across the United States. The publication’s original goals were to combat anti-Catholic sentiment, defend the teachings of the Church and provide solid catechesis to its readers.

By the end of the year, Father Noll had sent out more than 200,000 copies of the paper. At its peak in 1961, the national weekly publication reached 1 million copies in circulation, and Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. became one of the world’s largest Catholic publishers.

When Bishop Herman J. Alerding died in late 1924, Pope Pius XI named then-Father Noll the fifth bishop of Fort Wayne. He was ordained a bishop on July 30, 1925.

Bishop Noll’s commitment to *Our Sunday Visitor* continued, and because of his experience with national and international issues, he was named secretary of what later became the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He was also a longtime member of its administrative committee. In his role, he again demonstrated his foresight about the coming information age. Bishop Noll helped launch Catholic News Service and the “Catholic Hour” on NBC

radio with then-Father Fulton J. Sheen. He then worked with Catholic Charities to aid families and children who were devastated by the Depression. He also oversaw a massive building program of churches, schools, hospitals, a seminary and an orphanage. As a sign of Vatican esteem, Bishop Noll was given the honorary title of archbishop in 1953.

Archbishop Noll played an instrumental role in the early 1950s by leading a national fundraising campaign to complete work on completion of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, using *Our Sunday Visitor* as a means of galvanizing donations. The shrine was dedicated on Nov. 20, 1959, three years after Archbishop Noll died. He was honored at the time of dedication for his leadership with the title “Apostle of the Shrine.”

Archbishop Noll had notable connections to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He was a first cousin of Msgr. Raymond Noll, who served as archdiocesan vicar general from 1934-59. And he was a great uncle of John Fink, who served as editor of *The Criterion* from 1984-1996 (and later as editor emeritus) after serving in various positions at Our Sunday Visitor from 1956-84.

Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. continues



to thrive as a major American Catholic publishing company and digital service provider. It is the largest Catholic publishing house in the United States.

In the closing paragraph of her book, *Champion of the Church: The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Archbishop Noll*, author Ann Ball sums up his life:

“John Francis Noll—with his ‘faithful companion,’ *Our Sunday Visitor*—was a daring, resourceful priest who led the fight against ignorance and bigotry in the early western United States. Nowhere in the pages of history can one find a greater champion of the Catholic Church in America.” †

Bishop Martin Marty inspired a saint as a missionary to Native Americans

By Sean Gallagher

Born in 1834, Bishop Martin Marty came to Indiana in 1860 as a Benedictine monk of Einsiedeln Abbey in Switzerland. The abbot of Einsiedeln sent him to the fledgling Saint Meinrad Priory in southern Indiana, founded six years earlier by the Swiss monastery.

Facing various problems, Saint Meinrad was in danger of being closed. Father Martin was able to stabilize its community life and served as its first abbot when it became an independent abbey.

In coming to America, Father Martin also had an interest in serving as a missionary to Native Americans. In his earlier education, he had been inspired by the stories of Jesuit Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, who ministered among the Native Americans in the Northern Plains, the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Northwest from 1838-68.

This desire began to be fulfilled in 1876 when Abbot Martin traveled to the Standing Rock Reservation, which today straddles North Dakota and South Dakota, to investigate if it might be possible to found a monastery there. He arrived around the same time that Lakota chief Sitting Bull led a group of Native American warriors to victory over American Army forces led by General George Custer in the historic Battle of the Little Bighorn in what is now southeastern Montana.

While Saint Meinrad did not establish a monastery in the Dakotas at that time, Abbot Martin, showing capability and determination for the challenging life of a missionary among the Sioux, was appointed a bishop for

the Dakota Territory in 1879. He was later appointed bishop of Sioux Falls, S.D., in 1889; and bishop of Saint Cloud, Minn., in 1895, dying a year later at the age of 62.

The gaunt 5-foot-10-inch bishop, who weighed 130 pounds and was known among the Sioux as “Black Robe Lean Chief,” met with Sitting Bull twice in his ministry in the Dakotas.

In addition to building upon the Church’s missionary work among the Native Americans of the northern Plains previously done by Father de Smet, Bishop Marty also contributed to the growth in holiness of an American saint.

In a letter written in 1922, St. Katherine Drexel wrote about how she, at the time a young adult woman from a wealthy Philadelphia family, met Bishop Marty on various occasions and was impressed by his zeal for missionary work among the Native Americans.

St. Katherine went on in 1886 to found a community of women religious dedicated to ministering among Blacks and Native Americans. In her 1922 letter, she wrote that Bishop Marty helped her realize her “missionary vocation,” adding that “had I not met Bishop Marty, my whole future career might have been entirely different.” She was declared a saint in 2000 by St. John Paul II.

Bishop Martin’s life is recounted in some detail in Benedictine Father Albert Kleber’s *History of St. Meinrad Archabbey, 1854-1954*, written for the monastery’s centennial. †



‘Had I not met Bishop Marty, my whole future career might have been entirely different.’

—St. Katherine Drexel

Page provides links to podcasts, articles, more on U.S. 250th anniversary

As the United States marks its 250th anniversary, Catholics across the country are invited to turn in prayer to the love and mercy of Jesus Christ through the consecration of our nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Visit archindy.org/250th to find prayer resources, related ArchIndy Vox episodes and a *Criterion* profile series celebrating Catholics from Indiana whose faith and service have helped shape our state, our Church and our nation. †



Who has inspired you to pursue a life rooted in hope, faith and love?

As our country celebrates the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, *The Criterion* is inviting you to share your favorite personal stories of someone among your ancestors, heroes or current lives in America who has inspired you to pursue a life rooted in hope, faith and love.

Please send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number

BRUTE

continued from page 1

on Bishop Bruté Days as his parents were.

“On the way down, I was like, ‘Mom, why are you sending me all the way down to Indianapolis?’ ” recalled Avery, who will soon start the ninth grade as a homeschooled student. “As I got used to it, I was like, ‘This was a good idea. Thanks, Mom.’ I’ll definitely come back next year.”

That’s been the reaction of many of the teenage boys who take part in Bishop Bruté Days from year to year. They’re drawn by the camaraderie they experience with their peers, the seminarians who help operate the camp, and archdiocesan priests who spend time with them during the three-day event.

That fellowship is built up through a combination of prayer, daily Mass, eucharistic adoration, the availability of the sacrament of penance, spiritual presentations and outdoor games like soccer and capture the flag. This year, this happened both at Bishop Bruté Seminary and at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in Bloomington, which the participants visited on July 15.

“I really do enjoy praying with all of my brothers here,” said Avery. “It really makes me feel part of a community. They share the same faith that I have. They’re deeply invested in it like I am.”

Laying a ‘good foundation’ of faith

Jessica Boham and her family had learned about Bishop Bruté Days when they lived near Indianapolis while her husband Sampson was studying at the Indiana University Medical School in the city. Avery was too young at the time to take part in the vocations camp. But Jessica was convinced enough by its goodness that she filed it away in the back of her mind for the future, even if her family lived far from Indianapolis.

“Being a strong Catholic family, we thought that this would give him a good foundation to learn more about the Catholic faith,” she said. “And we thought that Bishop Bruté Days would give him an opportunity to be really immersed in what it might be like to be in a seminary. Then he could grow from that and continue his discernment.”

Although he may have had the longest drive to get to the camp, Avery definitely wasn’t alone. He was one of 65 teenage boys who took part, most of them coming from 33 parishes across central and southern Indiana. The day before the high school camp, there was a one-day event at the seminary for seventh- and eighth-graders that drew 45 participants from across the archdiocese.

It didn’t take Avery long to look upon as “brothers” the young men from Indiana in the high school camp, something that gratified his father.

“It’s great to see young boys participating in this,” Sampson said. “[Avery] being around other boys with the same mission and ambition will help him grow more in the Catholic faith.”

“We are so glad we brought our son to Bishop Bruté Days,” added Jessica. “The moments of peace, sacredness and seriousness of the camp was balanced with activity, laughter and friendship—just the right mix to begin his discernment of God’s will in his life.”

Being inspired and hoping to inspire

The three newly ordained archdiocesan priests visited Bishop Bruté Days on July 14. Father Samuel Hansen, Father Timothy Khuishing and Father Khaing Thu all received priestly formation at Bishop Bruté as college seminarians.

Father Thu was the principal celebrant of a Mass at the seminary on July 14. When he stood at the altar during the liturgy, he looked out on all the teenage boys at Bishop Bruté Days in the pews of the seminary’s chapel,



Moises Velez, left, Alexis Angeles-Sandoval, Paul Racanelli and Jude Vanderhulst kneel in prayer during a July 14 Mass in the chapel of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. The liturgy was celebrated on the opening day of Bishop Bruté Days, the archdiocese’s annual vocations camp.

looking much like he did when he took part in the camp years ago.

“It reminded me of when I was in those pews,” said Father Thu, now serving as parochial vicar at St. Michael Parish in Greenfield and St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville. “As a participant, I was really inspired and motivated by all the priests who helped at Bishop Bruté Days. I hope now to be an inspiration, not because of who I am, but because of the priesthood through which I am celebrating Mass and serving the people.”

While hoping to inspire this year’s camp participants, Father Thu noted that he’s encouraged by them.

“I’m inspired by their presence and the fact that they have a lot of energy that they want to use to serve the Church,” he said. “Hopefully they’ll be guided in the right direction to listen to God’s call in their lives.”

Father Hansen, parochial vicar at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, called returning to Bishop Bruté “a dream fulfilled,” saying that in the two years he was in formation there he had “imagined being a priest so much.”

“So, it’s a special time to be here to share the joys and the glories of the priesthood with guys who are hoping for that one day,” said Father Hansen.

Peers helping each other grow in faith

John Paul Pack appreciated getting to meet and know the many priests and seminarians present during Bishop Bruté Days. An incoming homeschooled senior and a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, this year’s vocations camp was the fourth one for John Paul, who is discerning applying to become an archdiocesan seminarian.

“I’ve loved this place ever since my first year here,” he said. “I’ve found it super-inspirational.”

In addition to being inspired by the priests and seminarians at the vocations camp, John Paul also valued having so many peers with him there.

“It gives you a sense of fraternity,” he said. “You get to meet these awesome young men with super-good Catholic backgrounds. They just take their faith so seriously. That inspires me to take my faith more seriously.”

Michael Bauer, an incoming junior at New Palestine High School in New Palestine and a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, is also a Bishop Bruté Days veteran.

“I go to a public school,” he said. “So, I’m surrounded by the secular world all the time. It’s good to be back among faith-filled people.”

Being around so many Catholic peers at the camp gives Michael a spiritual shot in the arm.

“It gives me a chance to revitalize my faith,” he noted. “My daily mundane life gets to me. I fall away from faith a little bit. But every summer when I come back here, my faith is reinvigorated all over again.”

Hope for the future of the Church

In addition to helping teenage boys grow in their faith and begin discerning God’s call in their lives, Bishop Bruté Days also helps archdiocesan seminarians in their ongoing formation for ordained ministry.

Seminarian Nathan Huynh, who will soon begin his fourth year of formation at Bishop Bruté, assisted at the vocations camp.

“Youth ministry is something that I’ve always enjoyed in general,” said Huynh, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. “It’s nice to see familiar faces from past Bishop Bruté Days or other events where I’ve met these teenagers.



Father Michael Keucher leads Bishop Bruté Days participants on July 15 in praying the Stations of the Cross on the grounds of Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in Monroe County. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)



Avery Boham, center, poses on July 16 in the chapel of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis with his family. They are, from left, his little brother Lijah, his parents Sampson and Jessica and his sister Kitson. Avery took part in Bishop Bruté Days, the archdiocese’s annual vocations camp.

What makes this event flow is everyone’s enthusiasm to want to grow closer to God.

“It gives me hope that the future of the Church is in good hands.”

Seminarian Dean Cheever, who will be starting his second year of formation at Bishop Bruté, was similarly encouraged by spending time with the teens at the vocations camp.

“Honestly, they’re very inspiring,” said Cheever, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. “It seems like they share attitudes that we have. They’re very excited about the future of the Church, learning about the faith and bringing it to other people.”

Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director, shares that excitement. That hope is what keeps Bishop Bruté Days from getting old for him, even though this year’s vocations camp was the seventh one he has overseen.

“Every single year, I have the joy of knowing that every one of these guys was invited personally by the Lord,” said Father Keucher, who is also pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County. “They’re not here by accident, but by grace. That’s what keeps it new, along with the enthusiasm, zeal, excitement in them for God, which is very beautiful.”

During this year’s Bishop Bruté Days, Father Keucher and other priests who assisted gave reflections on the Sacred Heart of Jesus since it was just the month after the country’s bishops re-consecrated America to the Sacred Heart in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of America’s founding.

“St. John Vianney said that the priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus,” Father Keucher said in an interview with *The Criterion*. “So, it’s really appropriate to be thinking about the Sacred Heart in connection with the priestly vocation. We have young men here who are growing in virtue, prayer, fraternity, their love for the Lord and their desire to do his will. That’s a gift to the archdiocese.”

In his homily during the Bishop Bruté Days’ closing Mass, Father Keucher addressed the parents of the camp participants.

“It was such a joy for me as a priest to witness the fierceness of the love of God in the hearts of your sons,” Father Keucher said. “It’s been a great three days. I love watching young men fall in love with the Lord and, little by little, grow into men of virtue, men of prayer, men of Christ. And that’s exactly what’s going on here.”

(For more photos from Bishop Bruté Days, go to www.CriterionOnline.com. For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, go to HearGodsCall.com.) †

Priest and three young adults visit 16 adoration chapels in one day

By Sean Gallagher

Father Jonathan Meyer was honest. He called it “a crazy idea.”

But it’s one that he and three young adults embraced wholeheartedly. In the process, they witnessed the beauty and power of prayer from one end of the archdiocese to the other.

The four made a pilgrimage by visiting all 16 perpetual adoration chapels in central and southern Indiana in one day on July 22. They started at 6 a.m. at the chapel on the St. John the Baptist campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County and completed it at 8 p.m. at the chapel at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Aurora.

Over the course of the day, the tour was livestreamed in a series of short videos on All Saints Parish’s YouTube channel: youtube.com/@allparish/shorts.

They spent 15 minutes in prayer in each chapel, interceding with God for specific intentions in each place, totaling four hours of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament across the day. Over the course of the day, the four spent 10 hours driving across the archdiocese.

“It’s been a powerful experience,” said Father Meyer at about 12:30 p.m. at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. Its adoration chapel was the 11th one he and the young adults visited that day.

Father Meyer was ordained in 2003 and in every place that he’s ministered there has been a perpetual adoration chapel, including St. Luke where he served as parochial vicar from 2006-08. He currently serves in the four parishes in Dearborn County.

Father Meyer’s close connection to these chapels has also come about through him establishing three of them. He began perpetual adoration at St. Mary Parish in North Vernon in 2010, at All Saints in 2017 and at St. Mary in Aurora in 2024.

“My entire priesthood has known nothing but perpetual adoration,” Father Meyer said. “All I can say is that it bears fruit, and it works. It changes people’s lives.”

‘The powerhouse of prayer’

It certainly changed Lucy Herth’s life. Herth, 28, is the youth minister at All Saints Parish. She was one of the three young adults on the pilgrimage on July 22.

Of the 16 adoration chapels that she visited that day, the one at St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute meant the most to her.

“It was the first adoration chapel where I regularly spent time with the Lord,” Herth said in an e-mail to *The Criterion* of her time when she was a college student in Terre Haute. “It was there that my relationship with Jesus deepened and where I began to recognize his call to serve him in ministry. Returning after so many years felt incredibly personal.”

Prayer intentions during adoration chapel pilgrimage

Father Jonathan Meyer and three young adults made a pilgrimage on July 22 in which they visited all 16 perpetual adoration chapels in the archdiocese in one day.

At each chapel, they prayed for a specific intention that often was related to the patron saint of the parish. Here are the intentions they prayed for at each parish adoration chapel they visited:

- All Saints Parish in Dearborn County: Bishops, priests and deacons.
- St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County: Children.
- Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg: Marriages and families.
- St. Louis Parish in Batesville: Government leaders.
- St. Mary Parish in Greensburg: Mothers.
- St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville: Fathers.
- Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood: Religious sisters.
- St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis: Encouragement and affirmation in the Church.
- St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis: Spiritual protection upon parishes and the archdiocese.
- St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis: Conversion for children, grandchildren and godchildren who are away from the Church.
- St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis: Doctors, nurses and all the sick.
- St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville: Those who are persecuted.
- St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute: Revival and renewal.
- St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford: The poor, underprivileged and suffering.
- St. Mary Parish in North Vernon: Vocations to the priesthood.
- St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Aurora: Physical, mental and emotional healing. †

Herth was amazed at the unique beauty of each chapel she visited during the day.

“Each one reflected the love and care that a parish had poured into creating a sacred place where people could encounter Christ,” she said. “Although every chapel was unique, each one pointed to the same eucharistic Lord.”

At the adoration chapel at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford, Merth, Ethan Green and Rachel Fairfield, the other young adults on the pilgrimage, and Father Meyer saw beauty in grief being shared by strangers in what Herth described as “God’s perfect timing.”

At that chapel, the pilgrims were praying for people suffering in any way. Just before they were getting ready to leave to go on to the next chapel, someone knocked on its door.

Father Meyer spoke about the experience in a homily during a Mass the next day at All Saints’ St. Joseph campus, viewed by *The Criterion* in an archived online video.

The priest opened the door and met a young adult man from Evansville, Ind., who was in Bedford on a work project. He was looking for a place to pray after learning that he and his girlfriend had just lost their unborn daughter to a miscarriage 16 weeks into his girlfriend’s pregnancy.

“And then he started crying and fell into my arms,” Father Meyer recalled. “He would not let go. I just put my hands on his shoulders, I looked him in the eye and I told him, ‘You are in the perfect place. God loves you and you’re a good father. ... You have a child in heaven right now that sees her father because he’s grieving. Your child is rejoicing that you love the Lord.’ ”

As Father Meyer and the young adults prepared to leave for the next chapel, he turned to a woman praying in the chapel who was there for her weekly hour of adoration.

He brought the young man into the chapel and introduced her to him. She immediately sat beside him to console him and pray with him.

“This is why adoration is so awesome,” Father Meyer said in his homily. “It is the powerhouse of prayer. We were at St. Vincent de Paul to pray for people who are suffering and here’s a man who’s grieving. He goes to the church and finds people there who are praying 24 hours per day.”

The gift of eucharistic adoration

The pilgrims also experienced some lighthearted moments of fun in their travels across the archdiocese.

“There was so much laughter, singing, storytelling,



Ethan Green, left, Lucy Merth and Father Jonathan Meyer kneel in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament on July 22 in the perpetual adoration chapel of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. The three and another young adult visited all 16 perpetual adoration chapels in the archdiocese that day. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

praying and simply enjoying one another’s company,” Merth said.

She recalled how the pilgrims called a phone number on the side of a business van they were behind just out of curiosity about what work the company did.

The driver of the van answered the call.

“When we drove past the van,” Merth recalled, “the driver noticed the large Jesus decal on Father Meyer’s vehicle and laughed, saying, ‘Hey! You have Jesus in your car! I’ve been looking for him! You’ve had him this whole time!’ ”

That moment of fun and laughter led Merth to prayerful reflection later.

“I couldn’t stop thinking about those words,” she said. “Isn’t that true for so many of us? We spend our lives searching for Jesus, while he waits for us so faithfully in our adoration chapels.”

In his ministry in parishes across central and southern Indiana, Father Meyer has witnessed the power that adoration chapels can have, especially given the fact that hundreds of people will come to pray in them from day to day and week to week.

“I don’t know anything else that brings so much life to a parish,” he said. “It’s a silent ministry. It’s very different from a festival or a school. People just come in, they love the Lord and they leave. But their lives are changed.

“Perpetual adoration works. I’ve never met a priest who opened an adoration chapel and then said, ‘That was a bad decision.’ It’s such a gift.”

(For an online list of perpetual adoration chapels in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, go to archindy.org/perpetual-adoration-chapels.) †

ADORATION TOUR 2026

Graphic by Rachel Fairfield

1 ALL SAINTS, ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST 25743 State Road 1 Guilford, IN 47022	2 ST. NICHOLAS 6461 E. St. Nicholas Dr. Sunman, IN 47041
3 HOLY FAMILY 3027 Pearl St Oldenburg, IN 47036	4 ST. LOUIS 13 St. Louis Place Batesville, IN 47006
5 ST. MARY 1331 E Hunter Robbins Way Greensburg, IN 47240	6 ST. JOSEPH 125 E. Broadway Shelbyville, IN 46176
7 OUR LADY OF THE GREENWOOD 335 S. Meridian St. Greenwood, IN 46143	8 ST. BARNABAS 8300 Rahke Road Indianapolis, IN 46217
9 ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL 3354 W. 30th St. Indianapolis, IN 46222	10 ST. MONICA 6131 N. Michigan Road Indianapolis, IN 46228
11 ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST 7575 Holliday Dr., E. Indianapolis, IN 46260	12 ST. THOMAS MORE 1200 N. Indiana St. Mooresville, IN 46158
13 ST. PATRICK 1807 Poplar St. Terre Haute, IN 47803	14 ST. VINCENT DE PAUL 1723 "I" St. Bedford, IN 47421
15 ST. MARY (NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY) 212 Washington St. North Vernon, IN 47265	16 ST. MARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 210 Fifth St Aurora, IN 47001

Court shields women religious from New York assisted suicide law

(OSV News)—A federal judge on July 30 temporarily shielded four orders of women religious and Catholic health care ministries from enforcement of a New York state law allowing physicians to aid terminally ill adults in dying by suicide.

The Catholic entities—the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, the Missionary Sisters of St. Benedict and the Little Sisters of the Poor—sued the state on July 17, arguing the law would require them to facilitate such deaths for their patients in violation of their faith.

“Families entrust their loved ones to us because they know our homes will be places of tenderness, dignity and faithful care,” Mother Mary Rose Heery, prioress general of the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, said in a July 31 statement. “We are grateful that we can continue honoring that trust and remain beside every resident until the very end.”

U.S. District Judge Anne M. Naracci's temporary restraining order also sets an Aug. 20 deadline for New York Attorney General Letitia James to respond to the emergency motion.

James' office did not immediately respond to an OSV News request for comment.

Supporters of physician-assisted suicide argue the practice protects the autonomy of suffering or terminally ill individuals in their final days, but opponents argue the practice disregards the dignity of human life and leaves those who are ill or dying vulnerable to coercion, among other concerns.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explicitly condemns the practice of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide as “morally unacceptable” (#2277) and a violation of the Fifth Commandment,

“You shall not kill.”

Gov. Kathy Hochul, D-N.Y., who is Catholic, signed the Medical Aid in Dying Act (MAID) in February, arguing she had “secured” guardrails during the legislative process that ensured the “integrity of patient decision and preparedness of medical institutions.” The state’s Catholic bishops were among those who objected to the law, which authorizes terminally ill New Yorkers with less than six months to live to seek physician-assisted suicide.

“Forcing Catholic nuns to participate in suicide—and robbing New Yorkers of the choice to receive faithful, life-affirming care—is both unlawful and unjust,” Mark Rienzi, president of Becket, a religious liberty law firm, and the lead attorney for the health care ministries, said in a July 31 statement.

“This agreement protects the sisters and those they care for while we fight to end New York’s suicide mandate for good,” he said.

Bishop John O. Barres of Rockville Centre, N.Y., said in a statement issued through Becket, "This agreement is an important first step toward protecting religious freedom."

“New York cannot force the Church to answer suffering with suicide or abandon the sick and dying when they need care most,” he said. “Until our legal fight is resolved, this temporary agreement keeps our ministries free to serve every patient according to the Gospel. We continue to proclaim that every human life is sacred and worthy



An undated file photo shows a Dominican Sister of Hawthorne serving a resident at Rosary Hill Home in Hawthorne, N.Y. On July 30, a judge temporarily shielded four orders of women religious and Catholic healthcare ministries from enforcement of a New York state law allowing physicians to aid terminally ill adults in dying by suicide. (OSV News photo/courtesy Becket)

of love until its natural end.”

Also on July 31, the New York State Catholic Conference submitted a public comment to the state's Department of Health calling The Medical Aid in Dying Act "the most significant—and misguided—piece of public health legislation in many years."

They argued that the state’s proposed regulations implementing the law fail to “provide adequate oversight of the practice of MAID,” and fail to “resolve flaws in the conscience protection provisions in the MAID law.”

The Catholic entities' lawsuit against

the assisted suicide law is among several lawsuits from Catholic nuns against recent Empire State laws.

Earlier this year, the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, who operate a 42-bed palliative care program for the dying poor, challenged a law implementing requirements on gender identity accommodations for nursing home residents.

New York is one of 13 states, as well as the District of Columbia, that have legalized assisted suicide. The state's law was scheduled to go into effect on Aug. 5. †

Calling all poets! Submit your work for possible publication in *The Criterion*

Do you ever write poems in response to God moments in your life? Do you jot down rhymes that come to mind in adoration or write verses when reflecting on Scripture or spiritual reading? Does the beauty of God's creation inspire you to express your awe in poetry?

The Criterion is seeking faith-based poems written by its readers for possible publication in the paper's My Journey to God section.

The choice of topic is as broad as the circumstances that inspire spiritual verse:

- The sacraments
- Scripture
- Feasts related to Christ
- Mary and her feast days
- Saints
- Advent and Christmas
- Lent, Christ's passion and resurrection
- Pentecost
- Nature and seasons
- Hope, faith, trust, charity, joy, grief, forgiveness, healing
- Attributes of God the Father, Christ and the Holy Spirit
- Priesthood
- Civil holidays like Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents Day, Fourth of July
- Current events
- Pro-life
- Friendship

The list goes on. The only topical requirement is that the poem is written through the lens of faith and does not contradict Church teaching.

No experience or prior publication is necessary. Any form of poetry from rhyming to free verse is welcome from those of all ages. Due to space limits, poems should be no more than 25 lines with a maximum of 80 characters per line, or 50 lines with a maximum of 35 characters per line. Each poem must be written by the person who submits it, or by a family member in the case of children or poems written by a deceased relative. Anonymous poems will not be considered.

Send poems for consideration to Natalie Hoefler at nhoefler@archindy.org, and include the name and location of your parish. For those without access to e-mail, poems may be sent to Natalie Hoefler in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish name and location and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †

Love Your Neighbor Summer Scirée

THUR. AUGUST 27, 2026, 6 P.M.
Pre-event Cocktail Reception at 5 p.m.
 (separate ticket required)

Union Station Downtown
 123 W Louisiana St., Indianapolis, IN 46225

The evening's festivities will include:

- Emcees: Indy Now hosts Jillian Deam and Ryan Ahlwardt
- Cocktails and gourmet chef-attended menu stations
- Live music from An Innocent Band
- Many live and silent auction items
- Embracing SVdP Indy's mission to support those in need

\$175 PER PERSON
 Order tickets at svdpindy.org/summer or scan the QR code.

SAVE \$25
 Limited tickets are available.

QUESTIONS?
 Email events@svdpindy.org.

Can't attend? Visit svdpindy.org/summer to register to bid on auction items right from your phone or computer!

ENTER TO WIN
A NEW CAR OR \$25,000!

\$125 per raffle ticket or five for \$500.
Maximum 600 tickets to be sold*

*If minimum number of tickets are not sold, the raffle winner will win 50% of the amount raised from ticket sales.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Archdiocesan Council of Indianapolis, Inc.
 CGL 014626 IGC 165331




My Journey to God

Subtle Signs

By Stephanie Jackson

Be on the lookout
for signs from God.
Perfectly timed when needed.
Await, to be awed.
Not coincidence, but occurrence.
Something especially for you.
Designed for your understanding.
A message that's true.
It'll be self-evident
That it's spiritual stimulation.
For these subtle signs,
God's the only explanation.

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Faith of Native American Catholics is rooted in missionaries

By Jeremy Beer

(OSV News)—Communities of Native American Catholics dot today the regions of the American Southwest, the Rocky Mountains, the Northern Plains and the Pacific Northwest.

The faith of many of these native people was planted through the ministry of courageous missionary priests from the 18th and 19th centuries.

In carrying out their missionary service, these priests also undertook valuable exploration of lands then unknown to Europeans.

Franciscan Father Francisco Garcés

Enthusiasm for the missions was a European-wide phenomenon during the 17th century.

Eusebio Kino was born in 1645 in northern Italy. As a young Jesuit, he had an intense desire to be a missionary. Sent to Mexico City in 1681, the energetic, handsome, charming priest went on to plant two dozen missions in Baja California, Sonora and today’s Arizona before his death in 1711. The Vatican declared him venerable in 2020.

A successor to him in his missionary work was the Spanish Franciscan Father Francisco Garcés, who arrived in 1768 at San Xavier del Bac, a mission near present-day Tucson, Ariz. During the next eight years, he undertook a series of journeys in lands to the north and west.

Like Father Jacques Marquette during his journey along the Mississippi River, Father Francisco documented the lands he explored and the peoples of the Southwest he peacefully interacted with.

Among them were the O’odham and Piipaash peoples. This led to Father Francisco contributing to the discovery of an overland route from the interior Southwest to present-day California. That was where his fellow Franciscan, St. Junipero Serra was founding missions up and down the Pacific coast.

Father Francisco faced many dangers and challenges in his journeys to find a way from Arizona to Mission San Gabriel outside today’s Los Angeles. He and a group of bedraggled Spaniards finally made it there in early 1774. Father Francisco celebrated Easter with St. Junipero that spring at Mission San Diego before returning to San Xavier del Bac.

The following year, Father Francisco set off on a journey up and down the Colorado River and across the unforgiving Mojave Desert to California’s Central Valley. Returning to northern Arizona, the missionary made a challenging descent into the Grand Canyon to visit the Havasupai people who have lived there for centuries. Father Francisco then went further east to a Hopi village before returning to San Xavier del Bac.

The natives that the missionary met were often receptive to the Gospel and showed him hospitality, which was sometimes a lifesaver for him.



Franciscan Father Francisco Garcés (1738-1781) was a Spanish missionary and explorer who served in the American Southwest. (OSV News photo/Wikipedia Commons, Public Domain)

Father Francisco in turn helped save the lives of a group of young Halchidhoma women who had been enslaved by other natives, trading a horse for their freedom. He, like other missionaries, did much to expose and criticize the enslavement of natives carried on both by other natives and Spanish colonists.

Carrying on the Franciscan tradition of peacemaking rooted in the witness of St. Francis of Assisi himself, Father Francisco did much to foster harmony among native peoples of the Southwest who were often at war with each other. He wanted to form a series of missions in the region as a means to promote peace and civilized living there.

It was not meant to be. Broken Spanish promises, imprudent military leadership and jealousies of the native Quechan people led to an uprising at Yuma in July 1781 in which Father Francisco and three other friars, along with 127 other Spaniards, were killed.

A monument to Father Francisco stands today along the Colorado River in front of the St. Thomas Indian Mission.

Jesuit Father Pierre-Jean De Smet

Another priest explorer came west in 1823, 43 years after Father Francisco’s death.

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was born in Belgium in 1801. Like Father Francisco, as a young man he was stirred to serve in the New World missions by the zealous appeals of a recruiter, this one working on behalf of the Jesuits. In 1821, he left, against the wishes of his family, for America.

Unlike Fathers Francisco and Jacques Marquette, priest-explorers whose likenesses were never portrayed by those who knew them, we know what De Smet looked like: fair, round-faced, athletically stout, uncommonly strong. We also know much more about De Smet’s activities and thoughts, because, unlike Marquette and Garcés, his extant writing about his explorations and other topics fills multiple thick volumes. Although they can be difficult to find, they make for entertaining reading.

De Smet arrived in 1823 at St. Louis. In Florissant, Mo., some 15 miles north, De Smet and fellow Jesuits founded the order’s second novitiate in the U.S. St. Rose Philippine Duchesne and her Sisters of the Sacred Heart were also based in Florissant.

Attempts to found schools for Native Americans in Florissant proved unsuccessful, so Father De Smet began in 1838 a long series of crisscrossing missionary journeys across the Northern Plains, the northern Rockies and Pacific Northwest, covering tens of thousands of miles.

His purpose was the usual one of a missionary: to preach, teach, give assistance and serve. He established his first mission among the Flatheads (or Salish) of the Bitterroot Valley in Montana.

For decades, these extraordinary Native Americans had been pleading for Jesuit missionaries; the faith seems to have been introduced to them by some devout Iroquois from the East. Much had changed since the days of SS. Jean de Brèbeuf and Isaac Jogues, who died as martyrs at the hands of the Iroquois.

So much did the Flatheads wish to receive more instruction that they sent delegations four times to St. Louis to request a priest.

On one of these journeys, they were traveling with some white men when the party was intercepted by a group of Sioux, who decided to execute the Flatheads and let the others go. Included among those freed was an Iroquois named Old Ignace. Because of his dress, the Sioux mistook him for a European.

Ignace, who had done more than anyone to evangelize the Flatheads, would not have it. He stepped forward, revealed his identity, and was slain



Jesuit Father Pierre-Jean De Smet (1801-1873) was a Belgian-born missionary who brought the Gospel to many native people from the Northern Plains across the northern Rockies to the Pacific Northwest. He also served as a mediator between the U.S. government and native leaders. Father De Smet is pictured in an 1860 portrait. (OSV News photo/Library of Congress)

along with his four native companions. A good book could be written about the unshakeable faith of native Christians like Ignace, for they seem to pop up in every missionary’s story.

De Smet would have happily spent the rest of his life among the Flatheads, but he was too talented and too passionate not to become involved in defending the region’s natives from the greed of American traders and settlers, and the cruelty and incompetence of the American government.

Time and again, De Smet wrote letters and treatises exposing the unjust treatment of his native friends. Time and again, he was prevailed upon by the United States authorities to act as a mediator between government officials and Native American leaders. Added to his challenges was the fact he was called back from the frontier by his Jesuit superiors to undertake fundraising tours across America and Europe. Talent always exacts a price.

One of Father De Smet’s last acts was to persuade Sitting Bull and his desperate native followers to lay down arms and negotiate the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868. Five years later, De Smet died in St. Louis. He had baptized thousands but, like his idealistic missionary predecessors, he believed he had failed to create the space necessary for distinctively Native American Catholic communities to emerge and flourish.

The numbers tell a different story. It is rarely noticed, but today approximately 20% of U.S. residents who identify as Native American identify themselves as Catholic—the same as among the general population. On some reservations the proportion of Catholics is much higher. Among the Tohono O’odham of southern Arizona, where Father Francisco labored, it is 80%.

There is a strong devotion to the Mohawk-Algonquin St. Kateri Tekakwitha—received into the Church by French Jesuits one year after Marquette’s death—in Native American communities across the country. And the canonization cause for the badly misunderstood Nicholas Black Elk, an Oglala Lakota who knew Sitting Bull well and is now a Servant of God, seems to have momentum.

It is unthinkable that any of that would be the case without the witness and influence of missionaries like Fathers Marquette, Francisco and De Smet. As much as they contributed to American geographical and ethnographical knowledge, they ought also to be credited for shaping, much for the better, America’s spiritual landscape. American Catholics can take pride in their legacies of witness.

(Jeremy Beer is the author of *Beyond the Devil’s Road: Francisco Garcés and the Spanish Encounter with the American Southwest*, published by University of Oklahoma Press.) †

Faith in History/Sean Gallagher

Mother Theodore Guérin lived a life of holiness in Indiana

During this year of the United States celebrating the 250th anniversary of its founding, we continue to learn about the lives of American saints. This month, we turn to Indiana’s first saint, St. Mother Theodore Guérin.

She was born in 1798 in Brittany in northwestern France. The Church in Indiana traces much of its early roots back to that region. The state’s first bishop, the Servant of God Bishop Simon Bruté, was born there, as was Father Benjamin Petit, a missionary among the Potawatomi in northern Indiana who was ordained by Bishop Bruté in 1837.

From a young age, young Anne-Thérèse Guérin had a deep desire to dedicate herself entirely to God. As a teenager, though, God called her to give herself to him through the extraordinary care she needed to give her family. Her father, a French naval officer, was murdered by bandits when she was 15. Her parents had already lost two young children. So, when her father died, Anne-Thérèse’s mother fell into a deep depression, forcing the teenager to care for her mother and sister. This later led her to work in a factory to support her family.



It was only when Anne-Thérèse was 25 that she was finally able to follow her calling and became a member of the Sisters of Providence of Ruille-sur-Loire, receiving the religious name Theodore and professing perpetual vows in 1831. Sister Theodore excelled as an educator, being honored for her ministry by the French government. In 1839, the new leader of the Diocese of Vincennes, Bishop Celestine de la Halandière, also from Brittany, asked the Sisters of Providence to send some of its members as missionaries to Indiana. The superior selected six sisters for the mission, with the group’s superior being Sister Theodore, who took much time in prayerful discernment before accepting. They departed France on July 15, 1840. After a two-month voyage across the Atlantic Ocean and a journey by steamboat and stagecoach, they finally reached the village of St. Mary-of-the-Woods in western Indiana on Oct. 22. They soon became an independent religious community, the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Sister Theodore then became known as Mother Theodore, the name that has been beloved of Catholics across the state and beyond ever since. Despite the deprivations that Mother Theodore and her fledgling community experienced on the Indiana frontier, they

founded Catholic schools, orphanages and pharmacies for the poor across the state before the end of the 1840s. The challenges that Mother Theodore experienced weren’t simply physical. They were also social and ecclesiastical. Anti-Catholicism was a growing phenomenon in America during her time in Indiana. And a strained relationship with Bishop Halandière also made leading her congregation difficult until his early resignation at the age of 49 in 1847. Mother Theodore also had significant digestive struggles during most of her life as a religious, requiring her to live on a simple, bland diet during those years. Through it all, Mother Theodore was a model of deep faith in the care of God’s providence, the belief that stood at the heart of her religious community. Mother Theodore died on May 14, 1856, at the age of 57. Her cause for beatification and canonization was opened in 1907. St. John Paul II declared her blessed on Oct. 25, 1998. Pope Benedict XVI declared her as Indiana’s first saint on Oct. 15, 2006. Her feast is celebrated on Oct. 3. After she was declared a saint, Mother Theodore was named a co-patron saint of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, along with its original patron, St. Francis Xavier. St. Mother Theodore Guérin, pray for us. †

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

Learning to read the map

Before there was a story, there was a map. The map contained the story. Robert Louis Stevenson just had to stare at it long enough. Eventually, characters emerged from the woods, and he began scrawling a list of chapters. Treasure Island was born. Nearly a century and a half later, the book still haunts and delights readers.



It all started during summer vacation back in 1881, when the 30-year-old writer joined his wife and 13-year-old stepson, Lloyd, in the Scottish Highlands. On rainy days, they would draw together. Stevenson sensed that the teen needed something “craggy to break his mind upon,” he later wrote. He was thinking in geography—cliffs, hazards, drama. One day, Stevenson drew a map of an island, adding color and labeling it Treasure Island. “The shape of it took my fancy beyond expression,” Stevenson recounted. “It contained harbors that pleased me like sonnets.” Maps had always fascinated him, with “the shapes of the woodlands, the courses of the roads and rivers, the prehistoric footsteps of man still distinctly traceable up hill and down dale, the mills and the ruins, the ponds and the ferries ...,” Stevenson wrote. “Here is an inexhaustible fund of interest for any man with eyes to see or twopence-worth of imagination to understand with!” The key is what happened after Stevenson sketched the map. He studied it. He entered into it. And his imagination began filling it in, like “a child staring into the infinitesimal forest and seeing it grow populous with fairy armies.” “As I paused upon my map of ‘Treasure Island,’ ” Stevenson wrote, “the future character of the book began to appear there visibly among some imaginary wood,” and then more faces and weapons “peeped out upon me from unexpected quarters, as they passed to and fro, fighting and hunting treasure, on these few square inches of flat projection.” Stevenson’s genius wasn’t simply drawing the map. It was refusing to rush past it. He lingered long enough for a story to emerge. August invites the same kind of lingering. There is still time to wander, to wonder, to unfold a map and see where it leads. If you’re seeking direction in life, hoping for arrows and nudges that lead to some treasure, the Catholic Church offers a remarkably detailed map. This is partly because we’re the oldest Christian church and partly because we draw on both Scripture and tradition. Over two millennia, the Church has amassed an extraordinary inheritance of wisdom, guidance and lived experience.

Open the map and you’ll notice you aren’t the first person to carry it. The margins are full. A saint has penciled a note beside a steep climb. An ecumenical council has clarified a fork in the trail that once confused travelers. A doctor of the Church has sketched the contours of prayer. The Catechism of the Catholic Church points toward a safe harbor when the way grows foggy. Folded inside are diaries of saints and encyclicals from popes, weathered guides from fellow pilgrims who learned the terrain before us. Combined, these careful observations don’t rewrite the map. They help the rest of us read it. The map isn’t merely beautiful. It’s practical, shedding light on human nature. The catechism, for instance, begins with

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Help children make their return to school much easier

Catholic Charities assists children and families experiencing periods of transition by providing essential services, emotional support, and faith centered care that strengthens their path forward. As the summer comes to a close and school is getting back into session, here are a couple quick reminders to help make the transition from the beach to the classroom easier for you and your child. Returning to school often means reconnecting with friends and navigating new social situations. Some children may be excited, while others may feel anxious about making friends, joining a new class, or fitting in with their peers. Encourage your child to talk openly about any worries and remind them that many of their classmates are likely experiencing similar feelings. If possible, arrange a playdate or attend school events before classes begin to help your child feel more comfortable and confident. Listening without judgment and offering reassurance can go a long way toward easing social anxiety. Summer schedules often bring changes in eating, sleeping, screen time, and physical activity. A few weeks before school begins, start gradually reintroducing healthy habits that support learning and well-being. Encourage nutritious meals, regular exercise, and consistent sleep schedules. Limiting screen time, especially before bed, can improve sleep quality and help children feel more rested and ready to learn. Healthy routines provide the foundation for academic success and emotional well-being. Helping your child feel prepared can reduce anxiety and build excitement for the new school year. Involve your child in gathering school supplies, organizing a study space at home, and talking about goals for the coming year. Whether it is improving grades, making new friends, or trying a new activity,



setting achievable goals can give your child a sense of purpose and motivation. Celebrating small successes throughout the year helps build confidence and resilience. A strong partnership between families and schools benefits children in many ways. Take time to attend open houses, review school communications, and introduce yourself to teachers when possible. Maintaining open communication with school staff helps you stay informed about your child’s progress and allows concerns to be addressed early. When children see parents and teachers working together, they feel support both at home and at school. For some children, back-to-school worries can include fear of the unknown, academic concerns, or separation anxiety. Encourage your child to express their feelings and help them identify strategies that work when they feel overwhelmed, such as taking deep breaths, talking with a trusted adult, or focusing on positive experiences. Remind your child that feeling nervous about a new school year is normal and that challenges can often become easier with time and practice. The transition back to school can be exciting, challenging and emotional for both children and parents. By establishing routines, maintaining open communication, encouraging healthy habits, and providing plenty of support and encouragement, you can help your child start the school year with confidence and success. And if you find that these transitions are harder than expected or find yourself needing any additional help or support, the doors at Catholic Charities are always open. Our staff is available to provide resources, guidance and support to help children and families thrive throughout the school year. (David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at dbethuram@archindy.org.) †

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Reflecting on the role of grace in our lives of faith

How would you define grace? One definition that resonates with my experience is that grace is “God’s kindness, favor and/or mercy that is given without merit.” That’s right: we can’t do a single thing to warrant this gift! Like the very nature of all gifts—a person cannot earn it—it is always freely given with no strings attached. For me, this grace from God is often manifested in the many resources that I require on any given day at any certain time. At every moment in life, God knows our needs better than we do. And I believe



that many of us are aware of these most basic physical needs when considering grace: food, shelter and safety. But what are the emotional graces that God can give? Do I need patience? How could I benefit from more energy and psychological strength to endure a specific situation? Do I need a new sense of hope when things seem bleak? What about grace that leads to more humility? Do I need more enthusiasm or a more positive attitude? Could I benefit from being more thankful for the blessings in my life and not just focused on the next “wish” on my never-ending list? Those are all examples of God’s grace for me that often surpass those physical needs of safety, shelter or food. Additionally, when a person prays, “Give us this day our daily bread ...,”

this does not refer to our food alone but all of these other types of blessings that a person needs at the current time. And as St. Paul writes in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, “And my grace is sufficient [will be enough] for you” (2 Cor 12:9). Every day, God can provide what we need if one only “knock” and “ask.” For me, these needs are often more attitudinal. Am I truly open to the path that seems to be unfolding for my life each day as I try to walk with the Lord? Consequently, we can always be assured that this process will begin again tomorrow. Every part of God’s creation is constantly changing. I must stay open to the world as it develops before me and what God is offering me today. This is

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, August 9, 2026

- 1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a
- Romans 9:1-5
- Matthew 14:22-33

The first reading for Mass this weekend is from the First Book of Kings. First and Second Kings prominently



mention the kings of the unified kingdom of Israel, but they are not political histories. Of course, politics and other realities of life in Israel under the king appear in these books, but the chief purpose of these writings was to reveal

God’s mercy, justice and identity. So often more emphatically and extensively than their references to the kings, these books mention prophets, who spoke for God.

The reading for this weekend from First Kings is in this mode of writing. Principal in the reading is the prophet Elijah. God spoke to him, so Elijah learned that God will be accessible and will communicate with him.

Elijah looked for God. A fierce storm was raging, but God was not in the wind or in the thunder.

Next came an earthquake, not an unusual event in the Middle East. Elijah could not find God in the earthquake.

At last, Elijah heard a tiny whispering sound. It was the voice of God.

Several lessons emerge from this reading. First, God interacts with humanity, and the resulting divine revelation is conveyed to humans by humans. Elijah, after all, was a human.

Second, Elijah looked for God in great outbursts of nature, in the storm and in the earthquake. God is supreme over nature. The ancient Hebrew concept, therefore, was that God used nature and all its powerful manifestations to teach the people that they should live according to the divine plan.

Sin so disrupts the order of life. Temptations abound, but no power exceeds God’s power and perfection.

Finally, God appears in places and events and forms often least expected by humans, such as in tiny whispering sounds in the middle of storms and tremors.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans is the source of the next reading. In this passage, Paul verified his own status and truthfulness as an Apostle. He mourned that many of his kin in the Jewish nation did not accept God. It was a failure that, alas, occurred throughout Hebrew history, indeed throughout human history. Paul admitted his own humanity and frailty. But, despite all, he insisted that he would remain true to his calling as a Christian and as an Apostle.

For its last reading this weekend, the Church gives us a passage from St. Matthew’s Gospel. It is a familiar story.

Last weekend, the reading from Matthew was from verses immediately preceding these. It, too, was a familiar story, that of the Lord’s miraculous feeding of the 5,000.

In this story, the Lord literally walks across water to reach the boat in which the Apostles were crossing the Sea of Galilee. St. Peter, impulsive as was his personality, leaped from the boat trying to meet Jesus, who had invited the Apostle to come forward.

As often happened, Peter’s impulsiveness gave way to uncertainty and doubt. When these feelings took hold, Peter’s own ability to walk on the water failed. He began to sink.

Jesus, not outdone by Peter’s lack of faith, pulled him from the water, rescuing him from death. Understanding Peter’s weakness, Jesus assisted him, giving him security and life.

Reflection

Jesus as the sole source of life is a basic teaching in the Gospels. He is the only security. Life cannot be measured just by earthly standards. It must be measured by its totality, in other words, with attention given to the fact of eternity.

Jesus alone gives eternal life. He alone is the source of life, especially and uniquely of eternal life. Nothing else possesses the power of the Lord, because Jesus is God.

We humans must realize that Jesus alone gives true life. Left to our own abilities, we will drown. †

Daily Readings

Monday, August 10
St. Lawrence, deacon and martyr
2 Corinthians 9:6-10
Psalm 112:1-2, 5-9
John 12:24-26

Tuesday, August 11
St. Clare, virgin
Ezekiel 2:8-3:4
Psalm 119: 14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131
Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14

Wednesday, August 12
St. Jane Frances de Chantal, religious
Ezekiel 9:1-7; 10:18-22
Psalm 113:1-6
Matthew 18:15-20

Thursday, August 13
St. Pontian, pope and martyr
St. Hippolytus, priest and martyr
Ezekiel 12:1-12
Psalm 78:56-59, 61-62
Matthew 18:21-19:1

Friday, August 14
St. Maximilian Kolbe, priest and martyr
Ezekiel 16:1-15, 60, 63

or Ezekiel 16:59-63
(Response) Isaiah 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6
Matthew 19:3-12

Saturday, August 15
The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
Psalm 45:10-12, 16
1 Corinthians 15:20-27
Luke 1:39-56

Sunday, August 16
Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 56:1, 6-7
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Romans 11:13-15, 29-32
Matthew 15:21-28

Monday, August 17
Ezekiel 24:15-23
(Response) Deuteronomy 32:18-21
Matthew 19:16-22

See READINGS, page 19

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

The Catholic Church sees marriages officiated by SSPX clergy as invalid

Q What is the current situation with marriages and the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX)? I have heard different things about whether or not weddings at SSPX chapels are valid.



A From the time of Pope Francis’ pontificate, there was a fairly limited pathway for a valid Catholic wedding ceremony in chapels of the Society of St. Pius X, but this is now no longer an option.

For background, although marriage is a human institution which predates the foundation of the Church and which therefore can in principle be contracted validly even in non-Catholic or non-religious contexts, the Catholic Church has the fundamental right and capability to create binding laws regarding the marriage of Catholics. One of these created laws includes the obligation for Catholics to marry “according to canonical form.”

As general shorthand, it would not be wrong to describe “canonical form” as marriage in a Catholic ceremony. But the *Code of Canon Law* gives us a more specific breakdown of what this means. As we read in canon 1108: “Only those marriages are valid which are contracted before the local ordinary [i.e., the diocesan bishop or his vicar general], pastor [i.e., the priest in charge of a parish], or a priest or deacon delegated by either of them, who assist, and before two witnesses.”

In other words, while the imagery that comes to mind when we are thinking of a “Catholic ceremony” might include many of the traditional elements like a Catholic Mass in a church building, ultimately what is necessary for canonical form is the exchange of marital consent (what we often popularly term “wedding vows”) in the presence of two witnesses in addition to a Catholic cleric who has the authority to serve as the Church’s own official witness.

Canon law itself gives this authority to the legitimate bishops of dioceses as well as to pastors of parishes. But any other clergy who would officiate at a wedding would need to have this authority expressly delegated to them by either the bishop or the pastor of the parish in whose territory

the wedding would take place. So, for example, a parish deacon, a visiting priest or even a priest assigned to a parish as a parochial vicar would need the delegated authority (known in canon law as the “faculty”) from either the local pastor or the bishop directly. Otherwise, the wedding they officiated at would be not only illicit but also invalid due to a lack of canonical form.

While a wedding in an SSPX chapel might certainly look Catholic to an outside observer, SSPX weddings are invalid due to the lack of canonical form resulting from the absence of the official faculty to witness a marriage.

To spell it out: The bishops of the SSPX are not bishops of dioceses, and the priests in charge of their chapels are not pastors of real parishes. Thus, they do not have the authority to officiate at Catholic weddings nor do they have the power to delegate this authority to other people.

Pope Francis was concerned about the pastoral situation of the lay faithful who attempted marriage at SSPX chapels, and in the hope of reconciling more people to the Church, on April 4, 2017, he created a pathway that would allow valid weddings to be celebrated in SSPX chapels.

Specifically, he encouraged bishops to delegate a diocesan priest or any priest in good standing to witness the consent of the bride and groom, which in the pre-Vatican II wedding ritual would occur immediately before the nuptial Mass, with an SSPX priest celebrating the Mass that would follow. Pope Francis also allowed diocesan bishops to grant the faculty to witness the consent directly to a priest of the SSPX, although this was discouraged and was only permitted in extraordinary situations.

This pathway created by Pope Francis to allow for the possibility of a valid exchange of consent in weddings that take place in SSPX chapels was revoked by the Holy See following the SSPX’s illicit episcopal ordinations on July 1. The Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith’s declaration of schism and explanatory note issued after the ordinations make that clear.

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

My Journey to God

I Found Love

By Sandy Bierly

Being grateful,
Trusting in God,
Forgiving wrongs,
Focusing on Love.

Searching for God,
Showing up for prayer,
Finding Him here,
Experiencing great Joy.

Resting in God,
Holding onto Him,
Opening my heart,
Receiving His Peace.
I found LOVE!

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Photo: A man prays in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Nov. 5, 2024, at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis.) (File photo by Sean Gallagher)



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.

ABRAHAM, Joan C., 84, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, June 12. Mother of Lisa Francis and Chuck Abraham. Sister of James, John and Robert Schaertl. Grandmother of six.

AUSTERMAN, Martin C., 74, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, June 21. Brother of Margaret Rosenberger, Marilyn Uhte, Mike and William Austerman. Uncle of several.

BECRAFT, John J., 69, St. Mary, Rushville, July 1. Husband of Kimberley Becraft. Father of Julia Davis, Conner Dembroski, Tara and Danny Becraft. Brother of Chris and Jim Becraft. Grandfather of four.

BOSLER, Sr., Paul J., 94, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, June 30. Husband of Sharon Scotty. Father of Jennifer Redmond, Teresa Thiesing, Marie, Regina, John, Mark, Michael and Patrick Bosler. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of six.

BROUHARD, Kay, 66, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, May 28. Wife of Robert Brouhard. Mother of Melissa Flueckiger and Mindy Huesman. Sister of Judy Barbee, Annette Mullen, Rita Sturgill and John Stadtmiller. Grandmother of three.

CARTWRIGHT, Theresa C., 100, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, June 22. Mother of Martina and Timothy Cartwright.

CRAWFORD, Gerald R., 78, St. Michael, Brookville, June 22. Father of Terry Jo Dare. Brother of Joseph Crawford. Grandfather of two. Great-grandfather of five.

CRUSE, Sharon, 77, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, July 13. Wife of Jack Cruse, Jr. Mother of Kari Hunley and Bryson Cruse. Sister of Jennifer Perkins and Roi Kichler. Grandmother of three.

CUSKADEN, Deidra A., 71, St. Mary, Greensburg, July 8. Wife of Richard Cuskaden. Mother of Erika Effing, Brittany and Jordan Cuskaden. Sister of Jeanne Daniel, Debbie Clarkston, Joan Greiwe, Norma, Gary and Tim Nobbe, Nancy Cuskaden and Kathy Power. Grandmother of three.

DUSELIS, Uldis, 81, St. Jude, Indianapolis, July 16. Husband of Jane Duselis. Father of Marian Pham, Catherine Thordarson, Elizabeth, Rosemary, John, Mark, Michael, Paul, Peter and Thomas Duselis. Grandfather of 19.

FEHRING, Mary C. (Chouteau), 79, All Saints, Dearborn County, July 14. Wife of Bill Fehring. Mother of Brenda Faucett, Kimberly Miller, Michael, Paul and Steven Fehring. Sister of Linda and Dale Chouteau. Grandmother of 14. Great-Grandmother of 15.

FOUTS, David L., 77, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, June 10. Husband of Kathleen Fouts. Father of Leigh Hasquin, Sarah Salinas and Matthew Fouts. Brother of Carol Fouts Johnson and Stephen Fouts. Grandfather of nine.

GALLIGAN, William, 85, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, July 1. Husband of Sylvia Galligan. Father of Anna Judd, Douglas and Edward Galligan. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of two.

GARY, Sr., Ronald C., 87, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, July 3. Father of Lisa Costlow and Ronnie Gary. Brother of Cheryl Hunt and Ben Gary. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of six.

GASVODA, Sr., Ronald J., 89, St. Ann, Indianapolis, July 1. Father of Jacqueline Gasvoda-Durey, Deanna Ratz, Christina Warren, Mareia, Andrew and Ronald Gasvoda, Jr. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of one.

GILL, J. Stephen, 86, St. Ambrose, Seymour, June 25. Father of Frederick and Toby Gill. Brother of Linda Trimpe, Diane Villalvazo and Ted Gill. Grandfather of one.

GUY, Gloria L., 83, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, June 11. Wife of John Guy. Mother of Cindy, Laura, Alex and Chico.

HARTMAN, Irwin J., 86, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, July 9. Husband of Frances Hartman. Father of Christy Barnachea, Dan and Jon Hartman. Brother of Edith Eickhorst and Geraldine Nobbe. Grandfather of eight.

KINKER, Judith A., 65, St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, July 12. Wife of Michael Kinker. Mother of Jessica Chia, Gregory and Mitchell Kinker. Sister of Diane Dierckman, Brenda Meyer, Mary Jo Reer, Jane Tekulve, Nancy, Donald, Luke, Marvin, Matthew and Michael Prickel. Grandmother of nine.

KOORS, Richard E., 73, St. Mary, Greensburg, July 9. Father of Bryan and Jason Koors. Brother of Debbie Weston, Becky, Franciscan Sister Joanita, Jeff and Jerry Koors. Grandfather of four.

KUNKLER, Marlene H., 89, St. Mark, Perry County, July 4. Mother of Jerene Gilliam, Tina Kunkler-Laake, Jenny, Bill, Chris, Dan, David and Tony Kunkler. Sister of Berite Lehman, Phyllis Perkins, Albert, Bob, Henry and Kenneth Jasper. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

MARCOTTE, Elsie, 87, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, July 3. Mother of Mary Beth Duffy, Ann Miller, Sherry Pesch and Susan Zurcher. Sister of Frieda Mahler. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of two.

MATTHEWS, Mary C., 82, St. Mary, North Vernon, July 11. Mother of Kelly Gonzalez, Gracie Guenthensperger, Teresa Miracle, Tina Pearson and Karla Vance. Sister of Leona Fenbers, Freda Henry, Andy and Bill Biehle. Grandmother of 14. Great-Grandmother of 22.

MCATEE, Sue, 77, St. Anne, New Castle, June 17. Wife of Mike McAtee. Mother of Lisa

Fuller and David McAtee. Sister of Jan Fox and Alan Schneider. Grandmother of seven.

MILLET, Martha, 73, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, May 6. Mother of TJ Millet, Jr. Daughter of Fredonia Ingram. Sister of Donna Alexander, Barbara Bennett, Lisa Carmichael, Jamie and Saffevell Ingram, Jr. Grandmother of two.

MUCHA, Joseph M., 93, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, May 13. Husband of Nancy Mucha. Father of Kara Lowry, Melinda McCaffrey, Lisa and Pamela Mucha. Grandfather of two.

PALUMBO, Joan C., 94, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, July 1. Mother of Elaine Flannery, Mike and Rick Palumbo. Grandmother of eight. Great-Grandmother of seven.

PRILLER, Christine A., 83, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, July 8. Sister of Theresa Borden, Louise Drake, Virginia LaFara and Stephen Priller. Aunt of several.

ROWAN, David J., 96, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, April 14. Husband of Jane Rowan. Father of Debbie Askren, Diane Miller, Danny,

David, and John Rowan. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of 26.

SNOW, Patricia A., 93, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, June 28. Mother of Danny, Mark and Michael Snow. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 25. Great-great-grandmother of six.

WICKER, Robert J., 90, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, July 15. Father of Kate Elmer, Beth McCoy and Joe Wicker. Grandfather of one.

WILTSEE, Rebecca L., 63, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, May 29. Wife of James Wiltsee, Sr. Mother of Samantha Bowman and James Wiltsee, Jr. Grandmother of three.

WISSEL, Richard J., 80, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, June 24. Husband of Katha Wissel. Father of Anne, Ben, Daniel, Greg and Tom Wissel. Grandfather of 21. Great-grandfather of five.

ZAUNER, Magdalen C. (Welch), 63, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, June 23. Wife of David Zauner. Sister of Mary Aiken, Martha Mendez, Theresa Needs, Agnes Taylor, Rita, Bernard, Edward, Gregory, Peter, Thomas and Vincent Welch. Aunt and great-aunt of several. †

Benedictine Brother Kenan Kapina served in the business office and guest house at Saint Meinrad

Benedictine Brother Kenan Kapina, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, died on July 19 at the monastery’s infirmary. He was 73.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 23. Burial followed at the Archabbey Cemetery.

Brother Kenan was a jubilarian of monastic profession, in the 50th year of his profession of vows at the time of his death.

Brother Kenan was born on Oct. 5, 1952, in East Chicago, Ind., and was given the name Vincent Joel at his baptism.

He was an elementary student at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Chicago and later graduated from Bishop Noll High School in 1970. Brother Kenan was then a college seminarian at the former Saint Meinrad College in St. Meinrad, graduating in 1974 with a bachelor’s degree in English.

He went on to study at Purdue University for a year before

Carmelite Sister Jean Alice McGoff led the former Monastery of the Resurrection in Indianapolis as prioress for 27 years

Discalced Carmelite Sister Jean Alice McGoff died on July 15 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 97.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 5 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed in a separate plot for the Carmelite sisters in the cemetery of the Oldenburg Franciscans.

Sister Jean Alice was born on Sept. 19, 1928, in Cincinnati.

She joined the former Discalced Carmelite Monastery of the Resurrection in Indianapolis, receiving her habit and the religious name Agnes of the Virgin Mother in January 1950 and professing final vows in January 1954.

Sister Jean Alice later served as the contemplative community’s novice mistress, as its sub-prioress for six years and as its prioress for 27 years.

Franciscan Sister Norma Jean Hynes served in Catholic education for 25 years, including in Indianapolis

Franciscan Sister Norma Jean Hynes (formerly Sister Dolorose) died on July 25 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 93.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 31 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Sister Norma Jean was born on Dec. 22, 1932, in Indianapolis where she grew up as a member of the former St. Francis de Sales Parish and graduated from the former St. Mary Academy.

She joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Feb. 2, 1954, and professed final vows in on Aug. 12, 1959. Sister Norma Jean earned a bachelor’s degree in education in 1962 at Marian

University in Indianapolis.

For 25 of her 72 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Norma Jean ministered as an educator in Catholic schools in Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. She later served with the nursing staff at the motherhouse for 13 years.

In the archdiocese, Sister Norma Jean served the former Sacred Heart School in Clinton from 1959-63, at Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove from 1963-74 and St. Mark the Evangelist School in Indianapolis from 1974-75. She ministered with the nursing staff at the motherhouse from 1980-85 and 1987-95.

Sister Norma Jean is survived by two sisters, Cathy Jeffries of Danville and Teresa Lenahan of Coatesville, Ind.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

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



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Good is never out of season.



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

1 Ethics Point Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810

2 Victim Assistance Coordinator, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

Reflection offers a reminder: dad’s ‘I love you’ often comes in actions

(Editor’s note: The Criterion invited our readers to share their stories about how their father’s influence has shaped their life and their faith. Here is one of their stories.)

One in an occasional series

By John Shaughnessy

For some fathers, the words, “I love you,” never came easily. And certainly not as often as a child wanted or needed to hear from someone who was so much a force and a presence in his or her life.

Still, there were those cherished moments when a child knew that love and felt that love.

Two such moments have stayed with Don Striegel through the years when he thinks of his father.

One of them takes him back to his childhood when he was the fourth youngest of the 11 children of Carl and Agnes Striegel.

“Growing up in a family of 11 children on a small farm didn’t lend itself to a lot of one-on-one time with my father,” recalls Striegel about growing up in Dubois County in far southern Indiana. “Our family generally did not outwardly display love and affection for each other, including parent to child. Rather, we tended to show affection by action and example more so than words.

“In my early teens, I started to assume more responsibility for helping run the

farm, doing more chores and learning how to tend animals, prepare fields, plant and tend crops, harvest and store grain in barns, under the guidance of my father and mother.

“Farm hands were not necessarily rewarded for the hard work, but an occasional special treat was welcome. One time that comes to mind is when I would accompany my dad to the mill with grain to be sold or ground for livestock feed. On our way home, dad would stop at a tavern for a well-deserved beer and camaraderie. Dad would hand me a quarter for a treat, an ice cream drumstick ... yum!”

At 82, Striegel can still taste the sweetness of that treat in his memory, a sweetness that goes far beyond the flavor of an ice cream cone.

The lasting power of the second moment is more poignant, showing the humble pleas of parents’ prayers and the deep anger of a father when he feels his child is being treated unfairly.

“After graduation and a couple of years in the local work force, I was drafted into the U.S. Army, serving for two years, including deployment to Vietnam,” notes Striegel, a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. “My parent’s prayers were answered, and I returned home safely and resumed local employment.

“Since the Vietnam War was continuing to expand after my discharge, the U.S. Army ordered me to attend a two-week summer camp. My dad was furious that after a tour



‘As my career, family and personal life developed to the present day, I very much treasure and give thanks to my father and mother for influencing me with their strong Catholic faith and example that has guided me throughout my life.’

—Don Striegel

in a war zone, I was required to train with recruits. He tried several avenues to release me from that duty. Alas, the Army ignored his pleas, and in August 1967 off to Minnesota I go. After two days of field exercises, I was called back to unit headquarters by the chaplain.”

The conversation that followed rocked Striegel.

When the chaplain began by asking, “Has your father been ill?” Striegel responded that his dad had suffered from heart disease for nearly 12 years. The chaplain then shared, “I regret to tell you that your father has passed.”

The days that followed were naturally hard ones for him—“returning home and spending time to mourn our loss with my mother and siblings.”

At the same time, he relied on the Catholic faith that his parents shared with him.

“I don’t harbor any hard feelings for the Army, but rather I take comfort that

God in his time decided that my dad had suffered enough and took him home,” Striegel says.

Years later, those two moments—the sweetness associated with the ice cream treat and the impassioned efforts toward the Army—remain vivid reminders of how his father showed his love through his actions.

Those moments connect to the core values that Striegel says he learned from his father—working hard, being frugal, leading by example, being involved in the community, trusting in God, offering any suffering to Christ, and always giving thanks for your blessings.

Striegel’s thanks extend to his wife of 56 years, Dorothy, their two children and their three grandchildren. His thanks also always include thoughts of his parents.

“As my career, family and personal life developed to the present day, I very much treasure and give thanks to my father and mother for influencing me with their strong Catholic faith and example that has guided me throughout my life.” †

Pope Leo on his ancestry, and how he’s a ‘pope who happens to be American’

(OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV spoke with Tom Llamas of NBC News on July 29 about being the first American pope, his diverse ancestry and whether he might be coming to the U.S. soon.

“You are the first American pope. It’s something you don’t speak about often,” Llamas noted, asking, “How important is being American to you, and what do you love about America?”

“First of all, just to clarify, I think of myself more as the pope who happens to be American,” Pope Leo responded, “not to belittle what it means to be American. I was born in the United States, my family is still in the United States. I have great love for America. But I understand my mission, having a very important dimension, which is precisely being pastor of a universal Church and having a voice and opportunity to speak to people throughout the world. So, I will put things in that order.

“And yet, at the same time,” he added, “I will acknowledge that for myself as well as the people of

the United States, judging by the response that we’ve seen since May 8 of last year, that there is great significance in being the first American pope.”

Speaking to Llamas at a July 29 Concert for Peace at Castel Gandolfo outside Rome, which featured Andrea Bocelli and an interfaith choir of 200 children from conflict-affected regions around the world, Pope Leo said he loves “so many things” about America: “What America stands for, the sense of freedom, the sense of opportunity, the sense of having invited, for generations, people from around the world to be part of America.”

Discussing his ancestry, he noted that, “I come from a family that—my grandparents were immigrants. On my mother’s side, we have people who were both slaves and slave owners. There’s a history of, if you will, growing up in the kind of experience that helps me to recognize, myself, one of the greatest wealths of



‘There’s a history of, if you will, growing up in the kind of experience that helps me to recognize, myself, one of the greatest wealths of the United States. And I continue to hold the principles that have been a part of being American for so many years. That will continue.’

—Pope Leo XIV

CAPECCHI

continued from page 16

this profound claim: “The desire for God is written in the human heart” (#27). We spend so much of life chasing happiness. The catechism reframes the search, explaining that our restlessness isn’t a flaw to overcome but a clue to follow.

Stevenson never set out to write a masterpiece. He drew a map. Then he

lingered long enough for it to reveal its secrets.

God has given us a map, too. Not one that eliminates mystery, but one rich enough to reward a lifetime of attention. The treasure isn’t reserved for those who race ahead. It’s found by those willing to pause, to study and to enter into the story.

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Grey Cloud Island, Minn.) †

ETIENNE

continued from page 16

supported by the passage from Luke 12:22-34. God knows what our true needs are, and he will provide the resources.

So the ultimate goal for each of us is to trust that God has a grander plan—his “will”—and that each of us has a specific part to play in this great scheme.

And if we listen carefully, we will see our role and recognize the individual part that we must play in it and, with “God’s grace,” have every essential that we will need to carry it to completion.

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.) †

READINGS

continued from page 17

Tuesday, August 18
Ezekiel 28:1-10
(Response)
Deuteronomy 32:26-28, 30, 35c-36b
Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday, August 19
St. John Eudes, priest
Ezekiel 34:1-11
Psalm 23:1-6
Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday, August 20
St. Bernard, abbot and doctor of the Church
Ezekiel 36:23-28
Psalm 51:12-15, 18-19
Matthew 22:1-14

Friday, August 21
St. Pius X, pope
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 107:2-9
Matthew 22:34-40
Saturday, August 22
The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Ezekiel 43:1-7ab
Psalm 85:9ab, 10-14
Matthew 23:1-12

Sunday, August 23
Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 22:19-23
Psalm 138:1-3, 6, 8
Romans 11:33-36
Matthew 16:13-20

the United States. And I continue to hold the principles that have been a part of being American for so many years. That will continue.”

Llamas asked if Americans can expect a papal visit soon. “They will see me there,” Pope Leo replied, “by coincidence, today we were looking at the calendar for the next couple of years. Nothing is set in stone yet, but I certainly hope to be there soon.”

Julio Vaqueiro, anchor of Noticias Telemundo, also spoke with Pope Leo following the pope’s concert.

Pope Leo told Vaqueiro that the concert “featuring children from various countries, of different races, perhaps from different traditions—all singing together to beautiful music” —offered “a beauty that I believe was an invitation to all of us to look beyond, to see the beauty that can be created or in which we can share when we set aside certain differences and recognize the richness of being one, of all being created in the image of God.” †

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call
(317) 236-1585.

For Sale

FOR SALE: Our Lady of Peace Cemetery, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis, IN 46260. Desirable double side-by-side indoor crypt located in the Prince of Peace Mausoleum. Location: Section 9, Level A, Ground Floor. \$15,000.00. Call or text 317-605-9714.

Call
317-236-1585
TO ADVERTISE IN
The Criterion

Trends for the Church are grim, but signs of hope exist, priest says

By Mike Krokos
Second of two parts

When he considers the research about the Catholic Church in America between 1965 and 2022, the trends are troubling to Father Eric Augenstein.

But when he considers the ways of God, Father Augenstein always has hope.

During that nearly 60-year time frame, infant baptisms went from 1.24 million annually to 438,000 annually. First Communion decreased beginning in 2010. Between 1990 and 2022, Catholic marriages were reduced by 70%.

Mass attendance has declined as well. About 30 million people attended weekly Mass in 1972. Now, it is about 18 million. At the same time, the U.S. Catholic population has increased.

“Generations have changed, the world has changed, the Church has changed,” said Father Augenstein at a July 11 presentation during the Serra International Convention in Indianapolis titled “Promoting Vocations in Our Current Cultural Environment.”

“But God is faithful and God always cares for and provides for his Church,” added Father Augenstein, who has served the majority of his 22 years of priestly life in various forms of vocations ministry in the archdiocese. He currently serves as the director of seminarians and vice rector of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

The statistics cited for the Church’s sacramental practices were collected by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University in Washington and *The Official Catholic Directory*. Sociologist Ryan Burge shared these troubling trends drawn from the “General Social Survey” of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago on his blog “Graphs about Religion.” And they paint a “grim” picture, Father Augenstein said.

During the last 30-40 years, there have been some significant changes in religious affiliation and practice, noted the priest, who also serves as pastor of Holy Angels Parish and St. Rita Parish, both in Indianapolis, and as vice-president of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocations Directors.

“We’ve seen the rise of the nones,” Father Augenstein noted, those individuals who have no religious affiliation.

Burge noted that 34% of millennials (ages 31-45) have no religious affiliation. For Gen Z (high school, college and young adults ages 14-30), about 41% said they have no religious affiliation.

One survey question asked respondents: Do you know that God exists?

Forty-five percent of millennials responded “yes,” while only 35% of Gen Z did, according to the same survey as analyzed by Christian Smith, a sociologist and former University of Notre Dame professor, in his book *Why Religion Went Obsolete: The Demise of Traditional Faith in America*.

“You start to see the challenges that we face and the generational markers,” Father Augenstein said.

There are several reasons for the changes in the cultural landscape. Much of Father Augenstein’s presentation focused on the markers for Gen Z and what is impacting their lives. But some statistics cited millennials as well.

Father Augenstein noted that a trend of delayed commitment began with millennials. Currently, more than 50% of those ages 25-39 are not married. During the last 30 years, the average age for women to get married has increased from 24 to 29, and for men from 26 to 30.

Issues of mental health are among Gen Z’s challenges, according to author Jean Twenge in her book *Generations: The Real Differences Between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents—And What They Mean for America’s Future*. In 2021, 30% of teenage girls suffered from clinical level depression. For teen boys, it was about 12%.

“Much of this, according to those who study such things, has been caused by digital media and smartphones,” Father Augenstein noted. Women are impacted by a culture of comparison on Instagram and TikTok, he continued.

“Life with smartphones,” he said, quoting a sociologist, “means that we are forever elsewhere.”

Members of Gen Z went through puberty in their most formative years with digital media and smartphones, he continued. “They are highly destructive in terms of self-image and to the way we interact or don’t interact with others. It’s been devastating on Gen Z.”

There are several signs of hope, the priest noted, in promoting vocations.

“There is a longing for that presence of God that the Gospel can fulfill. The Gospel offers an extraordinarily powerful response to the challenges that our culture is facing. The Gospel offers a powerful response to anxiety and depression,” Father Augenstein said. “TikTok will not give you rest. TikTok will not ease your soul. Jesus will ease your soul.”

In spite of digital media, “community and human connections are still a powerful way of living and growing closer to one another and closer to God,” the priest said.

“Particularly for Gen Z, young men and boys thrive most when they have a stable group of friends and create their strongest and most durable friendships in a group. ... Discernment groups and Bible study groups are so powerful.”

Twenge’s book noted millennials want a job that is interesting and where they can make friends. Gen Z, in contrast, looks for a job in which they can make a difference in the world and serve other people.

“[That] sounds like a good entry point for priestly and religious vocations. I think we will see more of a response to priestly and religious vocations among Gen Z than we did among millennials ...,” Father Augenstein said.

For many members of Gen Z, faith is something new.

“A large percentage of them grew up with no faith, and grew up in houses where parents didn’t practice a faith, and many of them were not baptized,” Father Augenstein said. “For many of them it’s not a return, it’s a new discovery, a new discovery of faith.”

When it comes to vocational discernment today in the archdiocese, family is at the core of many who are considering the priesthood or religious life, Father Augenstein noted.



Father Eric Augenstein discusses Church trends as part of a presentation titled “Promoting Vocations in Our Current Cultural Environment” during the Serra International Convention in Indianapolis on July 11. (Submitted photo by Wayne Mikols)

“Our seminarians [in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis] most often come from an active family of faith, both parents are Catholic, and in an intact marriage,” he said. “They also are more often coming from large families.”

As noted in Smith’s book, Gen Z values having experiences more than possessing things, another trend the Church can “build on,” Father Augenstein said. They also thrive in peer relationships and being a part of a community.

“The Mass is ... an encounter with God and the Church. So, we can’t settle for a mediocre version of the faith, for an individualized version of the faith. We have to offer opportunities for our young people to experience God.”

This is why eucharistic adoration is becoming powerful among Gen Z, he continued. “It’s an experience, an encounter, a personal encounter with God in the midst of the Church.” †

‘Vocational seeds’ are sown at National Eucharistic Congress, priest notes

By Sean Gallagher

Father Michael Keucher has long known the importance of eucharistic adoration for people discerning a possible vocation to the priesthood and religious life.

But he saw it on dramatic display in July 2024 at the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis when some

40,000 Catholics worshiped in silence before the Blessed Sacrament in Lucas Oil Stadium and some 50,000 Catholics took part in a eucharistic procession through the streets of the city.

Father Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director since 2019, spoke on July 10 to the more than 200 attendees who came to Indianapolis from across the country and around the world to attend the

Serra International Convention. He reflected on the ways that the congress helped promote vocations, something that he said the Church won’t know the full effects of for many years.

“Jesus was sowing vocational seeds like crazy at the Eucharistic Congress just two years ago,” he told the members of the organization who seek to promote vocations to ordained ministry and religious life. “It takes a while for these seeds to germinate.”

But some are already starting to blossom, Father Keucher noted, as the archdiocese expects to welcome in August the largest number of new seminarians it has had in many years.

One of those new seminarians told Father Keucher of the effect on him of the opening night of the congress in which Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., led a time of eucharistic adoration in Lucas Oil Stadium.

“He heard his vocation right there at the congress,” said Father Keucher. “And it was at the very beginning when Bishop Cozzens brought in our Lord [in the Blessed Sacrament].”

Father Keucher also emphasized the beauty of the witness of “lives surrendered to [Christ]” on display in the approximately 200 bishops, 1,300 priests, 650 deacons, 700 seminarians and 1,200 men and women religious who attended the congress.

“Everywhere our young people turned, they saw priests hearing confessions for hours,” Father Keucher said. “They saw bishops kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament. They saw Masses being celebrated with profound reverence. They saw seminarians laughing together over meals. They saw priests and nuns walking alongside families.”

Although the congress had a who’s who lineup of speakers, Father Keucher said that all who took part in the congress, no matter their vocation, ultimately came to Indianapolis because of Christ and his gift of himself in the Eucharist.

That, he said, is the most effective means of building up a culture of vocations in the Church.

“When you put young people in front of our Lord, miracles happen,” Father Keucher said. “He calls them. He speaks to them.

“Our job is really not that hard as ministers in the Church of the Lord, as priests, as religious, as Serra members. Our job is to put people in front of Jesus, and then he does the work. He does the heavy lifting. ... All we have to do is put our Lord in front of people in silence and he does the rest.”

(To read part one of the coverage by The Criterion of the annual convention of Serra International, go to www.CriterionOnline.com.) †



Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director, gives a presentation on July 10 at the annual convention of Serra International held in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)