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Trusting in providence

The perseverance of St. Mother Theodore Guérin, canonized 20 years ago, page 3.

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Respect Life Award recipient is 'non-stop advocate and warrior for pro-life cause'

By Natalie Hoefer

Sheryl Dye admits to not always having a pro-life mindset in the past.

"I wouldn't have an abortion, but I thought it was a woman's right," says the former Sanctity of Life committee chair at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

"It wasn't until I started seeing some of the radical things that people were wanting to do that I started to question that way of thinking. And then I started to really look at the sanctity of life, that that's a human being in there.

"And the more I looked at what people were wanting to do, the more I thought, I have to do something to stop this."

Since that revelation 20 years ago, Dye has worked to end abortion and change hearts to embrace the sanctity of life within the womb.

She was honored for her efforts on Oct. 4—the first Sunday of October, which the Church in the U.S. celebrates annually as Respect Life Sunday. At the end of a Mass that day at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, Dye received the archdiocese's Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Respect Life Award. Her story follows below.

More than 30 seminarians of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis were among those worshiping at the Mass. The seminary's spiritual director, Father C. Ryan McCarthy, celebrated the Mass.

He began his homily by addressing the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' theme for Respect Life Sunday this year: "Mary, the Mother of Life."



Sheryl Dye receives this year's archdiocesan Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Respect Life Award from Father C. Ryan McCarthy, spiritual director for Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, at the end of a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4, Respect Life Sunday. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

Seek 'unmediated experience' of others

"What does it mean that Mary is the mother of life?" Father McCarthy asked.

For one, he said, she is "the mother of God, the mother of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is … the way, the truth, and the life, quite literally … [since she is] the source of the Incarnation.

"And from the Incarnation we receive the sacraments. … So, Mary allows us to celebrate the goodness of life in coming in direct contact with God in the Holy Eucharist."

Respect for life involves relationship, said Father McCarthy, and relationship involves "a commitment to the other and a willingness to be in their presence."

Praying for others is essential, he noted. But praying "with them" and having "an interpersonal relationship Jesus Christ did, which is … to remove the obstacles to an incarnational, unmediated experience of the other so that they could know and love God and experience God in this life and be with him in the next."

At the end of the Mass, Father McCarthy presented the Respect Life award to Dye.

A 'passionate' advocate for life

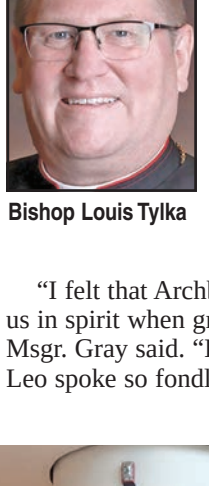
Dye was selected from among the nominations submitted to the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. Brie Anne Varick, director of the office, shared comments about this year's recipient at the end of the Mass.

"Sheryl is passionate about advocating for the human person at every stage of life," said Varick. "She has embraced the Church's mission to uphold the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death and has enthusiastically put countless hours into this mission."

See LIFE, page 8

Pope Leo receives a relic of Blessed Fulton Sheen from Peoria's bishop

VATICAN CITY (OSV News)—Bishop Louis Tylka of Peoria, Ill., presented Pope Leo XIV with a relic of the recently beatified Blessed Fulton J. Sheen during a private audience at the Vatican on Oct. 5.



Pope Leo XIV

Bishop Tylka was one of four U.S. bishops who met the pope on Monday. The pope also received 75-year-old Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami for an individual private audience, as well as the leadership of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

For the bishop of Peoria, the opportunity to give the Chicago-born pope the relic was "a profound joy and privilege," especially because of Pope Leo's personal interest in Blessed Fulton, who was beatified in St. Louis on Sept. 24 with about 50,000 people in attendance.

"To place a relic of this son of the Diocese of Peoria into the hands of the first American pope, both of whom are from Illinois, was an especially moving moment," Bishop Tylka said in a statement following the papal audience.

"The Holy Father's own interest in Archbishop Sheen reminds us that his witness continues to speak to the Church today and challenges all of us to proclaim the Gospel with the same conviction and joy," the bishop added.

Bishop Louis Tylka

Msgr. Jason Gray, the executive director of the Peoria-based Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation, also took part in the papal audience.

"I felt that Archbishop Sheen was with us in spirit when greeting Pope Leo," Msgr. Gray said. "I am grateful that Pope Leo spoke so fondly of Archbishop Sheen,

See RELIC, page 8

Family hopes to follow Blessed Fulton all the way to heaven

By Sean Gallagher

Before the start of the Sept. 24 beatification Mass of Blessed Fulton J. Sheen at The Dome at America's Center in St. Louis, a speaker asked any of the 50,000 people present named Fulton and any parent who had given that name to any of their children to stand.

Among them stood Fulton Wenzel, 13, and his parents Craig and Natalie who, along with the rest of their family, are members of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

"As Fulton and I stood hand in hand along with Craig, an unforgettable smile came across my son's face as he felt a beautiful and humbling sense of honor to be recognized for his namesake," recalled Natalie.

"It feels very special to know I have the same name that a man of God has, a man who is on the road to sainthood," said Fulton, a seventh-grader at Lumen Christi Catholic School in Indianapolis. "I have begun to pray his canonization

See FULTON, page 9



Craig and Natalie Wenzel pose on Sept. 24 with their children, Gianna, left, Fulton, Dominic and Teresa in St. Louis for the beatification of Blessed Fulton J. Sheen. (Submitted photo)



On Oct. 4 in Assisi, Italy, Archbishop Felice Accrocca of the Diocese of Assisi-Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino, carries a relic in a procession outside the Basilica of St. Francis as cardinals, friars and thousands of pilgrims join in the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis. (OSV News photo/courtesy Sala Stampa Sacro Convento Assisi)

In Assisi, cardinals, friars celebrate 800th anniversary of saint's death

ROME (OSV News)—At the stroke of midnight on Oct. 4, church bells tolled across the Italian hilltown of Assisi to mark the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' death.

The Oct. 4 feast of the "the Little Poor Man of Assisi" was the pinnacle event amid a yearlong jubilee celebration, which began with the historic exposition of relics of him for public veneration.

The feast day celebrations began on Oct. 3 with a night procession and a solemn commemoration of the "*Transitus*" ("passage"), the traditional Franciscan prayer service in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels marking St. Francis' transition into eternal life. The basilica houses the chapel where St. Francis died on the night of Oct. 3, 1226.

About 3,000 people took part in the procession on the eve of the beloved saint's feast day, singing hymns and voicing prayers as they retraced the route made by St. Francis' coffin in 1226, walking about 2 miles uphill through Assisi from the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels to the Basilica of St. Francis where he is currently buried.

The walk ended with a midnight Mass celebrated by Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime, the pontifical legate for the papal basilicas of Assisi.

Reflecting on the meaning of St. Francis' *transitus*, Cardinal Artime told the congregation, "To live well means learning, day after day, to die to ourselves so that we may belong ever more fully to Christ.

"The things we owned, our achievements, the image we projected of ourselves" will not matter in the end, the cardinal said. "Love will remain. Christ will remain. Francis dies poor, but he dies rich in the only wealth that never dies: the Lord."

The following morning, Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, the president of the Italian bishops' conference, presided over a packed Mass in the basilica attended by Italy's President Sergio Mattarella. Assisi's Bishop Felice Accrocca and Cardinal Artime were among the concelebrants.

In his homily, Cardinal Zuppi said that St. Francis continues to teach us to be peacemakers, bringing the gift of peace "wherever there is violence, hatred and misunderstanding." The way forward when "we are tempted and seduced by a vulgar, overbearing and deceptive culture of power," the archbishop of Bologna added, is to disarm "our hands and our hearts."

Following the Mass, Italy's president addressed the crowd gathered in front of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi.

"In these times marked by senseless and cruel wars, by so much violence, manipulation and arrogance, as Leo XIV said a few days ago, our hope is that Francis' sun may illuminate the world, convert minds hardened by hatred, and point the way toward peace, hope and a serene, fraternal life together," Mattarella said.

The celebrations concluded on the evening of Oct. 4 with solemn vespers and a procession led by Bishop Accrocca, who imparted a blessing of Italy and the world from the small dome of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi using the Chartula relic of St. Francis. The Chartula is a small, fragile piece of parchment written on directly by St. Francis of Assisi in September 1224, two years before his death. The parchment contains the "The Praises of God" on one side and "The Blessing for Brother Leo" on the reverse.

The Jubilee Year proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV celebrating the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi will continue until Jan. 10, 2027. †

Correction

An article in the Oct. 2 issue of *The Criterion* misidentified a reader who reflected on the role that Blessed Fulton J. Sheen had on her life.

The reader, who is Donna Hollingsworth of Sacred Heart Parish in Clinton, was misidentified as Barbara Hollingsworth. †

Public Schedule of *Archbishop Charles C. Thompson*

October 10—October 20, 2026

October 10 – 5:30 p.m.
175th Parish Anniversary Mass at St. Gabriel Church, Connersville

October 11 – 11 a.m.
75th Parish Anniversary Mass at St. Jude the Apostle Church, Spencer

October 12 – 5 p.m.
Mass and Dinner with Evangelization Summit Planning Team, Indianapolis

October 13-15
Evangelization Summit at Marian University, Indianapolis

October 17 – 1 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Mary Parish, New Albany, and St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Clarksville, at St. Mary Church, New Albany

October 18 – 10 a.m.
175th Parish Anniversary Mass at St. Anthony of Padua Church, Clarksville

October 18 – 1:30 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyds Knobs; St. John the Baptist Parish, Starlight; St. Mary Parish, Navilleton, and Holy Family Parish, New Albany, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church, Floyds Knobs

October 18 – 5:30 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Augustine and Most Sacred Heart of Jesus parishes, Jeffersonville; St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany; St. Michael Parish, Bradford; St. Bernard Parish, Frenchtown; St. Joseph Parish, Corydon, and St. Mary Parish, Lanesville, at St. John Paul II Church, Sellersburg

October 20 – 10:30 a.m.
Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 20 – 5:30 p.m.
Mass and Dinner for the National Eucharistic Congress at St. John the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis

Video campaign showcases rewards of teaching in Catholic schools

***Criterion* staff report**

The teachers who shape the faith and future of Catholic school students are taking center stage in a new social media campaign launched by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The initiative, a partnership between the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools and Secretariat for Communications, features a series of short video reels highlighting educators who share what they value most about teaching in Catholic schools. The campaign is designed to attract qualified teachers to schools across central and southern Indiana.

Led by Joe Hansen, assistant superintendent for Catholic Schools, the videos focus on the mission of Catholic education, relationships with students and colleagues, and the opportunity to integrate faith into daily work.

The reels are being shared on archdiocesan social media channels, including LinkedIn, with links directing viewers to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis employment website, where current teaching opportunities are posted.

"Teaching in a Catholic school is more than a profession. It is a vocation that allows educators to help form students academically, spiritually and personally," Hansen said. "These videos give our teachers an opportunity to share their experiences and encourage others to consider joining our schools."

The videos hope to attract talented educators by highlighting the faith-filled communities, sense of purpose and opportunities available throughout Catholic schools.

Go to bit.ly/CatholicSchoolsTeachers or scan the QR code to watch the video series. To learn more about opportunities to serve in the archdiocese's Catholic schools, go to archindy.applicantpro.com/jobs/. †

Share how Mary has touched your life

As October is a month dedicated to the Blessed Mother, *The Criterion* is inviting readers to share their thoughts and stories about the special connection they have with her—how they have relied on her in tough times, how they have felt her presence, how they have come to know her comfort, guidance and love.

Please send your thoughts and stories about your special connection to the Blessed Mother 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 where you can be reached. †

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Chanting Marian antiphon is living reminder of nuptial joy for spouses

(Editor's note: The Criterion *has invited you, our readers, to share a song that has led you into a deeper level of faith, humanity or love. Here is one of the songs that has been shared so far.)*

One in an occasional series

By Sean Gallagher

Although not in the Church's Rite of Marriage, it's a pretty solidly established custom in many places at nuptial Masses for the bride and groom to offer flowers and a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ordinarily, this happens after Communion when the new spouses walk to where there is a statue of Mary, place flowers by it and pray silently while a vocalist sings a solo piece inspired by her. Franz Schubert's "*Ave Maria*" has been a popular choice for this.

When my wife Cindy and I planned our wedding Mass back in 2001, I wanted to do something different. Instead of having a vocalist sing, Cindy and I would sing our prayer to the Blessed Mother.

My own mother planted a love for music in my heart when I was young. And she encouraged me through the years to put to use for the Church the singing talents God gave to me. So, doing this at our wedding Mass seemed like a fitting thing to do. It was a way for Cindy and me together to show our great love for God and our Blessed Mother in a way that goes beyond the spoken word.

You really can't call what we sang a song. It's just a simple and short chant antiphon traditionally sung during the season of Easter: the "*Regina Coeli*" ("The Queen of Heaven"). By chant standards, it's fairly new, probably composed sometime in the 13th century.

This is its text that goes with the melody: "*Regina coeli, laetare, alleluia/Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia/ Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia/Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia*."

("Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia/For he whom you merited to bear, alleluia/Has risen from the dead just as he said, alleluia/Pray for us to God, alleluia.")

The melody of the chant is simple. Cindy learned it quickly. Singing it together at our wedding was a beautiful moment for us on a day that we'll remember for the rest of our lives.

A reminder of that blessed day has come to us at our parish—Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary in Indianapolis—where through the years the traditional Marian antiphon connected to different liturgical seasons are chanted after some Masses.

When we hear the first notes of the "*Regina Coeli*" at the end of Mass, it's like we're taken back to June 9, 2001. Easter is a great season to celebrate in the Church. Cindy and I look forward to it in a personal way because of the chance we have to live out anew a special moment of our wedding.



Sean and Cindy Gallagher are pictured on June 9, 2001, their wedding day. (Submitted photo)

The grace of the sacrament of marriage began to flow through Cindy and me on our wedding day. For 25 years since then, it has come forth like a beautiful, harmonious song when we cooperate with that grace in giving ourselves in sacrificial love to each other, our five sons, our extended family and others.

I'll be the first to admit that I sing more than my fair share of off-key notes when I fail in many little and some big ways from day to day in this mission of our marriage.

But the joy of the Blessed Mother at her Son's resurrection and the promise of her prayers to God for us chanted in the "*Regina Coeli*" are inspiring reminders to Cindy and me that our Lord is always merciful to us and invites us anew to enter more fully into our married love which is a sacramental sign of Christ's love for the Church.

(To hear Sean and Cindy Gallagher sing "Regina Coeli," *use the QR code or go to* tinyurl.com/GallaghersSing.*)*

(Whether it's a song from popular culture or from a church hymnal, you are invited to share your story of how that song has led you to a deeper level of faith, humanity or love. Please send your story and song(s) to John Shaughnessy 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 where you can be reached.)* †

The perseverance of St. Mother Theodore Guérin, canonized 20 years ago

(OSV News)—When St. Mother Theodore Guérin (1798-1856) was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006, the pontiff almost understatedly summed up her life and holiness when he said, "With great trust in divine providence, [she] overcame many challenges and persevered in the work that the Lord had called her to do." Indeed, St. Mother Theodore Guérin's life was full of challenges, and the way she responded to them shows how she lived as a saint.



St. Mother Theodore Guérin

Oct. 15 marks the 20th anniversary of this remarkable woman's canonization. Her feast day is celebrated on Oct. 3.

Anne-Thérèse Guérin was born in France's Brittany region in 1798. Early on, she decided to dedicate her life to God, telling the priest who administered her first Communion that she planned to be a nun. While her father's naval work often kept him from the family home, her mother's influence was strong and loving.

After her father's murder, the young Anne-Thérèse cared for her mother and sister. She lived a simple holiness knowing, "We are not called upon to do all the good possible, but only that which we can do."

Entering the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loire in 1823 at nearly 25 years old, Anne-Thérèse soon dedicated herself to educating and caring for the poor. She was given a fitting new name, Sister Theodore, which is Greek for "gift of God." At the age of 42, her reliance on God's providence soon became even more important when she accepted an assignment to the Indiana frontier.

Bishop Celestin de la Hailandière of Vincennes, Ind., asked the superior of St. Mother Theodore's order to send sisters as teaching missionaries to his diocese, which then encompassed the entire state of Indiana and the eastern third of Illinois, including then the small town of Chicago.

Her superior knew of only one sister who could lead the mission, and the humble St. Mother Theodore was troubled to learn she was chosen for the task. After all, she long suffered from the effects of a disease-curing medication that rendered her tolerant of only an extremely limited diet. She accepted the mission only after a great deal of prayer with a heart dependent on God's will, fearing that if she didn't go, no one would.

In 1840, travelling with five other sisters, St. Mother Theodore arrived in Indiana. After a meeting with the bishop, they arrived in the village of St. Mary-of-the-Woods just west of Terre Haute, first coming to a chapel with the Blessed Sacrament. "We found waiting for us in a poor log cabin our God, our ALL," St. Mother Theodore wrote in her journal.

First lodging in the home of a pioneer family, the sisters got right to work building the infrastructure making it possible to open a school within a year. The school still exists today as Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. Filled with missionary zeal, St. Mother Theodore would establish nearly a dozen schools and two orphanages throughout Indiana and Illinois.

She experienced almost every imaginable hardship on the Indiana frontier: anti-Catholicism, prejudice against women, misunderstandings, fire, hunger and illness. The woman of perseverance accepted it all in providence, writing, "Does it matter what becomes of us, provided God's will be accomplished?"

One of St. Mother Theodore's most notable challenges in Indiana was the difficulties she encountered with Bishop de la Hailandière. Unable to work well with the sisters, the bishop sought more and more control of them. St. Mother Theodore was eventually forced to return to France for advice from her superior, and it was decided that she should establish a new order back in Indiana.

In her absence, the bishop made matters worse. On her return, the bishop even locked St. Mother Theodore in a room hoping to obtain her resignation. He created further problems for her and the wider community until he resigned in 1847.

In those years of pain and suffering, St. Mother Theodore experienced her share in the cross. Ever reliant on God's providence, she proved strong in leadership and holiness, and urged her sisters, "Put yourself gently into the hands of providence."

St. Mother Theodore Guérin died at age 57 in 1856 at the motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, the order she founded. She knew what it was to live as a saint, and she teaches us about our call to the same: "What have we to do in order to be saints? Nothing extraordinary; nothing more than what we do every day. Only do it for his love." †

Oct. 11 gathering to honor St. Mother Theodore Guérin's canonization

All are invited to celebrate the 20th anniversary of St. Mother Theodore Guérin's canonization from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. on Oct. 11. It will take place at 1 Providence Pl., Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006, she is the first Indiana saint and the eighth Catholic saint from the United States.

The celebration will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a pilgrimage through the motherhouse grounds, where Mother Theodore founded the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

At 11 a.m., all are welcome to attend a special Mass in St. Mother Theodore's honor in the Church of the Immaculate Conception. A picnic luncheon will follow.

There is no cost to attend, but registration is needed to know how many people will be attending.

To register, go to events.sistersofprovidence.org, call 812-535-2952 or send an e-mail to msolis-deal@spsmw.org. †

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OPINION

The Criterion

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Editorial



A youth speaks as Pope Leo XIV and hundreds of children join in praying the rosary for peace in the Lourdes Grotto in the Vatican Gardens on the evening of Oct. 1. October is the month dedicated to the prayer of the rosary. (OSV News photo/Simone Risoluti, Vatican Media)

Like Pope Leo and the children, let's pray the rosary for peace

"When one million children pray the rosary, the world will change."
—St. Pio of Pietrelcina, commonly known as Padre Pio

Talk about "strength in numbers."

And the power of having countless people praying for the same intention in various languages.

That reality was evident last week during an evening of prayer at the Vatican on Oct. 1. And it continues.

Pope Leo XIV prayed the rosary with hundreds of children and their families at the Lourdes Grotto in the Vatican Gardens on that day after the Holy Father invited Catholics to pray the rosary throughout the month of October for peace in the world.

"Tonight and in these coming days, we are not alone in prayer. Across the globe, one million children are praying with us," Pope Leo told the children as reported by OSV News.

"One million! Just think: 50 million 'Hail Marys' rising to heaven from every corner of the Earth and in every language, asking for peace, and coming together as if in a single, immense rosary, to embrace and bind together all the continents, races and nations of the planet," he said.

The gathering came just days after Pope Leo visited the original Marian grotto in Lourdes, France, where the Virgin Mary appeared 18 times to St. Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.

The rosary with the pope at the Vatican Gardens was part of the "One Million Children Praying the Rosary" initiative organized by Aid to the Church in Need, a pontifical foundation that supports persecuted and suffering Christians around the world. The initiative began in Venezuela in 2005 and has since grown into a universal prayer movement involving children, families, parishes, schools and Church groups across the globe.

The 2026 initiative was the first-ever campaign taking place over an entire week—from Oct. 1-7—allowing communities around the world to choose a day suited to their pastoral circumstances while uniting in prayer for peace and unity. The campaign concluded on Oct. 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

"Tonight, we've gathered to be together with the two people who love us more than anyone else. Do you know who they are?" the pope asked. "The Lord Jesus and his mother Mary, who never leave us alone and who are always close to us."

Our universal shepherd encouraged the children to shout, "I love you, Jesus!" and "I love you, Mary!"

He continued, "Yes, we love you, Jesus and Mary, and tonight we ask you for a special gift: peace for all the children of the world, especially for those living in war-torn areas in so many countries around the world. We do this through the prayer of the Holy Rosary, which is a simple prayer that everyone can recite."

The children recited the "Hail Mary" in several languages, including Italian, Arabic, Urdu, German and Spanish, offering decades of the rosary for peace in Syria, Lebanon, South Sudan, Cuba, Venezuela and other countries across the globe.

The campaign draws inspiration from words attributed to St. Pio of Pietrelcina, commonly known as Padre Pio: "When one million children pray the rosary, the world will change."

The 2026 campaign was also inspired by the message of Our Lady of Fatima: "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph." She spoke those words on July 13, 1917, during her third appearance to the three shepherd children SS. Francisco and Jacinta Marto and Lucia dos Santos, who was declared "venerable' by Pope Francis in June 2023.

We believe it is a beautiful witness of faith when children and their families come together to pray for a similar intention. And to have the initiative led by Pope Leo offers a powerful reminder of how critical he believes it is for humanity to strive for peace.

The pope also reminded the children at the Vatican that prayer must be tied to acts of charity.

"Prayers must always be accompanied by good deeds and acts of love. That's how peace grows!" he said.

In our call to holiness during this Respect Life Month and beyond, we pray all families—including children—become instruments of peace in our world.

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/*Natalie Hoefer*

When a Raphael appeared in an emergency room on the feast of the Archangels



The 87-year-old woman was wheeled into a room in the emergency wing of IU Health Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis at 9:30 p.m. on Sept. 29. A fall 30 minutes prior left her with a bleeding chin and abrasions on her nose and cheeks.

Nevertheless, her face lit up when she saw the triage nurse.

"I know you! We sit in the same pew at St. Mary's, and you do such a beautiful job as a lector," the woman said. The two women are members of the Indianapolis parish, and both frequently worship at the parish's daily Mass.

They shared their names as the nurse tended to the woman's wounds. Then she turned the woman's care over to the doctor and the supporting medical team.

The doctor finally arrived around 11 p.m. to assess the patient, ordering a CAT scan and stitches for the woman's chin.

Neither had taken place when the initial triage nurse stepped into the room a few minutes after midnight.

"How are you doing? Can I get you anything?" she asked the woman and her two visitors—the patient's husband and a friend who drove him to the hospital.

The woman requested a cup of water, which the nurse quickly brought.

When the woman said she was waiting for a CAT scan, the nurse checked to see what she could do to speed up the process. Then, with no additional chair in the room, she leaned against a wall and visited with the woman.

"Is this your full-time job?" the woman asked.

"Yes, but I also work full time with the INDYCAR medical team," she answered, a job that takes her to the Indy 500 and to tracks around the country during the roughly six-month racing season.

Then there's the volunteering. She uses her medical expertise to help organizations like Gennesaret Free Clinics and on medical missionary trips. Throw in serving on several committees, and "sometimes it's a bit too much," she admitted of her busy life with a laugh.

The woman then asked the nurse if she knew a particular person who also worshiped at St. Mary's daily Mass.

"Yes," she said. "In fact, I just babysat for her kids the other night." The nurse described how the request came at 5:30 p.m., and she responded she'd be there after her shift ended at 6 p.m.—no hesitation, just an immediate response to someone in need.

Returning to talk of St. Mary, "Did you see the students from Indiana Wesleyan University at Mass the other evening?" the woman asked.

"Yes. They were there for a comparative religion class," the nurse responded. "I don't know why, but they came up to me and started asking questions after Mass."

The nurse then shared the questions and how she responded. From statues to the Eucharist, to Mary and more, the nurse's answers proved her to be a welcoming, knowledgeable witness true to Church teaching.

At that point, the doctor entered the room to clean and stitch the wound on the woman's chin. The doctor accepted the nurse's offer to help.

Afterward, the nurse asked the woman and two visitors another round of, "Can I get you anything?" and promptly returned with the husband's requested apple juice.

The couple's friend asked where the nearest vending machine was. The nurse personally showed her the way and, when the vending machine didn't work, offered her snacks she had on hand.

It was now 2:30 a.m., and the woman still hadn't had the CAT scan. The nurse pulled the couple's friend aside.

"I can stay with them and take them home," she offered. "You have to go to work in the morning, but I've got the day off."

The friend thanked her but declined.

With that, the nurse returned to the woman's room and bid her farewell, saying with a warm smile, "We'll have to sit a little closer in the pew now, and say each other's names at the sign of peace."

After the nurse left, the woman turned to her two companions and pointed out that the nurse's shift ended at midnight.

The three agreed: From the nurse's compassionate care, devoted accompaniment, selfless giving and love for the faith, she brought the presence of the healer and companion Archangel Raphael—from the moment she arrived on the scene the night before, the feast of the Archangels.

(Natalie Hoefer is a reporter for The Criterion.*)* †

Be Our Guest/*John Etling*

Child hunger: a problem more challenging than homework or a test

September was Hunger Action Month, a time to raise awareness about food insecurity, advocate for change and take action against hunger.



In Vigo County, the data from Feeding America—the country's largest domestic emergency foodbank network, of which the Catholic Charities Terre Haute (CCTH) Foodbank is a member—is telling us those actions must be bigger.

According to Feeding America's latest "Map the Meal Gap" study, an estimated 19.7% of Vigo County residents—approximately 20,930 people, nearly one in five residents—are food insecure. That figure is above the statewide rate of 15.8%. It is the highest food insecurity rate the county has experienced in the past decade, making Vigo County fourth highest in food insecurity among Indiana's 92 counties.

For children, the picture is even more concerning.

More than one in four children living in Vigo County—26.8% or approximately 5,830 children—are food insecure. That is the second-highest child food insecurity rate in Indiana.

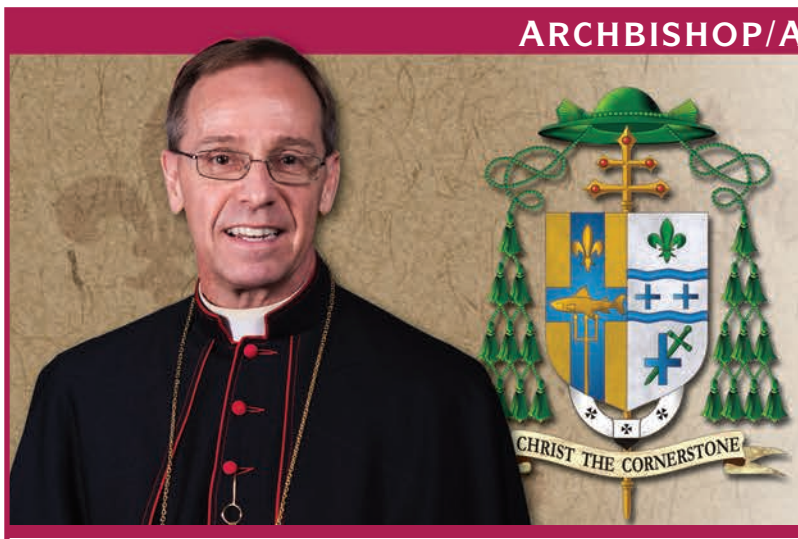
For those children who are in school, hunger does not remain neatly outside the classroom door. Inadequate access to food can affect a student's ability to concentrate, learn, maintain energy and regulate behavior. A student worried about whether there will be dinner at home—or whether younger siblings will have enough to eat—is carrying a burden into the classroom much bigger than homework or a test.

Food security is not separate from educational success. It is foundational to it.

For years, weekend backpack programs have been one of the most recognizable responses to hunger among school-aged children. A small bag of easy-to-prepare food sent home on Friday is intended to provide a helpful supplement over the

See HUNGER, *page 14*

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Turn to Mary and embrace the rosary this month

As we begin October, the month dedicated to the Holy Rosary, I invite you to pray the Rosary every day for peace in the world. … The Rosary is one of the most powerful devotions entrusted to us by Our Lady, and in these turbulent times, it remains a sure path to peace, conversion, and deeper love of Christ. (Pope Leo XIV)

On October 7, the Church invited us to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary as Our Lady of the Rosary. The Rosary is a distinctly Marian prayer, but its focus is the life, death, resurrection and glorious Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven.

Through Mary's eyes, we Catholics meditate on the mysteries of our faith. The Rosary includes biblical events such as the Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost. It invites us to enter into these sacred events with Mary and all the angels and saints who worship God in and through this profound, meditative prayer.

Mary is honored because she is the Mother of Jesus, Mother of the Church, and a model of faith and holiness for all missionary disciples of her Son, Jesus. The *Magnificat*, which is sung daily in the Church's evening prayer, records her prophecy: "All generations will call me blessed" (Lk 1:48), and Jesus gives Mary as a mother to the beloved disciple, symbolizing her maternal relationship to us and to all believers (Jn 19:27).

The Church's devotion to Mary is rooted in ancient Christian tradition. Mary appears in early Christian art as a woman of prayer and as an intercessor, and the Church Fathers recognized her as the "new Eve," whose obedience cooperated with God's plan of salvation. Veneration of Mary is not meant to distance her from Christ, but to contemplate how God worked through her humble "yes" and how she continues to guide Christians toward her Divine Son.

Pope Leo XIV is following in the footsteps of his predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his love and promotion of the Holy Rosary. Leo XIII served as pope from 1878 to 1903. During this time, he penned no less than 12 encyclicals on the Rosary. Although Pope Leo XIV has served as Successor of St. Peter for less than 18 months, he has mentioned this time-honored Marian devotion frequently, and he has requested that all who seek to follow Jesus commit to praying the Rosary daily with great fidelity and devotion.

Pope Leo is deeply grieved by the increasingly violent wars that affect so many people today, in Ukraine, in the Holy Land and in many other regions of the world. He deplores the many ways that warfare impacts families and nations, and he insists that the Rosary is a "daily antidote to the poison of noise, despair and spiritual indifference." Our Holy Father regularly calls for a slow and deliberate praying of the Rosary "thought by thought, bead by bead," and he emphasizes that praying the Rosary is a pathway to peace.

Last May, in his catechesis on the Second Vatican Council's teaching in "*Lumen Gentium*" on the Virgin Mary as a model of the Church, Pope Leo said:

"Let us be challenged, therefore, by the sublime model who is Mary, Virgin and Mother, and let us ask Her to help us, through Her intercession, to respond to what is asked of us through Her example: Do I live my participation of the Church with humble and active faith? Do I recognize in her the community of the covenant that God has given me to respond to His infinite love? Do I feel that I am a living part of the Church, in obedience to the pastors given by God? Do I look to Mary as a model, an outstanding member and Mother of the Church, and ask Her to help me be a faithful disciple of her Son?"

And, we might add, "Do I pray the Rosary—both alone and with my family—as a way of contemplating the mysteries of faith in Jesus Christ my Redeemer?

In these turbulent times, especially during the month of October, we should take seriously the admonition of Pope Leo XIV that the Holy Rosary is "a sure path to peace, conversion, and deeper love of Christ."

Let's not hesitate to turn to Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary, for her guidance, encouragement and intercession in our daily lives and in times of trouble. "Mary is the mother of the whole Church," our Holy Father says. "We can turn to her with filial confidence, in the certainty of being heard, protected and loved."

Let's honor our Blessed Mother by praying the Rosary as a pathway to peace, conversion and a deeper love of Christ. †

Cristo, la piedra angular

Recurran a María y recen el rosario este mes

Al comenzar octubre, el mes dedicado al Santo Rosario, los invito a rezar el rosario todos los días por la paz en el mundo. … El rosario es una de las devociones más poderosas que nos ha confiado Nuestra Señora, y en estos tiempos turbulentos sigue siendo un camino seguro hacia la paz, la conversión y un amor más profundo por Cristo. (Papa León XIV)

El 7 de octubre, la Iglesia nos invitó a honrar a la Santísima Virgen María como Nuestra Señora del Rosario. El rosario es una oración claramente mariana, pero su enfoque es la vida, la muerte, la resurrección y la gloriosa Ascensión de Jesucristo al cielo.

A través de los ojos de María, los católicos meditamos sobre los misterios de nuestra fe. El rosario incluye acontecimientos bíblicos como la Anunciación, la Visitación, la Natividad, la Crucifixión, la Resurrección, la Ascensión y Pentecostés. En esta oración profunda y meditativa se nos invita a adentrarnos en estos acontecimientos sagrados junto con María y todos los ángeles y santos que adoran a Dios.

Se honra a María porque es la Madre de Jesús, la Madre de la Iglesia y un modelo de fe y santidad para todos los discípulos misioneros de su Hijo, Jesús. El *Magnificat*, que se canta diariamente en la oración vespertina de la Iglesia, recoge su profecía: "Todas las generaciones me llamarán bienaventurada" (Lc 1:48), y Jesús entrega a María como madre al discípulo amado, simbolizando así su relación maternal con nosotros y con todos los creyentes (Jn 19:27).

La devoción de la Iglesia hacia María tiene sus raíces en la antigua tradición cristiana. María aparece en el arte cristiano primitivo como una mujer de oración y como intercesora, y los Padres de la Iglesia la reconocieron como la «nueva Eva», cuya obediencia cooperó con el plan de salvación de Dios. La veneración a María no tiene por objeto alejarla de Cristo, sino contemplar cómo Dios obró a través de su humilde "sí" y cómo ella continúa guiando a los cristianos hacia su Divino Hijo.

El papa León XIV sigue los pasos de su predecesor, el papa León XIII, en su amor y promoción del Santo Rosario. León XIII fue papa de 1878 a 1903. Durante este tiempo, redactó nada menos que 12 encíclicas sobre el rosario. Aunque el papa León XIV ha ejercido como sucesor de san Pedro por menos de 18 meses, ha mencionado con frecuencia esta devoción mariana consagrada por el tiempo, y ha solicitado que todos aquellos que buscan seguir a Jesús se comprometan a rezar el rosario diariamente con gran fidelidad y devoción.

El papa León está profundamente afligido por las guerras cada vez más violentas que afectan a tantas personas hoy en día, en Ucrania, en Tierra Santa y en muchas otras regiones del mundo. Deplora las múltiples formas en que la guerra afecta a las familias y a las naciones, e insiste en que el rosario es un "antídoto diario contra el veneno del ruido, la desesperación y la indiferencia espiritual." Nuestro Santo Padre exhorta regularmente a rezar el rosario de manera pausada y deliberada, "pensamiento por pensamiento, cuenta por cuenta," y hace hincapié en que rezar el rosario es un camino hacia la paz.

El pasado mes de mayo, en su catequesis sobre la enseñanza del Concilio Vaticano II (véase *Lumen Gentium*, "La Virgen María, modelo de la Iglesia"), el papa León dijo:

"Dejémonos pues interpelar por tal modelo sublime que es María, Virgen y Madre, y pidámosle a Ella que nos ayude con su intercesión a responder a cuanto se nos pide a través de su ejemplo: ¿vivo con fe humilde y activa mi pertenencia a la Iglesia? ¿Reconozco la comunidad de la alianza que Dios me ha donado para corresponder a su amor infinito? ¿Siento que soy parte viva de la Iglesia, en obediencia a los pastores que Dios nos ha dado? ¿Miro a María como modelo, miembro excelente y madre de la Iglesia, y le pido a Ella que me ayude a ser discípulo fiel de su Hijo?"

Y podríamos agregar: ¿Rezo el rosario, tanto a solas como con mi familia, como una forma de contemplar los misterios de la fe en Jesucristo, mi Redentor?

En estos tiempos turbulentos, especialmente durante el mes de octubre, debemos tomar en serio la advertencia del papa León XIV de que el Santo Rosario es "un camino seguro hacia la paz, la conversión y un amor más profundo a Cristo."

No dudemos en recurrir a María, Nuestra Señora del Rosario, en busca de su guía, aliento e intercesión en nuestra vida cotidiana y en momentos de dificultad. "María es madre de toda la Iglesia, la cual se puede dirigir a ella con confianza filial, y con la certeza de ser escuchada y amada," asegura el Santo Padre.

Honremos a nuestra Santísima Madre rezando el Rosario como camino hacia la paz, la conversión y un amor más profundo a Cristo. †

Events Calendar

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

Wednesdays

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.

October 7-November 18

Virtual Online Life-Giving Wounds Retreat for Adult Children of Divorce, 8:15-10 p.m. Wednesdays, for Catholics ages 18 and older, $155 ages 18-25, $245 ages 26 and older, cost includes retreat guide, journal and more. Information, registration: 317-592-4007, gross@archindy.org.

October 13

The Marriott Ballroom, 350 W. Maryland St., Indianapolis. **Right to Life of Indianapolis Celebrate Life Dinner**, 6-9:30 p.m., 6 p.m. check-in, 6:45 p.m. dinner and awards, 8 p.m. keynote by Deacon Paul Lunsford (Diocese of Lafayette), $125 individual, $1,250 table for 10. Information, registration: 317-582-1526, tinyurl.com/RTLIDinner2026, life@rtlindy.org.

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

October 15-18

Sheraton Birmingham Hotel 2101 Richard Arrington Jr. Boulevard North, Birmingham, Ala. **Fr. Chester P. Smith National Black Catholic Men's Conference: "The Rock I Stand On,"** 8 a.m. Thurs.-9 a.m. Sun., speakers include Birmingham Bishop Steven J. Raica; Father Vernon Huguley, head of Birmingham Diocese's Black Catholic Ministry; Father Gerald Holloway, former University of Alabama football chaplain; Ron Jackson, senior director of government relations for Catholic Charities USA; and more; adults $215, ages 13-17 $150, lodging separate, hotel parking $40 per day; no conference registration deadline. Information, registration: bowmanfrancis.org.

October 16

Liter House, 5301 Winthrop Ave. Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following until 9 a.m., presenter Deacon Rick Wagner, president of Guérin Catholic High School (Lafayette Diocese), $20 members, $25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. Oct. 13. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

October 17

Sisters of Providence, 1 Providence Pl., Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteer Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, visit with elder Sisters, help with activities such as bingo, exercise, baking and attending events, wear comfortable shoes and clothes that allow for mobility, lunch provided, free. Information, registration: 812-535-2878, teenvolunteer.sistersofprovidence.org, volunteer@spsmw.org.

Primo Banquet and Conference Center, 2615 National Ave., Indianapolis. **Marian Authentic Women's Conference: Fiat, Let It Be Done**, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., talks by Lisa Hendey, author and founder of CatholicMom.com; Kristy Malik, author and CEO and co-founder of Jonah Company; and Father Anthony Hollowell; includes opportunities for confession, adoration and Mass, Catholic marketplace, lunch and snacks included, hosted by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life and Living Our Vocations Everyday (LOVE) Ministries, Inc., $60 per person or $55 if in group of eight or more, students ages 14-24 $20, consecrated religious free, register by Oct. 13. Information, registration: loveministriesindy.org/mawc. Questions: 317-361-8361, info@loveministriesindy.org.

October 18

St. Isidore the Farmer Parish, 6501 St. Isidore Road, Bristow. **Fall Festival**, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. CT, raffle, games, country store, kitchen with homemade goods and chili, free admission. Information: 812-843-5713.

October 19

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.

October 22

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Providence Pl., Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Foundation Day Mass**, 11 a.m., Mass to honor the day St. Mother Theodore Guerin and her five companions arrived at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

October 23-25

Sisters of Providence, 1 Providence Pl., Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Discernment Retreat**, 4 p.m. Fri.-2 p.m. Sun., for Catholic women ages 18-42 discerning a religious vocation. Information, registration: 361-500-9505, events.sistersofprovidence.org, jluna@spsmw.org.

October 24

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Polidor 5K Run/Walk**, 8:30-11 a.m., check-in 7-8 a.m., supporting adult literacy Alfa Program in Limonade, Haiti, $20 ages 15 and older through Oct. 10, $25 after, $10 ages 14 and younger. Information, registration: tinyurl.com/PolidorRace2026, 812-350-5250, saleeb9287@att.net.

October 25

Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Church, 7225 Southeastern Ave., Indianapolis. **Nativity Concert Series: Autumn Concert**, 7 p.m., brass quintet, music spanning hundreds of years and multiple styles, free. Information: 317-357-1200, cseitz@nativityindy.org.

October 27

St. Mary Parish, 325 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **Deepening Communion in a Polarized World**, Glenmary Home Missionary Father Aaron Wessman presenting, 5:15-9 p.m.; talk in English 5:45 p.m., bilingual Mass 7 p.m., talk in Spanish 8 p.m., free. Information: 317-637-3983, parishoffice@saintmarysindy.org.

November 4

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—ages 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday 1 p.m. lunch events. Information: 317-796-8605.

November 6

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, St. Bede Theater, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Organ Concert by Dr. Ryan Kennedy**, 7:30 p.m. CT, performing liturgical music by Bach and Florentz, free admission. Information: saintmeinrad.org/visit-us/cultural-events, 812-357-6611. †

Retreats and Programs

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

October 23

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Quiet Day of Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., $20 (or $80 with spiritual direction). Information, registration: oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/quiet-day-of-renewal, 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgfranciscans.org.

October 23-25

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Being "Eucharistic" People**, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, $350 single, $550 double. Information, registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Peace in the Mourning Grief Retreat**, 6 p.m. Fri.-noon Sun., includes accommodations, meals and program, $250. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

October 30-November 1

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 Saint Anthony Dr, Mt. St. Francis. **Women's Weekend of Peace**, 7 p.m. Fri.-noon Sun., personal and group reflection, artistic activities, opportunities for spiritual direction, confession and Mass, limited to six women, $225. Information, registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/womens-weekend-of-peace, 812-923-, ext. 202, assocdir@mountsaintfrancis.org.

November 3

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds, $55, overnight stay available for additional $42, dinner additional $14.40. Information, registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

November 3-5

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Basket Weaving: A Monastic Microcosm**, Benedictine Brother Jean Fish presenting, $350 single, $550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

November 6

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Quiet Day of Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., $20 (or $80 with spiritual direction). Information, registration: oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/quiet-day-of-renewal, 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgfranciscans.org.

November 6-8

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Being and Belonging Weekend Retreat**, Fri. 6 p.m.-Sun. 1:30 p.m., hope and healing after divorce, $250. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

November 13-15

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **The Infancy Narrative of Matthew's Gospel**, Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell presenting, $350 single, $550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

November 20-22

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Virtues of the Heart of the Savior**, 6 p.m. Fri.-10 a.m. Sun., Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate Father Terrance Chartier presenting, $290 for single, $480 double, $670 triple, $860 quadruple, includes four meals and room for two nights, commuter $90 includes lunches. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, maryschildren.com.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Stories from the Old Testament for Today**, Benedictine Father Harry Hagan presenting, $350 single, $550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

Fatima Retreat House offers new 'Come Away Day' retreat series

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, has started a new series of one-day retreats called "Come Away Day." Unlike the "Day of Silence" offerings, these one-day retreats center on a theme that invites participants to journey together in moments of fellowship and community.

Each retreat includes two talks, adoration and time for reflection and meditation. Lunch and snacks are also provided.

The next "Come Away Day" will take place from 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. on Oct. 21. The theme for the retreat day is "Gratitude."

The cost is $55. The registration deadline is the day before each retreat.

For more information or to register, go to ftm.retreatportal.com/events,

Purchase memorial luminaries by Nov. 1 for Benedictine Sisters' 'Celebration of Life' on Nov. 15

A "Celebration of Light" memorial prayer service will take place at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove, from 7-8 p.m. on Nov. 15.

The prayer service is an opportunity to honor deceased family members and friends in a special way. The annual "Celebration of Light" will take place in the monastery chapel, where luminaries will be presented in memory of loved ones.

Luminaries can be requested in advance for a deceased family member or friend. All names submitted will be part of the presentation. A donation of $25 per luminary is requested, or $100 for up to 10 people. The deadline to request a luminary is Nov. 1.

All are welcome to the free memorial service.

For more information or to purchase a luminary, go to benedictine.com or call 317-787-3287. †

Wedding Anniversaries

Gerald and Sharon (Craft) Selm, members of St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Oct. 7.

The couple was married in St. Gabriel Church in Connersville on Oct. 7, 1961.

They have four children: Katy Duncan, Amanda Honeycutt, Gregory and Thomas Selm.

The couple also has 12 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.



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

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LIFE

continued from page 1

In his nomination letter for Dye, St. John the Evangelist pastor Father Timothy Wyciskalla wrote that, through her roughly 12 years of leadership, the parish's Sanctity of Life committee "flourished, and St. John's has become a very strong pro-life parish."

His list of Dye's accomplishments at the parish is long. Among them are the creation of a spiritual adoption program, a miscarriage ministry, a program to pray for specific pregnant moms and a pro-life film and speaker series offered in partnership with Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

"And we're now a Gabriel Project parish!" Father Wyciskalla added. "Sheryl is a true, non-stop advocate and warrior for the pro-life cause."

Outside of her parish, Dye has helped coordinate vendor booths for the Youth Rally prior to the annual Indiana March for Life in January, Varick added.

She also noted Dye's "many years" as a sidewalk counselor, "standing outside of abortion clinics praying and counseling women who are considering abortion, as well as training those called to join the ministry of sidewalk counseling."

Her efforts to train and organize these "peaceful, loving, law-abiding" volunteers began about the same time Dye became head of St. John the Evangelist's pro-life committee.

It was part of her plan when the Dye family moved to Indianapolis from Westfield, Ind., 13 years ago.



Father C. Ryan McCarthy elevates the Eucharist during a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4, Respect Life Sunday. Kneeling are some of the 31 seminarians of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis who worshiped at the Mass. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

'Somebody has to speak up'

Dye had her pro-life conversion seven years prior to the move when she was a member of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield in the Lafayette Diocese.

"I got involved just kind of mildly," she says, including participating in and coordinating the area's local 40 Days for Life prayer campaigns in front of abortion facilities.

That involvement introduced her to sidewalk counseling ministry.

"So many people think that pro-lifers are just about the babies," says Dye. "But really for me, it was seeing the hurt in women that I had started to meet and to talk to and wanting to help them know there's so much help in Indianapolis, that there's people who will walk with them the whole way.



"Abortion is seen as, 'This will take care of my problem,' but it just adds a lifetime of problem. So, we can work together through whatever issue it is that makes them think abortion is the answer."

After the move from Westfield, Dye started an Indianapolis location of Sidewalk Advocates for Life. The non-profit organization's mission is to "train, equip, and support communities across the United States and the world in sidewalk advocacy: to be the hands and feet of Christ, offering loving, life-affirming alternatives to all present at abortion and abortion-referral facilities, thereby eliminating demand and ending abortion."

Dye emphasizes the part about abortion-referral facilities.

"Because Indiana has [a near-total] abortion ban, people think that it's no longer an issue here, and I get asked often why we're still out there" at the Planned Parenthood center in Indianapolis where abortions previously occurred and which now offers abortion referrals.

"We're still out there because even though Indiana banned [most] abortion, we know that about 9,000 women still went out of state or had an in-home abortion using pills" last year, Dye says. "So, the need isn't gone.

"And women are still coming into Planned Parenthood, getting pregnancy tests and ultrasounds, and Planned Parenthood isn't helping them through their pregnancy. Planned Parenthood is telling them where they can go across the state line."

Sidewalk counselors share with these women where they can get life-affirming care.

"It's very peaceful, loving, and we follow all laws," Dye explains. "When the cars come in the drive [of the Indianapolis Planned Parenthood facility], we wave at them, hope that they'll stop, and if they do, we just talk to them about the help that's available right next door at the Women's Care Center or through Gabriel Project."

She offers sidewalk counselor training periodically.

"We still need a lot of help" to cover every hour of the facility's 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday schedule, she says.

As for her Respect Life award, Dye says she was "very shocked and touched" to receive it.

"I'm a very small cog in the pro-life wheel," she says. "It's just become a passion that somebody has to speak up for these people who have no voice and who society says someone else is to determine their value. We have to speak out against that."

(For more information on the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, go to archindy.org/human-life-and-dignity *or contact Brie Anne Varick at* bverick@archindy.org *or 317-236-1543. For more information on sidewalk counseling or shadowing to gauge interest, contact Sheryl Dye at* smdye1@gmail.com*.)* †

RELIC

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whom he remembered watching when he was young."

Pope Leo has previously praised Blessed Fulton as "a light of faith, hope and love that shone through the radio and television media for decades," as his broadcasts brought the Gospel to millions of Americans.

In comments to OSV News on the papal flight to Paris, France, the American pope recalled spending time with his family as a child watching Archbishop Sheen on television and remarked that he would have liked to attend the beatification.

The pope's first private audience of the day was with the U.S. bishops' conference president and vice president, Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City and Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, respectively. The bishops were joined by Msgr. Michael J.K. Fuller, the USCCB general secretary, and Father Paul B.R. Hartmann, associate general secretary.

The papal audience is part of the annual visit made by the leadership of the U.S. bishops' conference to Rome to meet with offices in the Roman Curia.

Chieko Noguchi, USCCB spokesperson, told OSV News that the meeting was an opportunity to update Pope Leo on the Church in the United States.

"The USCCB is grateful for the opportunities that our bishops have to spend time with our Holy Father and assure him of our support and prayers," she said.

While in Rome, Archbishop Coakley will participate in the Oct. 7-14 meeting on marriage and family convened by Pope Leo, who called the heads of national bishops' conferences worldwide as well as the heads of Eastern Catholic Churches to the event, titled "Ten Years After '*Amoris Laetitia*': Proclaiming the Gospel With Families Today."

Last week, Pope Leo had private audiences with two other U.S. bishops. The pope met one-on-one on Oct. 1 with Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle (a native of Tell City, who was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 1992) and with Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minn., who presided over the diaconate ordination of 18 American seminarians from the Pontifical North American College during an evening Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. †

Witnesses to life

***Criterion* staff report**

On Oct. 4, Respect Life Sunday for the Church in the U.S., members of parishes throughout central and southern Indiana participated in Life Chain events, gathering for an hour or more in public places, holding signs with pro-life messages and praying for an end to abortion.

Additionally, 48 members of Knights of Columbus councils in central Indiana held an overnight prayer vigil from 6 p.m. on Oct. 2 through 6 a.m. on Oct. 3 in front of the Planned Parenthood facility in Indianapolis as part of the fall 40 Days for Life prayer campaign.

Here are photos from Life Chain events in the archdiocese and the Knights of Columbus prayer vigil submitted to *The Criterion*.



Father Anthony Armbruster, parochial vicar of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, leads a prayer service on the evening of Oct. 2 at the start of the Knights of Columbus' 12-hour vigil outside of the Indianapolis Planned Parenthood facility, which offers out-of-state abortion referrals. (Submitted photo)



Participants in the Life Chain event in Indianapolis, which lined four blocks along North Meridian Street, are shown in front of and across from the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)



Lawrenceburg Life Chain participants pose with St. Lawrence Church in the background. (Submitted photo by Duane Meyer)



Participants of all ages joined in the Life Chain event in Brookville. (Submitted photo)

FULTON

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prayer each day, and I hope that one day Archbishop Sheen will be elevated to be a canonized saint."

Craig and Natalie attending the beatification Mass with their four children was a special moment in the life of their family that has holiness for all as its goal.

The birth of a devotion and a son

When they were preparing for their wedding in 2005, Craig and Natalie put "a good amount of prayer and discussion" into how they would be open to the gift of life as husband and wife.

From the start, their openness to life included welcoming children through adoption. As it turned out, Craig and Natalie adopted two children, their daughter Teresa and their son Fulton.

Before Fulton was born, the couple discussed what name they wanted to give to the son whom they would adopt.

Craig soon focused on Fulton as a possible name.

He had not known of Blessed Fulton until a Catholic radio station began broadcasting in 2004 in Indianapolis. Craig, 51, recalled one day listening to the radio station and "hearing a man's voice that was very distinctive and really drew you into listening to what he was speaking about."

At the end of the program, he learned that he had been listening to an audio recording of an episode of Blessed Fulton's 1950s TV show, "Life Is Worth Living." Craig soon purchased recordings of Archbishop Sheen and "listened to them multiple times, greatly enjoying them."

His devotion to Blessed Fulton increased as he was able to view a pectoral cross of his that is preserved in the archdiocesan archives. Craig also was impressed by seeing a rosary that had belonged to Archbishop Sheen that was brought to the archdiocese by the late Franciscan Friar of the Renewal Father Andrew Apostoli, who worked to promote the archbishop's canonization cause.

Craig has sought to follow the example of Blessed Fulton in his life as a husband and father by valuing eucharistic adoration and praying the rosary.

"His dedication to prayer helps as a reminder to keep myself focused on our blessed Lord and praying for my marriage and family though the rosary and during adoration," Craig said. "We can bring our successes and sorrows to our Lord in this time in adoration.

"We can also use the time in adoration to simply be with our Lord. This time can be used to pray for our marriage as well as our family and to bring to our Lord those items that we may be asking him for help on."

While Craig had a desire to name their son Fulton, Natalie had another name in mind.

But soon after their son was born and she got to hold him for the first time, she knew what his name was to be.

"After those first few hours of holding our son, the Holy Spirit gave me the clarity I needed, and I knew his name was to be Fulton," Natalie recalled.

'Nurture the seed'

Over the years, Craig and Natalie have fully embraced their call as parents to give their children the gift of faith through the sacrament of baptism and to nurture that gift as they grow.

Natalie shared how, from a young age, Fulton paid attention to what was going on at Mass and would mimic parts of the liturgy while playing at home.

"We knew we had our hands full with Fulton when he put on a red cape at age 4 and organized a *Corpus Christi* procession on the sidewalk of our neighborhood," she said.

Craig has appreciated introducing Fulton to Archbishop Sheen at a much younger age than when he first learned about him.

"As Fulton has grown, it has been enjoyable talking to him about Archbishop Sheen and his love for the Mass, our Blessed Mother and the rosary," Craig said.

"My parents told me that Archbishop Sheen was a priest who gave very moving talks, homilies and had a very popular radio show and TV shows in the 40's, 50's and 60's," Fulton said. "I also learned about how he had a devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and that he made a Holy Hour every day of his life from the moment he was ordained a priest."

As soon as he was old enough, Fulton started assisting as an altar server in liturgies at Holy Rosary, something he continues to do today.

Craig and Fulton have at times prayed Holy Hours together.

"We are then able to talk afterward about how God may be speaking to our hearts during those Holy Hours," Craig said.

Craig knows that Fulton is coming to an age where he might start to listen for God speaking to him about his vocation and wants him to be open to that, whatever it might be. He and Natalie know that they can help their son best by praying for him.

"It's our job to nurture the seed while praying that the Holy Spirit will shine its light upon the path in front of Fulton so that he may have a great understanding as to what God's vocation is for him," Craig said.

For his part, Fulton turns to his holy namesake for help in this task, for himself and others.

"I pray to Archbishop Sheen to ask for his intercession to help others to know of their vocation in life and for me so that I can prayerfully discern the vocation that God has planned for me," he said.

'A moment of clarity'

Earlier this year when the beatification of Blessed Fulton was set for Sept. 24, the Wenzel family started making plans to attend.

But in the weeks immediately before, many obstacles to their taking part in the historic liturgy emerged, including a car accident in the family the weekend before.

But on Sept. 21, Craig and Natalie made the decision to go to St. Louis for the beatification regardless of the challenges before them that seemed to make going "imprudent and too daunting," according to Natalie.

"Our hearts were guided by the Holy Spirit that beckoned us and asked, 'How can we not make this trip in our life right now?' " she added.

The hours before the Mass were filled with their own difficulties, from long lines for bathrooms and long lines for the sacrament of penance. But then, said Natalie, came a "moment of clarity."

"We had made it to St. Louis for the beatification of Fulton Sheen, to behold this holy servant of God become blessed," she said, "and nothing else mattered, not the stress, the immense crowds, all the ups and downs that day and with that we headed to our seats."

Now that he has returned from the beatification Mass, Fulton is set on seeking to follow in Archbishop Sheen's footsteps, all the way to heaven.

"I would like to help others to see and know God, just as Archbishop Sheen did with the many people he met in his life," Fulton said. "I would like to dedicate a specific time each day to praying with our blessed Lord, just as he did. And I would like to be a saint like him one day and be in heaven with our Lord." †

Papal trip showed miracle of rebirth out of tragedy is possible, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Leo XIV's journey to France aimed to show that a joyful or serene rebirth is always possible even after tremendous tragedy or terrible suffering, he said.

By visiting the newly restored Notre Dame Cathedral, meeting with survivors of abuse and praying at Lourdes, and celebrating the Christian faith openly in the public square of a secular nation, the pope highlighted how the miracle of new life can happen when everyone comes together out of love for one's neighbor and the common good, he said during his weekly general audience on Sept. 30.

As has been customary, Pope Leo used his first general audience after his Sept. 25-28 trip to Paris, Lourdes and Metz in France to tell people about the purpose of his visit and to thank all those who made the journey possible.

He also repeated an appeal he made in France: asking the faithful worldwide to pray the rosary throughout October, "dedicating it in a special way to ending wars and achieving peace."

The motto of the journey, "That the world may have life," the pope said in English, "characterized the Gospel-centered nature of my meetings throughout the visit. For God alone, through his grace, can restore the Church and renew humanity, and it was evident to me that this is precisely what is occurring."

The Cathedral of Notre Dame of Paris, which was restored after a fire destroyed its wooden spire and most of its roof in 2019, "can symbolically shed light on this entire apostolic journey, offering a perspective that I would summarize in one word: rebirth," he said in his main catechesis in Italian to thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square.

Rebuilt and "more splendid than ever," the cathedral's restoration "was a test of the possible collaboration between the Church, the state, public institutions and civil society," Pope Leo said.

"The synergy for the common good should be the norm for institutions, political and social forces, and all those with civil and economic responsibilities," he added.

"This is the message I wished to convey" to secular leaders and organizations, he said, "highlighting the fundamental criterion upon which such collaboration must be based: the dignity of the human person."

According to France's National Institute of Demographic Studies, the percentage of 18 to 49-year-olds who reported not belonging to any religion grew from 45% in 2009 to 53% in 2020, and 29% of the entire population reported being Catholic.

However, the pope said, there is also "a sign of renewal within the Church in France that has been evident for some years now, namely the remarkable and growing number of young people and adults seeking baptism."

A tangible and visible sign of rebirth "appeared in a surprising way" during Mass on Sept. 26 in Place de la Concorde, which, he said, was a highpoint of his visit. "Priests, the choir and a remarkable crowd extended all the way along the Avenue des Champs Élysées up to the Arc de Triomphe and beyond." An estimated 800,000 people filled the streets, according to the Vatican.

Despite the vast crowds, "everyone was able to receive the Eucharist," he said. "This is the true reconstruction, the restoration of the Church that only God can bring about, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary."

Turning to his visit to Lourdes, he said the shrine dedicated to Our Lady also represents "a message of hope and rebirth," especially for those who are sick "in body and spirit."



Pope Leo XIV addresses the faithful during vespers at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on Sept. 25. He's the first pope to visit Notre Dame after it was reopened following a devastating fire in 2019. The visit to the iconic temple was part of the pope's four-day apostolic journey to France. (OSV News photo/Simone Risoluti,Vatican Media)

This was another message "that I wished to openly reaffirm: every human life, in whatever condition, even in the most extreme frailty, retains its inviolable dignity and deserves to be cared for, accompanied and relieved of suffering with human compassion and with the aid of the means offered by science," he said.

Because Lourdes "represents for the entire world a sanctuary of the civilization of love," he said this was context for his meeting with a group of people who had experienced abuse by members of the Church.

"I asked them to help me express to other victims too my own wish, and that of the whole Church, to listen to them and walk alongside them as they seek healing, acknowledging the pain inflicted upon their lives and working to prevent abuse," he said.

Lastly, visiting the city of Metz, he said, helped symbolize its role in the process of unifying Europe "as a project for peace in the wake of the destruction wrought by war."

After two devastating world wars, "Europe was reborn, founded on those principles of democracy, solidarity and fraternity amongst peoples, which owe much to its Christian roots," Pope Leo said.

"Dear brothers and sisters, may the public witness of love for Jesus Christ that we have seen in France be an inspiration to the whole Church. Let us not hide our faith!" he told Portuguese-speaking pilgrims. †

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SIMPLYCATHOLIC

St. Francis had a love for the humility of Christ seen in the Eucharist

By Fr. Joseph Tuscan, O.F.M. Cap



St. Francis of Assisi is depicted in this detail from "Madonna Enthroned with the Child, St. Francis and four Angels," a fresco created by Giovanni Cimabue between 1278-80, in the lower church of the Basilica of St. Francis Basilica in Assisi, Italy. (OSV News photo/Octavio Duran)

(OSV News)—The Church celebrated the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 4 during this jubilee year of the 800th anniversary of his death. Looking closely at the life of his family can help us delve more deeply into his radical way of living out the Gospel.

St. Francis of Assisi's father, Pietro di Bernardone dei Moriconi, was a gregarious and generous man, a very ambitious and successful businessman. He was part of the "new money" demographic of the high Middle Ages as a representative of the merchant class.

Born into the lower classes of society, Pietro was determined to elevate himself and his family's social status.

He was domineering and driven but not abusive or wicked. He loved beautiful things like the fine cloth he purchased during frequent trips to France, which he would sell in his shop.

He married a refined and pious French lady named Pica de Bourlemont, also called Giovanna, about whom little is known except that she was a noblewoman originally from the Provence region of southern France.

Giovanni was the firstborn of Pietro and Pica's several children. Although the exact number is not known, some sources suggest seven. Giovanni was the first child and first son, a privileged and favored position.

He was born and baptized during one of his father's many absences. Pietro, who was in France purchasing cloth for his shop, returned home filled with joy. The birth of his firstborn son, his successful business trip and his love for all things French caused him to refer to his newborn son as Francesco.

This was the father of St. Francis of Assisi, a good man characteristic of his era, but driven by worldly ambition. He wanted to break the glass ceiling of the social structure of his time and become a nobleman, known in Italy then as a "*majore*." But personal wealth was not enough to accomplish this ambition.

In the social framework of the high Middle Ages, such a change of status needed to be granted by an imperial and ecclesiastical authority.

The only way for Pietro to achieve his ambition was for him or one of his sons to be victorious in battle. Then his family would be granted a title and therefore status as *majores*.

The heart of a son

Giovanni "Francesco" Bernadone loved his earthly father. He had no reason not to. Francesco was the heir to the family business and fortune, and the son Pietro could rely on to achieve his ultimate ambition of becoming majores.

Francesco willingly united himself with his father's ambition, helping to advance the family name not only by working in the family business, but also by using the family fortune to promote their status.

Francesco became a leader among the young men in his town through his charismatic personality and the use of his father's fortune to pay for entertainment. Pietro was supportive of his son in such activities, seeing this money as an investment in his own worldly ambition.

At this time, Assisi was engaged in a battle with the neighboring city of Perugia. Pietro saw his opportunity. Outfitting his son in the finest armor he could afford, he sent Francesco off to win the longed-for family status.

Medieval combat was largely hand-to-hand. Nothing in Francesco's past prepared him for the taking of human life in such a gruesome way. After a year in battle, Francesco fell prisoner to Perugia and wound up in a medieval prison cell for almost another year, waiting to be ransomed.

Haunted by the trauma of combat and poor health caused by the conditions of his confinement, Francesco was at a crossroads in his life. It was during his confinement that he had a mystical dream that would be the start of his conversion away from any worldly ambition and toward Jesus Christ as the center of his life.

Francesco was ransomed by his father and returned home a changed man. His health slowly returned, but he had completely lost interest in his father's business and social ambitions, for which he had done everything, likely including the shedding of blood, to promote.

A growing divide with his father escalated, culminating in a public confrontation in front of the bishop of Assisi in which his father publicly disowned him. Francesco acknowledged his earthly father's rejection, but he rejected, from that point on, any worldly ambition by embracing his Father in heaven.

The heart of a saint

Francesco approached life now as a penitent. Having been shown mercy by his heavenly Father, he realized that the Most High God was love poured out.

Unlike his earthly father's worldly ambition for upward mobility, the Most High God "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:7-8).

Francesco's mouth would water when he pronounced the holy name of Jesus, and his hunger would only subside in the reception of holy Communion, which became now the center of his life. He was offered ordination as a priest, for which he felt unworthy. But it is widely acknowledged that he accepted ordination as a deacon and served in this capacity, although we have no historical record of his ordination.

Francesco cherished this servant role at the altar and all things connected to it: the obligation to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the commitment to celibacy and obedience to the bishop.

Francesco's joyful commitment to poverty and a life of humility focused on God alone and in service to the Church soon inspired many other young men to follow him and thus the Franciscan family of religious communities was born.

In every aspect of his life, Francesco sought after the "Spirit of the Lord and his holy operation," which for Francesco meant the interior and exterior living of poverty modeled on the Most High, who once made himself poor in the child at Bethlehem and eternally poor and ever present to humanity in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

(Capuchin Franciscan Father Joseph Tuscan serves as director of the Confraternity of Christian Mothers and a full-time minister of the word for the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Augustine, offering retreats and reflection days for parishes, religious and priests.) †



Pope Leo XIV elevates the Eucharist as he celebrates Mass on Aug. 6, the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy. St. Francis of Assisi had a great love of the Eucharist, seeing in it the great humility of Christ. (OSV News photo/Mario Tomassetti, Vatican Media)

Perspectives

Faith in History/*Sean Gallagher*

St. Damien of Molokai gave himself in service to a Hawaiian leper colony

The stories of two American saints, St. Damien of Molokai and St. Marianne Cope, are intertwined, showing us how God's grace flows from person to person and how we can thus be the means of the sanctification of other people.



We'll explore the life of St. Damien in this column and St. Marianne's in the next.

St. Damien of Molokai was born on Jan. 3, 1840, in Belgium as Jozef De Veuster. At 18, he joined the Fathers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the religious order in which his older brother Auguste was a member. As a novice, Jozef was given Damien as his religious name.

He dreamed of becoming a missionary and got the chance to fulfill it when Auguste, who was supposed to be sent to Hawaii, became ill. Damien volunteered to take his place and departed in 1864 for the Pacific island nation, then an independent kingdom. He was ordained a priest in Honolulu on May 21 of that year.

At first, Father Damien did parish ministry on the island of Hawaii. There, he observed how the native Hawaiians were suffering from a variety of diseases brought to the islands by outsiders both from Europe and Asia.

One of those conditions was leprosy, now known as Hansen's disease. It is a contagious bacterial illness that can lead to damage in the skin, nervous system, respiratory tract and eyes. While it is treatable now, before the development of antibiotics, it could easily lead to crippling disabilities and death.

Cultures and societies across history and the world have feared leprosy and sought to isolate those who suffer from it. Such was the case in Hawaii in the time of St. Damien. The year after he was ordained, the kingdom's legislature passed a law quarantining those suffering from leprosy to an isolated colony on the island of Molokai.

The government supplied some food to the people sent there, but they received minimal health care—if any at all—and their living conditions were poor.

The bishop in Honolulu wanted the lepers on Molokai to have a priest to attend to their spiritual needs, but he also recognized the great personal risk involved.

Father Damien volunteered for the assignment and arrived at Molokai in 1873. While he was only supposed to stay there for four months, the priest himself and the residents of the colony soon requested that his ministry continue indefinitely.

Father Damien did all he could to address the many physical and spiritual needs of the colony's residents, giving them medical care and working with them to build a church, homes and furniture. He also made coffins for those who died there and dug their graves. Through it all, Father Damien proclaimed the Gospel and taught the faith to the people.

Echoing and adapting the words of St. Paul, Father Damien wrote in 1873, six months after his arrival in Molokai, to Auguste, back in Europe, "I make myself a leper with the lepers to gain all to Jesus Christ."

Those words were figurative at that time, but they eventually became a reality. Father Damien contracted leprosy in 1885, succumbing to it in 1889 at the age of 49.

The source of his strength for his ministry at the leper colony, including after he became a leper himself, was the Eucharist. "Without the constant presence of our Divine Master, I would never be able to cast my lot with that of the lepers," he wrote to Auguste.

Pope Benedict XVI declared Father Damien a saint in 2012. St. Damien of Molokai, pray for us. †

Our Works of Charity/*David Bethuram*

Act of kindness becomes 'the most important thing I've done in my life'

Research shows that both older adults and their caregivers benefit in a variety of ways from storytelling.

When an older person relays a tale about the things that have mattered most in his or her life, it helps the older person recall important life experiences, and the caregiver's experience is far more personal and richer.



I found this especially true when I visited a relative or fellow parishioner who was homebound. There was one gentleman, Richard, whom I visited twice a month for nearly a year. He often shared a story with me about when he worked as a taxicab driver in Chicago many years ago. It changed him.

Richard's story was about a time when he picked up a passenger in the middle of the night. When he arrived at the address, the building was dark, except for a light in a ground floor window. He said that many drivers would wait for a couple of minutes and drive away in such circumstances. But he thought of passengers who might need his assistance, so he went to the door and knocked.

He heard the weak voice of an elderly woman: "Just a minute." The door opened and he saw a small lady in her 80's, wearing a dress and a pillbox hat. She had a small suitcase in her hands.

He took the lady's suitcase and helped her walk to the cab. "Thank you for your kindness," she said. "It's nothing," he responded. "I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother treated." She said, "You are a very decent person. I'm Judith."

When they got into the cab, Judith told him the address and asked Richard to drive through downtown. He told her that it was not the shortest way, but she said she was in no rush, adding, "I am on my way to a hospice. I have no family left." Richard noticed tears in her eyes.

He quietly switched off the meter and asked what route she would like him to take. While they drove through the city, Judith showed him places that were important to her: the building where she worked as an elevator operator, the house where she and her husband lived just after they married, the warehouse which used to be a ballroom, where she went dancing as a young girl.

After two hours of driving, Judith quietly said: "I'm tired, let's go now."

When they arrived at the address she gave him, two orderlies immediately came out to meet the cab as if they had been expecting her. Richard did not realize at first that he was taking her to what was then called an "old people's home," a place we would now refer to as a nursing home.

Richard took Judith's suitcase while she was seated in a wheelchair. She asked how much she owed him, and he gently replied, "Nothing." She responded, "But you have to make a living." Richard gave her a hug. He told me that she held onto him tightly. "Thank you for giving me those moments of joy," she said.

While he was walking to his cab, he heard a door shut. He told me that he thought it "sounded like the closing of person's life."

He didn't pick up any more passengers that day. He just drove without any purpose, lost in thoughts about the old woman.

Richard would always say, at the end of telling me this story, "That drive was the most important thing I've done in my life."

We always look for great moments, but sometimes great moments catch us unaware, beautifully wrapped in what might be considered as nothing particular.

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

Guest Column/*Sarah Robsdottir*

Blessed Fulton Sheen's epic meatloaf—and its surprising 'appley' ingredient!

I recently pounced on a dinnertime opportunity to introduce my seven sons to the late, great Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, who was beatified and became Blessed Fulton J. Sheen on Sept. 24. I first became acquainted with the legendary 1950s TV evangelist when I was entering into the full communion of the Catholic Church 20 years ago.



Back then, I read many of his best-selling books, such as *Life of Christ* and *Way to Happiness*. I also watched countless clips from his groundbreaking, Emmy Award-winning TV show "Life is Worth Living." I think the thing that captivated me most about the articulate, insightful archbishop (with the brightest blue eyes) was how relevant and emergent he was—he seemed to leap off the page and the black and white screen to meet me exactly where I was, to talk about things that really mattered.

I'll never forget his remedy for my age-old problem of anxiety. No one else had ever told me to counteract it with community service. While community service hasn't taken the place of professional help, the archbishop's advice at the time was, and still is, mind-blowing.

This is just one of many examples where Archbishop Sheen has guided my life in a profound yet practical way—a way that endeared him to the hearts and minds of millions all around the world over the last half of the 20th century and beyond.

So, you can imagine my delight when I stumbled upon his meatloaf recipe on his museum's Facebook page, along with an article about how this particular meal was introduced to the public during a 1970s radio interview on "The Mike Douglas Show." As a mother of seven growing sons, I always need new dinner ideas; here was one that would spark a great conversation.

"Over 70,000 people called in to ask for this recipe after Fulton Sheen talked about it on the radio," I bragged as I set down the steaming hot meatloaf on the table. "Text and e-mail didn't exist back then. They had to dial old-fashioned rotary phones. Fulton Sheen was truly the world's first Catholic influencer."

My teens were impressed. My younger kids just liked the way the meatloaf tasted.

"Yum," my youngest son smacked his lips. "It reminds me of hamburgers and apple pie."

That's because I not only used Archbishop Sheen's recommended cup of applesauce, I threw in a couple tablespoons of apple butter and a hefty shake of cinnamon, too. I then coated the top of the meatloaf with extra ketchup, brown sugar and a little more apple butter. I baked the dish as directed and finished it under the broiler for a few minutes—watching it closely while the apple butter and ketchup bubbled into a dark, sweet crust. The result was an amazingly savory, appley sauce.

While my husband and kids helped themselves to seconds, I peppered them with more fun facts about Fulton J. Sheen.

"His real name was Peter John. 'Fulton' was his mom's maiden name—and would you believe he credited his spiritual strength to his devotion to the Blessed Mother and his daily Holy Hour—something he did every single morning for over 60 years?"

My husband chimed in, as he's a huge Archbishop Sheen fan, too.

"The miracle that moved forward his cause for sainthood, taking him from 'venerable' to 'blessed,' happened in 2010. A stillborn baby in Sheen's home diocese of Peoria, Illinois, didn't have a heartbeat for a full hour. His parents sought Sheen's intercession the entire time, and the baby—whose middle name is Fulton—survived. His heart miraculously started beating on the 61st minute of prayer. He's still alive today."

I told them about Archbishop Sheen's 1953 Emmy Award. "He drew an audience of over 30 million viewers each week, and when he accepted his award, he thanked his writers—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."

Blessed Fulton J. Sheen, pray for us!

Archbishop Sheen's meatloaf recipe

Ingredients: 2 pounds ground beef, preferably top round, 1 cup chopped onion, 1 cup chopped green bell pepper, 1 cup applesauce, 6 slices bread (crumbled), 1 clove garlic (minced), 1 large egg (lightly beaten), salt and pepper to taste, 1 teaspoon flour (plus some for dusting the meat), about 6 tablespoons ketchup for topping, vegetable oil to coat the pan.

Directions: 1. In a bowl, mix the beef, applesauce, green pepper, onion, bread, egg, garlic, 1 teaspoon flour, salt and pepper. 2. Form mixture into a loaf. Dust with flour. 3. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Oil the inside of a large loaf pan and place meat in pan. Spread ketchup on top of loaf. 4. Bake, covered, in a preheated 350-degree oven for 2 hours. Uncover for the last 15 minutes of baking.

(Sarah Robsdottir is a Catholic convert and homeschooling mom to seven sons. Her latest novel, Joan of Arkansas*, was released by Voyage Publishing earlier this year. Visit Sarah at* sarahrobsdottir.com*.)* †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 11, 2026

- *Isaiah 25:6-10a*
- *Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20*
- *Matthew 22:1-14*

The first part of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend.



Understanding the cultural, social, political and economic context surrounding the composition of biblical texts always helps to capture their meaning.

Generally, times were not good for the chosen people. Aside from bursts of prosperity and peace under David and Solomon, they usually had to cope with war, invasion, want or worse.

The prophets usually saw little that they could truly applaud. Invariably, they proclaimed that it was human sin, not divine revenge or indifference to human distress, which was the cause of trouble in the world.

Understandably, then, the prophets often demanded that people be true to God at all times.

This passage was written when times were not all that bad, but dark storm clouds lay on the horizon. The people, generally speaking, were lukewarm in honoring God. Isaiah loudly protested that this religious sluggishness surely would be their downfall.

The prophet also insisted that if the people were faithful to God, all would be right. Peace and security would reign. Prosperity would prevail. Tears would be wiped away. Fears would be stilled. People would rejoice that God had saved them. God would be in their hearts.

The second reading is from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. On several occasions recorded in the Acts of the Apostles or in Paul's epistles, we read of the Apostle being imprisoned for preaching against the establishment or simply for disturbing the peace. This passage from Philippians was written while Paul was in prison.

Jail, humiliation and abuse were Paul's plight. Nevertheless, he said that his faith in God never wavered. His commitment to proclaiming the Gospel always drove him on. Nothing else mattered to him. God gave Christ to the world. Paul felt that he had to extend this gift far and wide.

St. Matthew's Gospel furnishes the last reading. The reading recounts a parable, with three developments.

First, a king, who represents God, invited guests, familiar and even privileged, to a wedding banquet for his son. These people rejected the invitation. Next, the king invited other guests. They also ignored the invitation, distracted by other concerns. Finally, the king invited outcasts and strangers to the feast. They came.

As all celebrated, the king saw a guest at the banquet improperly dressed. He ordered this guest to be removed.

The king's servants represent the prophets. The privileged guests who spurn the invitation represent the people of Israel. The invited with other interests are those who think themselves without need for God. The outcasts and strangers represent gentiles and the sinful.

God's mercy extends to everyone. Even so, God drags no one into the kingdom of heaven. Sinners must reform with the help of grace to be worthy of God's invitation.

Reflection

Times are changing in France. A century ago, the Catholic faith was vibrantly alive. The country was, as medieval popes described it, "the most Christian nation." Then religious devotion plunged.

Visiting the country a generation ago, Pope St. John Paul II exclaimed, "Where, France, is your baptism?"

Considering recent events, it appears that a growing number of French citizens, especially young adults, have found the religion of their ancestors. Religious practice is returning in significant ways.

Even the most optimistic Church leaders have been surprised to see the renewed interest in the Catholic faith there.

Pope Leo XIV's visit to France last month confirmed what seems to be the trend. His trip was little less than triumphant.

He represents Christ. People want to feel that life has a purpose. They sense a bond with other human beings. They reject mistreatment of others. They long for support in their lives that will not fail. They want to hope in the future.

All of us need to face facts. We need to reform. The Gospels tell us that Jesus is the answer, as so many in France are realizing. †

My Journey to God

The Night We Called It a Day

By Kirth N. Roach

In that night we called it a day,
The world unstitched its common seam.
I went into the quiet gray,
And you dissolved into the stream—

A parting whispered in the dark,
A fading shore, a severed spark.
When you become religious,
The old foundations break apart;
A quiet, holy tempestuousness
Sweeps through the chambers of the heart.

You are never the same when the veil is drawn,
And the secular shadows turn to dawn.
Something dies in you,
The noise of ego, fierce and loud,
The ambition that consumed the view,
Dissolving like a summer cloud.

And something awakens without a name,
A breath untouched by human speech,
A quiet, unconsuming flame
Beyond the mind's horizon reach—
An empty vessel, cast anew,
Where God begins, and life breaks through.



(Kirth N. Roach is a member of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis and is a member of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. Photo: Pope Benedict XVI holds a chalice as he celebrates a Mass to mark the World Day of Peace in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Jan. 1, 2008.) *(CNS photo/Dario Pignatelli, Reuters)*

Daily Readings

Monday, October 12
Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1
Psalm 113:1b-5a, 6-7
Luke 11:29-32

Tuesday, October 13
Galatians 5:1-6
Psalm 119:41, 43-45, 47-48
Luke 11:37-41

Wednesday, October 14
St. Callistus I, pope and martyr
Galatians 5:18-25
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 11:42-46

Thursday, October 15
St. Teresa of Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church
Ephesians 1:1-10
Psalm 98:1-6
Luke 11:47-54

Friday, October 16
St. Hedwig, religious
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, virgin
Ephesians 1:11-14
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 12-13
Luke 12:1-7

Saturday, October 17
St. Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
Ephesians 1:15-23
Psalm 8:2-3b, 4-7
Luke 12:8-12

Sunday, October 18
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 45:1, 4-6
Psalm 96:1, 3-5, 7-10
1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b
Matthew 22:15-21

Question Corner/*Jenna Marie Cooper*

Scripture does not contradict the Church's teaching on the death penalty

Q I know officially the Catholic Church is against the death penalty, but what about Genesis 9:6?



A It looks like there are two dimensions to your question: the Church's teaching on the death penalty, and how we are to read the Old Testament as Catholics.

Starting with this latter aspect, it's good to keep in mind that the Old Testament (and the Bible in general) is not so much a single book as it is a whole library of books.

Different books of the Old Testament have different genres. For example, a book recounting historical events is going to have a different nature and purpose than a book of sacred poetry, and these are going to be different from a book meant to expound directly on the law or other moral principles. Furthermore, the Old Testament is filled with complicated, flawed characters who often sin grievously despite having been chosen by God for a special mission.

Even in cases where a passage of the Old Testament was meant as a straightforward moral directive, there is often some significant cultural context to take into consideration when discerning what message we should receive from it today.

And the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament often add a new depth of meaning or a more layered obligation related to the revelation found in the Old Testament.

The quotation you mention specifically is part of the story of Noah and the ark. This passage is found toward the end of that narrative. After the flood is over, and Noah and his family have disembarked, God is exhorting Noah on how to go forward in rebuilding life in the post-flood world.

Echoing the story of the creation of Adam and Eve, chapter 9 of Gensis begins with God telling Noah and his children to "be fertile and multiply," and God reminds them that they have dominion over all the animals (Gn 9:1). But while human beings are given the right to kill and eat animals for food, God forbids them from killing each other.

Genesis 9:6 reads: "Anyone who sheds the blood of a human being, by a human being shall that one's blood be shed; For in the image of God have human beings been made."

In context, clearly the message of this passage is that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God, and thus all human life has a special dignity.

God is using the language of the time—that is, a language that often phrases transcendent values in terms of concrete consequences—to express this truth. This is not the same thing as God commanding Noah to execute offenders, and it certainly isn't the same thing as God ordering all human societies to enact capital punishment for all time across all societies in history.

'Consequently, the Church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that "the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person." '

This biblical emphasis on the dignity of human life actually supports our current Church teaching on the death penalty.

Historically, the Church's moral theology did tolerate the possibility of societies making use of capital punishment in certain circumstances in which this was the best or only option for the protection of innocent citizens.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes: "Recourse to the death penalty on the part of legitimate authority, following a fair trial, was long considered an appropriate response to the gravity of certain crimes and an acceptable, albeit extreme, means of safeguarding the common good" (#2267).

But this same paragraph of the catechism, quoting Pope Francis, goes on to elaborate: "Today, however, ... more effective systems of detention have been developed, which ensure the due protection of citizens. … Consequently, the Church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that 'the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person.' "

(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*.)* †

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.

BAKER, Linda J., 76, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Sept. 24. Wife of Jerry Baker. Mother of Chrissie Sturgill, Ryan and Stephen Baker. Sister of Carl, Mark, Robert and Thomas Strack. Grandmother of 11.

CATON, John, 85, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Sept. 10. Husband of Jan Caton. Father of Meghan Murali, Colleen Wells and Matthew Caton. Brother of Virginia Acheson and Chris Peterson. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of three.

EDDY, Betty, 92, St. Gabriel, Connersville, June 21. Mother of Niah Hicks, Monica Ross, Anthony and Mark Eddy. Sister of Tommy McGuire. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 11.

FRANK, Karen, 82, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Sept. 20. Mother of Wendy Sargent, Josh and Rick Frank. Sister of Bruce Fassold. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of three.

HAURI, Richard A., 73, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 6. Husband of Deanna Hauri. Father of Stuart Hauri. Stepfather of Alexander and Jere Isaacs. Brother of Francis and Melvin Hauri. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of eight.

HUCKLEBERRY, Thomas, 83, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Sept. 21. Husband of Roseanne Huckleberry. Father of Emily Griffin, Sarah and Edward Huckleberry. Brother of Kitty Odle, Eileen and Jerry Mader. Grandfather of three.

JOHNSON, Michael, 69, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Sept. 3.

KAYS, Joyce, 75, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 5. Wife of William Kays. Mother of Kimberly Corsaro and Brian Kays. Sister of Barbie Apsley, Velda Clark, Sharon Halcomb, Laura Hodapp, Janice Suding and Vernon Schwegman. Grandmother of three.

KERN, Marie B., 92, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 25. Mother of Donna Ball, Susan Jansen, Loretta Wright, Bernadette, Rose and Karl Kern. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of 16.

KNUEVEN, Luella R., 106, St. Mary, Greensburg, Sept. 27. Mother of Mary Richards and Robert Knueven. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of six.

LAVENDER, Judith A., 75, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 11. Sister of Charles Lavender. Aunt of several.

LILLIS, Thomas E., 64, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Sept. 10. Husband of Sara Lillis. Father of Erin and Will Lillis. Brother of Kathleen Heeb, Patricia Schiller, John, Kevin and Michael Lillis.

LUX, David J., 89, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Sept. 19. Husband of Rosamond Lux. Father of Brenda Servies, Joseph and Thomas Lux. Brother of Mary Kay Hart, Sally Stone and Diane Wagers. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of four.

MACINTOSH, Margaret A., 81, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Sept. 5. Wife of Charles Macintosh. Mother of Molly O'Connor, Kimberly Walden and Margaret Macintosh. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of five.

PFLUM, Phillip, 82, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 15. Husband of Diana Pflum. Father of Mindy Blaiklock and Judy Buhl. Brother of Diane Jones, Marilyn Miles, Carolyn Nutty and David Pflum. Grandfather of five.

SALLEE, Barbara, 94, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 27. Mother of Linda Chiles, Cheryl Fielden and Vickie Long. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 18.

SMITH, Judy, 61, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 16. Wife of Randy Smith. Mother of Kelsey and Kiley Smith. Sister of Nancy Barr, Joann Borders, Karen Boulware, Rosemary Brown, Helen Edwards, Lois Risch, Shirley Wise, Eddie and Lowell Risch. †

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

Consecration of Notre Dame



Students and concelebrating priests join Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend on Sept. 25 on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana for a Mass, eucharistic procession and Benediction. Bishop Rhoades prayed a prayer in which he consecrated the university to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the first time that the school has been consecrated. The bishop and university also prayed for an end to divisions and the strength to love selflessly like Jesus. The event was initiated by a variety of student groups. (OSV News photo/Michael Caterina, University of Notre Dame)

HUNGER

continued from page 4

weekend.

But we also must acknowledge the limits of that model.

A package of food intended for one child over two days is not a sufficient response to household food insecurity affecting nearly one in five people in our county.

Since an estimated 45% of Vigo County residents experiencing food insecurity live in a household with an income at or above the threshold used to estimate Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility, a food-insecure student is likely returning home to siblings, parents or grandparents who are also struggling to access enough food. The need reaches far beyond one child and one weekend.

At the Catholic Charities Terre Haute Foodbank, feeding people is what we do. For more than 40 years, we have worked to understand hunger, source food efficiently and reach neighbors where they are.

That experience informs our position: the school food pantry model provides a more meaningful response to childhood hunger in Vigo County. A school pantry gives students access to groceries that can help feed their entire household.

Through local retail partnerships and the Feeding America network, school pantries can access food at significantly reduced cost, while many products, including fresh produce and bread, are available at little or no cost.

With help from our foodbank as a Feeding America member, pantries at West Vigo and Terre Haute North high schools distributed more than 26,000 pounds of food to students and their families during the 2025-26 school year, even though Terre Haute North was open for only the final three months of the academic year.

This fall, Terre Haute South High School joined Terre Haute North and West Vigo, giving every Vigo County high school access to a full pantry model. The CCTH Foodbank also supports pantries at Honey Creek and Sarah Scott middle schools.

Our work extends beyond pantry locations. When the CCTH Foodbank has large quantities of fresh fruits, vegetables, bread and other short-shelf-life foods available, we distribute them at no cost throughout Vigo County schools, regardless of whether a school operates a pantry.

Last year, that distribution totaled nearly 81,000 pounds of nutritious food for Vigo County students.

Each school pantry is operated by teachers and school staff who keep food available for students and families in addition to their already extensive responsibilities. At no charge to the schools, the CCTH Foodbank reduces the logistical burden by using our truck fleet to deliver large quantities of food directly to schools and by our staff providing assistance in unloading and moving food into buildings.

As hunger-relief professionals, our responsibility is not simply to continue programs because they are familiar. It is to understand the data, recognize changing needs and build responses capable of making the greatest possible impact.

The infrastructure exists. The food is moving. School pantries are working. Educators are stepping forward.

What is needed now is a level of commitment equal to the problem. Awareness alone is not enough. Neither is a solution designed to address only one child.

The problem is bigger than a backpack. Our response must be, too.

(John Etling is agency director of Catholic Charities Terre Haute. For more information on the agency's foodbank and other programs, go to ccthin.org*.)* †

Pope writes to Gaza priest after strike kills five, including Christian mother and daughter

(OSV News)—The pastor of Gaza's only Catholic parish revealed that Pope Leo XIV sent a personal condolence message following an Israeli missile strike that killed five people, including a Christian mother and daughter.

In his daily video update posted to YouTube on Oct. 4, Father Gabriel Romanelli, pastor of Holy Family Parish, read the pope's "beautiful message" he received earlier, just one day after the missile strike that killed Maysa Khader Ibrahim Abu Daoud and her daughter, Mary Hafez Michel Najjar.

"Good morning, Father Gabriel. Ever since hearing the painful news about Maysa and Mary, I've been praying for them, their families, and everyone in Gaza. 'How long, Lord?' " Pope Leo wrote, echoing a lament from Psalm 13.

"Thank you for standing by the parish and so many people who only want to live in peace. God bless, with a warm embrace," he wrote to Father Gabriel.

According to Turkey's state-run news agency Anadolu Agency, the two women were among five people killed in the early hours on Oct. 3 in an Israeli airstrike on a residential building in Gaza City.

The deaths were confirmed hours later in a statement by the Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs in Palestine, which mourned the lives lost, including the two Christian women.

"Maysa and her daughter Mary had devoted their time to serving parishioners and displaced people sheltering at the Holy Family Church in Gaza, providing support and assistance amid the devastating humanitarian conditions facing the Gaza Strip," Ramzi Khouri, head of the committee, said.

He added that the deaths of two women were "a painful loss for their families, the Church, and the parish community, and add to the growing number of martyrs among the Palestinian people in Gaza, who continue to endure death, destruction, and suffering on a daily basis."

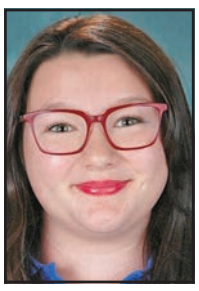
The mother and daughter were laid to rest hours after their deaths, following a funeral at St. Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church in Gaza.

In an Oct. 3 statement, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem prayed for their eternal rest, as well as "an end to the war and bombardment and for the protection of civilians." †

Archbishop Sheen's beatification is 'a real gift to our young people'

By John Shaughnessy

On a day when 50,000 people from around the world came together to celebrate the faithful witness of a fellow Catholic, Caroline Mason found herself embracing a deeper desire to be a witness of God's love to other young people.



Caroline Mason

At 6 in the morning on Sept. 24, the senior at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis boarded a bus with other students and school staff members to make the journey to St. Louis for the beatification Mass of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen—someone she knew just a little about, someone who would inspire her to do more before the bus returned to her school at 11:30 that night.

"Honestly, before heading to see the beatification Mass of Blessed Fulton Sheen, I hadn't heard much about him," Caroline says. "I felt I was more being called to experience something so monumental within my faith and experience a celebration in the Church. While being there, I learned so much about him, especially from hearing personal witnesses and seeing old footage of him speaking."

One of the stories about the 20th-century theologian, evangelizer and Catholic media pioneer especially resonated with her—the story of the first miracle attributed to his intercession.

The miracle is connected to the life of James Fulton Engstrom, the now-teenager who was born in 2010 without a pulse or respiration because of a knot in his umbilical cord. After 61 minutes in that condition, James came back to life after his parents and others prayed for Archbishop Sheen's intercession.

The miracle—approved by Pope Francis in 2019—struck home with Caroline.

"I was most inspired by his first miracle, especially since I'm co-president of the pro-life club at Chatard," she says. "Fulton Sheen inspires me to represent my faith proudly by advocating for the pro-life message, understanding communications and learning to openly express and share it with others, and finally to be humble."

The journey to St. Louis also left an impact on Damian Cain, a sophomore at Bishop Chatard.

Part of the impact came from learning more about Archbishop Sheen.

"He was able to inspire so many people through his ministry and his media of sharing the Gospel," Damian says. "He was such an influential figure for Catholics who were trying to learn more about the faith and for Protestants as well."

Being part of 50,000 people participating in a Mass celebrating Archbishop Sheen's life was also powerful for Damian.

"It was cool to see all the people who were gathered to celebrate this really important person," says Damian, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. "It gave me a new perspective about how important he was."

The changed perspectives of Caroline, Damian and the other students on the pilgrimage reflected the hope of Matthew Hilton, the director of faith formation at Bishop Chatard.



The students from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis who attended the beatification Mass of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in St. Louis on Sept. 24 pose for a photo with a cardboard figure of Blessed Fulton. (Submitted photo)

'A real gift to our young people'

"It was an opportunity to see an American saint in the making—someone who is still relevant in the cultural memory of the United States, even if the young people we took didn't have a chance to watch his programs or hear his lectures in person," Hilton says.

Just as important was the desire to give the young people on the trip a rare opportunity to experience the universality of the Church.

"The causes of the saints are one of those gifts to everyone in the Church, but in a special way to those communities where the saints are from," Hilton says. "And so, it was really our desire to give young people the opportunity to see the universal Church alive here in the United States.

"It was a Thursday morning-and-afternoon experience, and for 50,000 people to have taken off work and rearrange their schedules because they decided this was important enough to make a priority in their lives, that witness was a real gift to our young people.

"The people there were people of meaningful faith and relatable. The young people that were there were just like our kids. I don't suspect our young people know that their choice to go was a witness to others, but it was. That was really impactful to me."

So was sharing the experience with his wife, Katie, an English teacher at Bishop Chatard, and their son, Benjamin, a fifth-grade student at Christ the King School in Indianapolis.

"To be able to experience that as a family was amazing," Hilton says. "And really, my son was a powerful witness for me that day. The Mass was long, and he was enraptured the whole time. To see him participate in the liturgy and to see him get a small sense of how important this holy person is to so many people in the world was a real gift."

Both Damian and Caroline believe the pilgrimage will continue to be a gift for them.



Damian Cain

"It was inspiring to see the impact he had through what he was able to do through teaching people about the faith," Damian said about Archbishop Sheen. "It inspired me to know that hopefully I could do somewhat of the same and inspire people."

Caroline shares that hope.

"This experience has given me the confidence, courage and determination to openly express my faith," says Caroline, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis. This experience will affect my parish and final year at Chatard by expressing positivity and gratitude toward those around me.

"My goal is to make everyone feel included, valued and loved, especially when exploring their faith, because that is not only the Church's mission but God's will for us."

She also feels a deeper connection to Archbishop Sheen now.

"Overall, this experience inspires me to pursue my faith and explore the possibility of sainthood since it was attainable for many modern and young saints," she says. "I will definitely be praying for him to reach canonization sooner." †

Child loss memorial Masses offered in October, November and beyond

***Criterion* staff report**

The loss of a loved one is difficult. But the loss of a child—born or unborn, infant or adult—carries the particularly heavy grief of a life lost too soon.

Parishes throughout central and southern Indiana offer memorial Masses for the loss of a child at various times throughout the year.

These Masses are also listed by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life at marriageandfamily.archindy.org/grief. The office also lists resources for miscarriage loss at marriageandfamily.archindy.org/miscarriage.

If your parish offers a memorial Mass for the loss of children of any age, contact Gabriela Ross, director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life, at 317-592-4007 or gross@archindy.org to have it added to the online list.

Below are the Masses reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

All Saints Parish, St. Joseph Church, 7536 Church Ln., West Harrison, Dearborn County. **Holy Innocents Mass**, offered annually on Dec. 28, the feast of the Holy Innocents. This year's Mass will take place at 5:45 p.m. on Dec. 28. For more information, call the parish office at 812-576-4302.

St. Joseph Church, 125 E. Broadway, Shelbyville. **Bilingual Mass for Miscarriage and Child Loss**, offered annually on or near July 12, the feast of St. Zelie Martin. She and her husband St. Louis Martin, the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, are patron saints of miscarriage. For more information, contact the parish office at 317-398-8227.

St. Lawrence Church, 542 Walnut St., Lawrenceburg. **Holy Innocents Mass**, offered annually on Dec. 28, the feast of the Holy Innocents. This year's Mass will take place at 5:45 p.m. on Dec. 28. For more information, call the parish office at 812-537-3992.

St. Mary Greensburg, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Mass for Miscarried Babies**, offered annually in October. This year's Mass will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 20. To have a baby's name read aloud during the Mass—regardless of parish or attendance at the Mass—register the name by Oct. 16 at covenantresources.org/mass. For more information, call 812-212-3463 or e-mail contactus@covenantresources.org. For other miscarriage resources, go to covenantresources.org.

Indianapolis North Deanery

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass of Remembrance**, offered annually in early November. This year's Mass will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 3, with a special blessing at the end of the Mass.

Indianapolis South Deanery

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Requiem Mass for Infants Who Died Before Baptism**, offered annually during the week after All Souls Day. This year's Mass will take place at 6 p.m. on Nov. 6. For more information, call the parish office at 317-888-2861.

New Albany Deanery

Holy Family Church, 129 W. Daisy Ln., New Albany. **Mass for the Loss of a Child**, offered annually on the Thursday after Mother's Day for the loss of a child of any age for any reason—miscarriage, stillbirth, suicide, accident or sickness. The next Mass will take place on May 13, 2027. For the Mass time or more information, call the parish office at 812-944-8283. †

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call **(317) 236-1585.**

For Sale

FOR SALE: CALVARY CEMETERY, two crypts side-by-side located in the Court of the Apostles Garden, building one, Tier D. Last two available. $14,000 for both. Call or text. (317) 695-9247 or (317) 727-2564.

Medicare and Group Insurance



2027 United Catholic Appeal

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