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Criterion

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Angels from the Heart

Senior citizen, teens connect through community service project, page 12.

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Full-court faith

Catholic upbringing is at the heart of Pacers' coach Jim O'Brien's life

By John Shaughnessy

Indiana Pacers' head coach Jim O'Brien smiled and shook his head in awe as he told a revealing story about his father—the same story he shared recently with his fellow parishioners during a Sunday Mass at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis.

O'Brien noted how his father, Bill, supported his wife, Sis, and their eight children by working as a police officer for 22 years in "the toughest precinct" in Philadelphia.

"He saw a lot of bad things," O'Brien recalled about his late father.

Yet even with the horror and tragedy that he witnessed on a daily basis, his father was one of the most joy-filled people that O'Brien has ever known.

"My father just had a way of appreciating all the little gifts from God in life," O'Brien noted. "He was very Christ-centered. His joy came from the fact that everything in his life revolved around Christ."

And because he saw his life as a gift from God, Bill O'Brien never faltered from sharing his gifts with the Church.

"My father never made more than \$22,000 a year in his whole life," O'Brien said. "And we had a household of 10 people. He always joked that if he died, we'd have enough money to last until next Tuesday. But he always believed that you really needed to support your parish. The Church always got 10 percent [of his income]. He never talked about it, but it just was obvious in his actions how he felt about it. He was a very generous guy."

The story of his father's influence on him is one of the insights that the 56-year-old O'Brien shared in an interview with *The Criterion*. O'Brien also talked about his faith, his Catholic education, his marriage, his efforts to change the make-up of the Pacers, and the way that his youngest child, who has Down syndrome, has touched and changed his family's life.

Here is an edited version of the conversation with O'Brien, who is starting his second season as the head coach of the Pacers.

You graduated from Roman Catholic High School and St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. You were also a head coach at Wheeling Jesuit University and the University of Dayton. All Catholic schools. What impact has Catholic education had in your life?

O'Brien: It's been my whole foundation. When I grew up, I was one of eight children who lived three blocks from our parish, St. Stephen's in Philadelphia. And my parents were very much into their faith and made sure all eight of their



Submitter photo courtesy Indiana Pacers

Indiana Pacers' head coach Jim O'Brien pumps his fist during a preseason game against the Seattle Supersonics on Oct. 13, 2007. In an interview with *The Criterion*, O'Brien talked about his faith, his Catholic education, his marriage, his efforts to change the make-up of the Pacers, and the way that his youngest child, who has Down syndrome, has touched and changed his family's life.

children grew up knowing how important our Church was. And they made sure the sacraments were a huge part of our lives. It's really the center of everything that is important in my life.

You mentioned your mom and dad. What do you think you learned from your parents about your faith and making it a part of your life?

O'Brien: My mother was one of 11 children. She had a

See O'BRIEN, page 11

Synod on Bible can 'change Catholic culture,' says archbishop

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The world Synod of Bishops on the Bible "is meant to change Catholic culture," said Archbishop Terrence Predergast of Ottawa.



Archbishop Terrence Predergast

All Catholics should have a Bible, all Catholics should read the Bible and all Catholics need to have regular prayer experiences where they "open the book and let it become the word of God" speaking to them, he told reporters on Oct. 21.

The archbishop met journalists shortly after the synod leadership had presented the first draft of propositions the synod members will ask Pope Benedict XVI to consider when writing his traditional post-synodal document.

Synod officials said the 253 members of the synod, working in small groups with experts and observers, had written 254 separate propositions. By dropping repetitive suggestions and combining related texts, the first draft contained 53 proposals.

The 53 draft items, Archbishop Predergast said, included the needs to promote closer collaboration between Scripture scholars and theologians, to improve homilies, to strengthen relations with the Jews, to promote "lectio divina" (a process of praying with and reflecting on Scripture), and to support the translation and distribution of Bibles.

The draft will be discussed in the synod's small groups and amendments will be suggested before the final list is drawn up and put to a vote on Oct. 25.

Synod members also will vote on Oct. 24 on the final version of their message to Catholics around the world. Archbishop Predergast said it is likely to include a simple, one-page preamble and a longer, more detailed treatment of the synod's theme, "The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church."

Archbishop Predergast, a member of one of the synod's three French-speaking groups, said his group has decided to begin its meetings with a half-hour of "lectio divina," listening to a passage of Scripture, reflecting on it, praying about it and sharing what it meant.

"It was a very interesting experience for me," he said. "Bishops find themselves listening to the word of God and called to

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World Mission Sunday Mass has multicultural flavor

By Mary Ann Wyand

Many countries. Many cultures. One faith.

Catholics from Vietnam, Myanmar, India, the Philippines, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, France, Mexico and the United States offered prayers of thanksgiving for the evangelizing efforts of missionaries abroad and in Indiana during the archdiocesan World Mission Sunday Mass on Oct. 19 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Many people came to worship God dressed in colorful costumes from their homeland. During the liturgy, prayers were offered in Spanish, Burmese, French, Tagalog, Igbo and English.

Brightly colored banners symbolized the

World Mission Rosary introduced by Archbishop Fulton Sheen in 1951. Green represented the forests and grasslands of Africa. Blue was a symbol of the ocean surrounding the Pacific islands. White was chosen for Europe, the Holy Father's home continent. Red called to mind the fire of faith that brought missionaries to America. Yellow was a reminder of the morning light of the East for Asia.

Benedictine Father Julian Peters, administrator of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish, invited the gathering to "come together [in prayer] to celebrate many cultures—the diversity and breadth of the human experience—all made holy, all created

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Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

Sister Juliana Nwokoro, a member of the New Evangelization Sisters of Mother of Perpetual Help from Nigeria, reads one of the general intercessions during the archdiocesan World Mission Sunday Mass on Oct. 19 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Her order's convent is located in St. Lawrence Parish. She ministers as a teacher's aide for Kids Care at the parish.

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in the image and likeness of God.”

In his welcoming remarks, Father Julian reminded the people that, “The Holy Spirit dwells within us—as we gather today on this World Mission Sunday—to renew us in faith [and] in our mission as disciples.”

During his homily, he noted that many Catholics grew up with the concept that the



Longtime Cathedral Kitchen and Food Pantry volunteers Bruce Schaller of Indianapolis and Dolores Morley of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg accept distinguished service awards for their home mission work from Benedictine Father Julian Peters, administrator of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish, at the conclusion of the World Mission Sunday Mass on Oct. 19 at the cathedral.

missionary work of the Church only happens in exotic places, and missionaries are brave souls who move to far away lands to proclaim the Gospel, teach people about God and show them how to pray.

Today, our global society is much more interconnected, he said, and our Church is much more in communion and communication with people in distant places.

“We ... understand that the missionary work of the Church isn’t just ... far away,” Father Julian said. “... A hundred years ago, ... the United States was mission territory. We were the [recipients] of the riches of civilization, the material and spiritual riches of distant lands, who supported the preaching of the Gospel and the building of the Church in this country.”

Catholics must continue the mission of the Church, he said, by supporting missionaries abroad with prayers and donations as well as engaging in missionary work in our neighborhoods and communities.

“The commission, the challenge, of discipleship calls each one of us, in our own way, in our own place and situation, to teach children how to pray, to hand on our tradition of faith,” Father Julian said, “to break open God’s word by our own words and deeds and manner of life as disciples of Jesus.”

At the conclusion of the liturgy, Father Julian presented distinguished service awards on behalf of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein to two longtime Cathedral Kitchen

Photos by Mary Ann Wyand



St. Joseph parishioners Jennie Le, from left, Anna Le and Celina Le of Indianapolis hold hands for the Lord’s Prayer during the archdiocesan World Mission Sunday Mass on Oct. 19 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. They participate in the Vietnamese Apostolate at St. Joseph Parish in the Indianapolis West Deanery.

and Food Pantry volunteers.

St. Malachy parishioner Dolores Morley of Brownsburg and Bruce Schaller of Indianapolis were recognized for more than 10 years of volunteer service to the Cathedral Parish food ministry for homeless people in Indianapolis.

After the Mass, the recipients downplayed their gifts of time and talent to

help the poor several mornings a week.

“It’s just doing a lot of cooking and a lot of serving and a lot of cleaning,” Morley said. “That’s the majority of it. It’s my privilege to serve my sisters and brothers in Christ. It’s wonderful.”

Schaller said the “guests” he serves at the Cathedral Kitchen may be homeless, but “they’re just like all of us.” †

SYNOD

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conversion.”

One bishop actually said he might have to change how he relates to some aspects of his ministry, he added.

Archbishop Prendergast said the most basic message he expects to come from the synod is that “the word of God is not an aspect of the mission of the Church. It is the foundation and the guiding principle of all that we are about.

“God reveals himself to us in his word, not in a book, but in a word that speaks to us,” he said.

“The written text we have of the Scriptures is a privileged locus [place] for that,” but the word of God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, speaks through the tradition and teaching of the Church, cries out to the world through the poor, and is even echoed in creation and in art, the archbishop said.

To speak about the word of God is to speak about a call to a relationship of listening to God and speaking to him through prayer, he said.

The synod wants Catholics to realize that the word of God is God speaking to them and listening to them, he said.

“If that happens, it would be a big, big step,” the archbishop said. †

Court’s ruling on embryos raises ethical problems

PORTLAND, Ore. (CNS)—An Oregon divorce ruling that frozen embryos can be considered as property confirms an outcome predicted and feared by Catholic leaders decades ago.

In the wake of the Oct. 8 decision by the Oregon Court of Appeals, Catholic ethicists say other technologies, like the genetic selection of infants before birth, will pose more problems soon.

The court unanimously upheld a woman’s decision to kill six frozen embryos by thawing despite an appeal by the husband to keep them alive. Though the court stopped just short of actually calling embryos property, the key to the decision was a determination that embryos are to be considered under property laws.

The mother, Dr. Laura Dahl, said she wanted the embryos killed because she did not want someone else raising the children if they were ever carried to term. She is a pediatrician in Lake Oswego, a Portland suburb.

The father, Dr. Darrell Angle, argued that the embryos are alive, and so their protection should override a pre-treatment agreement saying that the mother could decide on their fate. Angle’s lawyers also contended that the destruction amounted to an unfair distribution of property.

Dahl and Angle wed in 2000 and had a son. In 2004, they decided to conceive again through *in vitro* fertilization at Oregon Health and Science University. The treatment

founded, leaving the six embryos frozen for preservation. They had signed an agreement that left Dahl to decide on the embryos in case of a divorce. Shortly after the 2004 treatment failed, they decided to get divorced.

The court’s decision on the fate of the frozen embryos has nationwide importance because tens of thousands of couples have frozen embryos in storage leftover from *in vitro* fertilization.

“Generally, when parents are permitted to be decision-makers for their offspring, the courts assume that the parents have the best interest of their offspring in mind when the decision is being made,” said Margaret Hogan, executive director of the Garaventa Center for Catholic Intellectual Life and American Culture at the University of Portland.

“Dr. Dahl maintains that she would not want someone else to raise her child—so she chooses to have them killed. This is hardly in the best interest of her offspring,” Hogan added.

The Catholic Church’s teaching is that life begins at conception, but from a legal perspective, when life begins became muddled with *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. In those 1973 rulings—which legalized abortion virtually on demand—the majority of the U.S. Supreme Court justices said they did not know when human life begins. †

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:

Jan Link, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1410

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

Growth and expansion grants are now available

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis Growth and Expansion Fund was established to provide financial support to parishes, schools and agencies of the archdiocese to grow or expand their ministries which are vital to the mission of the Church. Growth and expansion grants will be awarded through an application process.

Applications are available now and will be

accepted through Nov. 14. Distributions will be made in January.

An application and the award criteria are available on the archdiocesan Web site at www.archindy.org by clicking on the finance office page.

(For more information, contact Stacy Harris at 800-382-9836, ext. 1535, or by e-mail at sharris@archindy.org.) †

The Criterion

10/24/08

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Latinos seen as voting group key to outcome of presidential election

WASHINGTON (CNS)—As pollsters and political analysts try to predict the outcome of the election, Latino voters have become a target for intense attention—by tea-leaf readers as well as the candidates.

Latinos have been swing voters in the last several elections—with majorities supporting Democratic Vice President Al Gore in 2000 and Republican President George W. Bush in 2004.

With population growth, Hispanics' percentage of the electorate has steadily risen. Frustration over the failure of Congress to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill also has led many longtime legal permanent residents to become naturalized citizens and register to vote for the first time. A nationwide naturalization and voter registration campaign waged over the last two years has made those steps easier for people and helped keep up interest in voting.

Immigration, as well as concerns about the economy and the war, may turn Latino evangelicals into the key to that swing vote.

Political scientist Matt Barreto of the University of Washington predicts that more than 9 million Latino voters will turn out this fall, compared to 7.6 million in 2004. Hispanics will make up about 15 percent of voters nationwide this year.

That made them a particular target of the presidential campaigns, which have waged fierce battles for their vote in Spanish-language media, much of it focused on immigration policy. Both campaigns consider Hispanic voters important to winning in battleground states, such as New Mexico, Nevada and Colorado.

The National Council of La Raza estimates that 1 million new citizens have become registered voters since the 2004 election.

A national campaign in 2007 called "Ya es hora. Ciudadanía!" ("It's time. Citizenship!") helped 1.4 million

immigrants become citizens. Its follow-up campaign, "Ya es hora. Ve y vota!" ("It's time. See and vote!"), is registering millions of voters through Web sites, newspaper inserts, door-to-door campaigns, and programs in churches and community centers.

The far-reaching campaign was sponsored nationally by major media outlets, including Univision, the Spanish-language TV network, and ImpreMedia, the largest Hispanic newspaper publisher in the U.S., as well as civil rights groups, such as the National Council of La Raza. On the local level, churches and community organizations have helped get out information and managed voter registration.

One week this fall, nearly 1 million copies of Spanish-language newspapers across the country included a voter registration form and instructions on how to file it.

Democracia USA, a nonpartisan Hispanic voter registration and civic engagement organization, reported substantial percentage increases in the number of registered Hispanic voters in states where it was organizing the registration drive. For instance, the number of registered Hispanic voters in Nevada has more than doubled, bringing the group to 11 percent of the population.

What will bring all those new voters to the polls is another matter.

That is what the Gamaliel Foundation has been focusing on, said Laura Barrett, national policy director for the national faith-based community organizing network. They have been working on helping voters become aware of issues that are affected by elections, such as housing, transportation and immigration policy, she said.

Nonpartisan public meetings, follow-up phone calls, help getting to the polls and information, such as what ID they will



Gilberto Zelaya demonstrates a voting machine in Spanish at the Montgomery County Board of Elections in Rockville, Md., in early January. After massive campaigns to naturalize immigrants and register new voters, Latinos are looking to have a major influence in the 2008 U.S. presidential race.

need to vote, are the kinds of help Gamaliel is offering in many places, Barrett said.

Response has been unexpectedly strong, she said. For instance, "one community meeting in South Bend, Ind., drew 700 people, all immigrants, about half of them children," she said in an interview with Catholic News Service.

"Deportations, funding for public transportation, housing, these issues really affect immigrants," Barrett said.

The Republican presidential nominee may be an Arizonan, but Elias Bermudez said that is not what is motivating thousands of people to register to vote there.

"I've been helping people become naturalized citizens for 15 years," said Bermudez, director of Immigrants Without Borders in Phoenix, which helped run the naturalization and registration campaign in Arizona. "This is the first time I have found

most people want to become citizens, not to help their family members immigrate, but to vote."

In Maricopa County, which encompasses the Phoenix metropolitan area, he said there are 169,000 new Latino voters since 2004.

"In the last three months, my organization alone has registered over 4,000 people," he said.

Holli Holliday, executive director of the We Are America Alliance, which led some of the registration drives targeted at immigrants, said when the work first started, "We thought we would register about half as many people as we did."

Hundreds of paid staff people, largely funded by grants from foundations, such as the Carnegie, Ford and Four Freedoms organizations, have been assisted by thousands of volunteers around the country, she told CNS. †

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Editorial



Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois and Sen. John McCain of Arizona respond to the crowd at the end of their debate at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y., on Oct. 15. It was the final debate for the Democratic and Republican presidential nominees before voters head to the polls on Nov. 4.

The art of making decisions in a presidential election year

Responsible stewardship means making choices: How we develop, use and share the gifts that God has given us. How we spend our time, exercise our talents, and earn and save or spend our money.

Stewardship requires that we discern God's will for our development and the use of all his gifts—material and spiritual.

It also means that we have to make decisions in circumstances that are not always clear. God gave us the gift of freedom. We are called to use this gift maturely, knowing that we will be held accountable for our decisions.

How do we make responsible choices in an election year? How do we exercise the precious gift of freedom wisely and responsibly—as good stewards of all God's abundant blessings?

Our choices make a difference. Who and what we vote for matters.

Acknowledging this is the first step in responsible decision-making. We have a right and a responsibility to participate in the decision-making process.

When we forfeit this right, our humanity is diminished and society suffers. When we fail to choose, even among imperfect options, we abandon our freedom to the decrees of fate. Justice is impaired, and freedom loses something of its luster.

The great German Catholic philosopher Josef Pieper, in his book *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, points out that prudence (the art of making the right decisions) is "the mold and mother of all virtues, the circumspect and resolute shaping power of our minds which transforms knowledge of reality into realization of the good."

This means that all other virtues—including justice, courage and temperance—exist only because of prudence, "the precondition of all that is ethically good." In other words, unless we make good decisions, justice cannot be done, courage is impossible and everything is intemperate (out of balance).

But how do we make right decisions? The key to right decision-making is recognizing what is real, discerning the truth and separating substance from "spin."

According to Pieper, "If you do not know how it is with things, how they stand, you are practically unable to choose what is ethically good. The mere 'good intention' to be just, for instance, does not suffice at all."

Truth is essential to right decision-making.

The first step is to be informed—about the issues, about the candidates' positions, and about the likely consequences of actions proposed by political parties and

their nominees.

Decision-making in an election year would be a lot easier if everyone told the truth. If there were no spin doctors or attack ads. If candidates and political parties communicated clearly and unambiguously where they stand on things. And if all the issues were completely "black or white."

Making decisions based on campaign slogans, media images and sound bytes is irresponsible. It is also not good stewardship of the responsibilities that we have as citizens in a free society.

The second step in responsible decision-making is to make sure we have an informed conscience. Catholics who truly understand the teaching of our Church, and who strive to integrate these principles into their daily lives, are called upon to make difficult, often unpopular, decisions based on fundamental moral principles.

To be good stewards of our civic responsibilities, we need principled thinking, sound moral judgment, and an authentic understanding of who we are as a nation governed by the rule of law and dedicated to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness!

Every Catholic voter should read the U.S. bishops' 2007 publication *Faithful Citizenship*. In this very helpful guide to election year decision-making, the bishops outline the rights and responsibilities of "faithful citizens" who seek to make right decisions.

A clear understanding of Catholic teaching on issues of morality and social justice is needed to make responsible decisions. The challenge that all of us face, especially in an election year, is to reconcile what we believe as individuals with the common good.

If there is a genuine conflict between our individual consciences and the authentic teaching of the Church, it is our responsibility to seek reconciliation—through careful thinking, prayerful examination of conscience and the willingness to make tough decisions.

We hope that in this election year, as always, faithful citizens throughout the United States will use all their God-given gifts and talents to wrestle with the vitally important issues facing our nation and the world at large, and make decisions that are wise, faithful to our Constitution and clearly beneficial to the common good.

May Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, the patroness of our nation, intercede for us during this time of national discernment and inspire us by her faithful witness to the truth.

—Daniel Conway

(Editor's note: This week's Opinion pages in *The Criterion* include several letters to the editor concerning the 2008 presidential election. Nearly all of the letters we have received have focused on life issues. The following is a sampling of the numerous letters sent to us in the last several weeks. Due to space constraints, we cannot print all the letters we have received. As a condition of our tax-exempt, non-profit status, we are prohibited by law from

endorsing or opposing candidates for office. We do, however, urge all our readers to revisit the U.S. bishops' document "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility." The document, which was drafted by the bishops to help people of faith form consciences for political life, is a summary of Catholic teaching. It can be found online at www.faithfulcitizenship.org.)

Letters to the Editor

One party has a plan to protect unborn children

Sen. Barack Obama has never been introduced to a pro-life law that he could tolerate. His voting record for life issues is a big zero.

And during his brief career as a state senator in Illinois, he managed to make a name for himself by voting against the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act ... four times! He actually gave one of his famous speeches in defense of his vote.

The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act? Apparently, at Christ Hospital in Chicago, abortions were being performed on mid- to late-term pregnant women. Some of the babies actually survived the abortion, which, of course, means that the procedure "failed."

Nurse Jill Stanek described how she and other nurses desperately tried to find the time to hold these infants until they died but, more often than not, they were simply thrown in a garbage pail and left to die.

Stanek's testimony led to the law that would protect these innocents if they manage to survive. Obama voted against it.

He later claimed that his vote was procedural, and meant to protect *Roe v. Wade*. Several versions of this bill passed statewide and federally, and Obama voted against

life every time.

In April 2007, Obama was a co-sponsor of the "Freedom of Choice Act" (FOCA), which would wipe out all state regulations and laws concerning abortion. If he is elected, and the Democrats retain control in Congress, FOCA is a very real possibility!

Make no mistake about it: States that have chosen life and voted for pro-life politicians have saved lives.

Mississippi reduced its abortion rate by 50 percent when it enacted three pro-life laws in the 1990s. They actually had to vote for pro-life politicians to get this done.

President George W. Bush has appointed two pro-life Supreme Court justices. Obama has promised to appoint only Supreme Court judges who would support *Roe v. Wade*.

Many would-be pro-lifers like to defend their votes for pro-abortion candidates by dictating other problems they are concerned about. Somehow, the mass slaughter of 4,000 innocent unborn children every single day does not trump problems such as the Iraqi war or the environment.

I have even been accused by a relative of pandering to the Sen. John McCain campaign by spreading falsehoods about Obama. I don't need to spread falsehoods about him. His record on abortion could not be clearer, and it is a matter of public record. Why do you think every pro-abortion group known to man so wholeheartedly endorses him?

The Republicans and Democrats both have a plan for the economy, the environment, gas prices and the Iraqi war. However, only one of these parties

and its candidates has a plan to protect unborn children.

Choose life because it is right this November!

Joyce Deitz
Richmond

Abortion is one of many issues for voters to consider

Thanks to your recent letter writer for her "Be Our Guest" column in the Sept. 19 issue of *The Criterion*.

The letter writer took issue with the newspaper running a Catholic News Service story featuring the headline "Obama invokes American spirit, echoes 'Faithful Citizenship' themes."

It motivated me to try and explain why I am a Catholic who has decided to reject the team of Sen. John McCain and Gov. Sarah Palin, and to support Sen. Barack Obama and his running mate, Sen. Joseph Biden.

Fortunately, the U.S. bishops have published a 42-page document to help American Catholics make ethical decisions as faithful citizens in the coming election.

We need that help because we live in a complex, globalized, pluralistic, often secular world, and our country is currently in crisis on every front.

I don't agree with the letter writer that the abortion issue should be considered in pure isolation from all the others that we have to consider as we compare candidates' positions.

It is complicated. The issues are all interrelated, and the length of the bishops' statement attests to that.

Were it simple, a few sentences would have sufficed. With God's help, we all have to form our own consciences as best we can.

In spite of the fact that I find abortion an abomination and morally wrong, ultimately, I made my decision based upon a realistic and careful consideration of the candidates' abilities and approaches, and of whose plans best support life now and in the future.

The economy, education, health care, infrastructure, fair wages, job creation, trade policies, the war, national security, energy, the death penalty, torture, immigration, tax reform, the environment—all are important to a culture of life.

I think Obama's plans are better, and I also like the way he has asked each of us to take responsibility and to deliberately serve each other. He is a uniter, and he remembers the poor and marginalized.

I am following the letter writer's advice. I continue to examine the integrity and the consistency of the four candidates, and look forward to the rest of *The Criterion's* series on "Faithful Citizenship" to help us all make our choices.

I hope we can respect each other's decisions and withhold judgment.

Sara Debono
Indianapolis

More letters, page 10.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Catholic faith is a stable and unchanging support for us

Seventy-five years ago on Oct. 24, my Mom and Dad were married at St. Joseph Church in Jasper, Indiana. They were married at a 6 a.m. weekday Mass by the pastor, Benedictine Father Basil Heusler.

It was a simple wedding because of the economic conditions of the time. And if you wanted Father Basil to witness your marriage, it was at the 6 a.m. Mass because that was the pastor's Mass.

Mom died shortly before the 50th anniversary of their marriage. It was a simple wedding, yet Mom and Dad's commitment in marriage was profound and that was evident throughout the years.

Their life together was simple, even in their more prosperous years. They were only able to have two children, and that was a disappointment.

Once my brother and I were on our way—he in college and me in the seminary—Mom resumed teaching at Holy Family School, and Dad continued being active in the Boy Scout movement and in the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

They were active in Holy Family Parish. When all is said and done, both parents ended up serving a lot more children than their own.

I mention the simple way in which they lived. I was a senior in high school (seminary) before they bought a television.

I recall in their later years they loved to watch virtually all televised sports. They enjoyed "The Lawrence Welk Show" on

Saturday nights.

Their Sunday treat was to go to a local restaurant for lunch followed by a Sunday drive.

In October, they would pick me up at Saint Meinrad and we went to the Overlook Restaurant in Leavenworth, followed by a stop at a nearby apple orchard. Their life was simple. They did trade Ford cars on occasion, but that was the big purchase.

Their lives were simple, yet they were content. My folks placed a high value on working hard. They provided a simple but good life for my brother and I, and they expected us to work hard as well. We both grew to appreciate their example and what they did for us.

Both Mom and Dad had a certain serenity about them which I always admired. And so did other folks who knew them well. All through the years I could count on their calm manner, even when times could seem tough or kind of dark.

This calm spirit was also true during the evening of their lives when illness began to set in.

I think of Mom's determination to do the rehabilitation after hip replacement, despite the pain and slow progress. I have mentioned my Dad's gentle spirit in old age before.

Faith in God and love for the Church had a lot to do with the demeanor of both of my parents. I don't mean to imply that they did not have their ups and downs. They certainly

did, but their serene faith would win out.

I think simplicity and serenity were true of a lot of married couples of their era, or at least it seemed that way to me.

Faith as a way of life in our German Catholic community was taken for granted. Maybe faith and simplicity were more feasible because the waves of materialism and secularism had not washed over our society to the degree that it has in recent decades.

I think it is fair to say that you married couples live in substantially more difficult times. Simplicity as a way of life is more difficult to sustain. It is certainly not fostered as a value in our society.

Faith in God is virtually privatized by our culture; that is to say that God is often dismissed from public life, perhaps acceptable for weekend piety but that's about it.

The pressures on our children and young folks, including young adults, are certainly greater than what my brother and I experienced. It is not that there weren't the usual stresses associated with growing up and maturing in our day, but society was more supportive of spiritual and moral values. Parenting today is all the more challenging.

I pray a lot for you parents and especially for you young married couples. Cultural values may have changed, but please keep in mind that our Catholic faith is a stable and unchanging support for you.

I encourage you to value the strength and support of the sacraments of the Church. Christ gave us those sacraments as a necessary help for the journey of life in any circumstance.

You may not always feel like participating in the sacraments because society doesn't count them as important.

But, believe me, fidelity to the Eucharist and the sacrament of penance will make all the difference in your lives. I pray that you give them a chance. It works. †

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein's prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein's
Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for October

Youth Ministers: that they may always encourage youth to consider service in the Church, especially as priests and religious.

La fe católica resulta un apoyo estable e inmutable para nosotros

Un 24 de octubre hace setenta y cinco años mis padres se casaron en la iglesia San José en Jasper, Indiana.

Se casaron en una misa entre semana a las 6 a.m., celebrada por el pastor, el padre benedictino Basil Heusler.

Fue una boda sencilla debido a las condiciones económicas de la época. Y si se quería que el padre Basil celebrara el matrimonio, debía ser en la misa de las 6 a.m. porque esa era la misa del pastor.

Mamá murió poco después del aniversario número 50 de su matrimonio. Fue una boda sencilla y sin embargo, el compromiso matrimonial de mamá y papá era profundo y se hizo evidente a lo largo de los años.

Su vida juntos era sencilla, incluso en los años más prósperos. Sólo pudieron tener dos hijos y eso fue una desilusión.

Una vez que mi hermano y yo nos marchamos de la casa, mi hermano se había ido a la universidad y yo al seminario, mamá volvió a dar clases en la escuela de la Sagrada Familia y papá continuó prestando servicio activamente en el movimiento de los Niños Exploradores y en la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl.

Participaban activamente en la parroquia de la Sagrada Familia. Al final, ambos padres terminaron sirviendo a muchos más niños que a los suyos propios.

Mencioné su estilo de vida sencillo. Yo era estudiante del último año de secundaria (del seminario) cuando compraron un televisor.

Recuerdo que cuando ya estaban más entrados en años les encantaba ver prácticamente todos los deportes televisados. Disfrutaban el programa "The Lawrence

Welk Show" los sábados en la noche.

El gusto que se daban los domingos era ir a almorzar a un restaurante local, seguido de un paseo dominical en coche.

En octubre me recogían en Saint Meinrad e íbamos al restaurante Overlook en Leavenworth, seguido de una parada en un huerto de manzanas. Llevaban una vida sencilla. Ocasionalmente intercambiaban coches Ford, pero esa era una compra grande.

Sus vidas eran sencillas y sin embargo estaban contentos. Mis padres le daban gran valor al trabajo arduo. Nos proporcionaron una vida sencilla pero buena, a mi hermano y a mí, y esperaban que nosotros también trabajáramos arduamente. Ambos crecimos y valoramos su ejemplo y lo que hicieron por nosotros.

Mamá y papá emanaban una cierta serenidad que siempre admiré. Y lo mismo opinaban otras personas que los conocían bien. A lo largo de todos los años siempre pude contar con su modo de ser tranquilo, incluso en momentos que parecían difíciles o algo oscuros.

Esta calma espiritual también prevaleció en el ocaso de sus vidas, cuando empezaron a manifestarse las enfermedades.

Pienso en la determinación de mamá de seguir con la rehabilitación después del reemplazo de la cadera, a pesar del dolor y de la lenta mejoría. He mencionado anteriormente el espíritu bondadoso de mi padre en su vejez.

La fe en Dios y el amor por la Iglesia tuvieron mucho que ver con el comportamiento de mis dos padres. No trato de insinuar que no tenían sus altos y sus bajos. Ciertamente los tenían, pero su fe

serena prevalecía.

Pienso que la sencillez y la serenidad eran una constante de muchas de las parejas de casados de su época, o al menos eso me parecía.

En nuestra comunidad católica alemana no se le daba el justo valor a la fe como estilo de vida. Quizás la fe y la sencillez eran mucho más posibles ya que las oleadas del materialismo y del secularismo no habían inundado nuestra sociedad del modo que lo han hecho en décadas recientes.

Considero que es justo decir que las parejas de casados viven hoy en día en tiempos mucho más difíciles. La sencillez como estilo de vida es mucho más difícil de preservar. Ciertamente nuestra sociedad no la fomenta como un valor.

La fe en Dios está prácticamente privatizada por nuestra cultura; por lo general se elimina a Dios de la vida pública, quizás es aceptable para la devoción del fin de semana, pero nada más.

Las presiones que sufren nuestros niños y jóvenes, incluyendo los jóvenes adultos, son definitivamente mucho mayores que las que experimentamos mi hermano y yo. No es que en nuestra época no existieran las presiones comunes asociadas con el crecimiento y la madurez, pero la sociedad apoyaba más los valores espirituales y morales. La crianza de los hijos hoy en día es mucho más difícil.

Rezo mucho por los padres y especialmente por las jóvenes parejas de

casados. Tal vez los valores culturales hayan cambiado, pero recuerden que nuestra fe católica resulta un apoyo estable e inmutable para ustedes.

Los exhorto a que valoren la fuerza y el apoyo que brindan los sacramentos de la Iglesia. Cristo nos entregó esos sacramentos como una ayuda necesaria para la travesía de la vida en cualquier circunstancia.

Tal vez no siempre tengan ganas de participar en los sacramentos porque la sociedad no los toma como algo importante.

Pero créanme, la fidelidad a la Eucaristía y el sacramento de la penitencia harán la diferencia en sus vidas. Ruego por que tengan la oportunidad de probarlos. Funciona. †

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

Lista de oración del Arzobispo
Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa,
Language Training Center, Indianapolis.

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en octubre

Pastores Juveniles: Que ellos siempre puedan animar a los jóvenes a considerar dando servicio a la iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes y religiosos.

Events Calendar

October 24

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. **Ladies Club, fall luncheon and card party**, 11 a.m., lunch service, noon, \$8 per person. Information: 317-353-0939.

Ritz Charles, 12156 N. Meridian St., Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). Homeschool group, **FACES (Fishers Adolescent Catholic Enrichment Society) Masquerade Ball**, 5-10 p.m., \$25 per person. Information: www.faceshomeschool.org.

October 24-25

St. Augustine Home for the Aged, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **Rummage sale**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: 317-872-6420.

October 24-31

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **Pumpkin Patch and Harvest Fest**, weekdays, noon-8 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 4-8 p.m. Information: 317-291-7014.

October 25

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4050 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. **Knights and Ladies of Peter Claver, annual "Food, Folks and Fun" party**, 5:30-9 p.m., \$10 donation. Information: 317-546-1571.

East Central High School, Performing Arts Center, St. Leon. **"Spiritual Warfare," one-day**

conference, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., registration fee \$40 and meal plan \$15 before Oct. 20, registration \$50 and no meal plan available after Oct. 20. Information: 812-623-8007 or www.HealingThroughThePowerofJesusChrist.org.

St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 213 Ripley St., Milan. **"Harvest Day Dinner,"** roast pork, 4-7 p.m., \$8 adults, \$4 children, free for children age 4 and under. Information: 812-623-8007.

St. Vincent Women's Hospital, 8111 Township Line Road, Indianapolis. Couple to Couple League of Indianapolis, **Natural Family Planning (NFP) class**, 9-11 a.m. Information: 317-228-9276.

October 26

St. Luke United Methodist Church, 100 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. Christians for Peace and Justice in the Middle East, Indianapolis chapter. Seventh annual **Fall Conference, "Making Your Voice Heard in Washington on Holy Land Peace,"** 1:30-5:30 p.m. Information: 317-283-3760.

Immaculate Conception Parish, 2081 E. County Road 820 S., Greensburg. **Smorgasbord**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., \$8 adults, \$5 children 6-12, \$2 children 1-5, children under 1 free. Information: 812-591-2362.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey

and School of Theology, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Monte Cassino pilgrimage, "Holy Mother of Hope,"** Benedictine Father Pius Klein, 2 p.m. Information: 800-682-0988 or news@saintmeinrad.edu.

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South, .8 mile east of Versailles. Mass, 10 a.m., on **third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in**, groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

October 27

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Volunteers and Friends of Fatima, monthly Mass**, 9 a.m., continental breakfast following Mass, no charge. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

St. John the Evangelist Church, 163 S. Capitol Ave., Indianapolis. Concert sponsored by Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral, **Ely Cathedral Choir of men and boys**, 7 p.m., \$15 adult, \$10 student/child. Information: 317-635-2021.

October 29

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Christian Leaders**

and Leadership Series, "The Political and Religious Dimensions of the Russian/Georgian Conflict," Professor Charles Ingrao, presenter, 7 p.m. Information: 317-788-7581 or www.benedictinn.org.

Vito's, 20 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. Theology on Tap, **Series on "The Theology of the Body,"** 7 p.m. Information: <http://indytheologyontap.com> or call 317-413-6097.

October 30

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, 3360 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Annual Fund dinner, "Expanding Our Tradition,"** 6 p.m. Information: 317-927-7825 or advancement@cardinalritter.org.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **Adult education series, "The Cycle of the Liturgical Year,"** 7 p.m., Benedictine Father Matthias Newman, presenter, free-will donation. Information: 317-291-7014, ext. 27.

November 1

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, 3360 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Cardinal Ritter High School, Indianapolis Colts and City of Indianapolis, **Fall Festival and "Peace in the Streets" Initiative**, entertainment, food, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-927-7825 or

rbymes@cardinalritter.org.

St. Martin of Tours Parish, 1720 E. Harrison St., Martinsville. **25th annual Holiday Bazaar**, Christmas cookies, bake shop, food, holiday crafts, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 765-342-4504.

November 1-2

St. John the Baptist Parish, 25743 State Road 1, Dover. 18th annual **craft show and chicken dinner**, Sat. craft show, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sun. chicken dinner and craft show, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Information: 812-576-4302.

November 2

St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **"Celebrate Our Legacy," Indianapolis area girls' academies teachers and alumnae**, Mass, 10:30 a.m. Information: 317-571-9886.

Calvary Cemetery, 4227 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute. **All Souls Day, vespers service**, 3 p.m. Information: 812-232-8404.

November 3

St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. **Feast day of St. Martin de Porres, Mass and fiesta/harambee**, 7 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery, 9001 N. Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **All Souls Day Masses**, noon and 6 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

Calvary Cemetery, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **All Souls Day Mass**, noon. Information: 317-784-4439.

November 4

St. Simon the Apostle School, 8155 Oaklondon Road, Indianapolis. **Election night spaghetti dinner**, 5-7:30 p.m., \$5 per person, \$25 per family. Information: 317-826-6000.

November 5

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles 50 and over, single, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-897-1128.

November 7

St. Joseph Church, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana, First Friday Mass**, 7:30 p.m., teaching, 7 p.m. Information: 317-592-1992 or ccrci@inholyspirit.org.

November 7-9

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **World-Wide Marriage Encounter weekend**. Information: 317-888-1892 or jbradleylevine@msn.com.

November 8

St. Roch Parish, Family Center, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Single Seniors**, meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-1102. †

Oct. 31 marks 100th anniversary of first healing attributed to the intercession of St. Theodora Guérin

Eighty current Sisters of Providence were members of the congregation at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods when Sister Mary Theodosia Mug died on March 23, 1943.

Sister Mary Theodosia received the first healing attributed to the intercession of St. Theodora Guérin, the congregation's foundress.

Approval of her healing opened a long process that led to Mother Theodore's canonization in Rome on Oct. 15, 2006.

Sister Mary Theodosia's healing occurred during the early morning hours of Oct. 31, 1908.

The congregation will recognize the 100th anniversary of her healing this year.

"I was in awe that she was cured," said Sister Marceline Mattingly, who entered the order in 1933. "I couldn't imagine how she must have felt. ... She seemed like an ordinary person in the community. Seeing her was very special because she was so very close to Mother Theodore."

The story of Sister Mary Theodosia's healing unfolded on the evening of Oct. 30, 1908. She was passing the crypt where the remains of Mother Theodore were entombed at that time. After going to confession, she paused at the crypt to pray for Sister Joseph Therese, who was very ill.

According to the congregation's history, when she came to the tomb of Mother Theodore, she said to herself, "I wonder if she has any power with Almighty God?"

Instantly, she felt very clearly in her soul that, "Yes, she has."

Somewhat startled, Sister Mary Theodosia ascended a stairway and again heard the inner voice say, "Yes, she has."

Sister Mary Theodosia said, "Well, if she has, I wish that she would show it."

Sister Mary Theodosia had numerous ailments and was in poor health. She had a tumor removed from her left breast in 1906. After surgery, she could not use her left arm. Because of a large abdominal tumor, she had to wear clothes that were too large and often had to take food standing up



St. Theodora Guérin Sr. Mary Theodosia Mug, S.P.

because of severe pain. She also had poor eyesight.

After she returned to her room on the evening of Oct. 30, she was correcting proofs of documents to be printed. She worked until nearly 1 a.m. on Oct. 31.

The lights went on at 4 a.m. as they did every morning. Sister Mary Theodosia arose with an unaccustomed sense of well being and found that she could use her left arm easily. She made her bed and combed her hair without difficulty. The abdominal tumor was gone and the pain had ceased.

As her health continued to improve, Sister Mary Theodosia was instructed by Bishop Francis Silas Chatard to record the details of her case. She was later examined by her own doctor, another independent doctor and at the Mayo Clinic.

The Catholic Church requires proof of two unexplainable healings attributed to a person's intercession as part of the requirements leading to sainthood.

The Church accepted Sister Mary Theodosia's healing and pronounced Mother Theodore blessed in 1998.

A second healing attributed to Mother Theodore in 2001 was approved by Pope Benedict XVI in early 2006, leading to her canonization in October that year.

Sister Mary Theodosia, the former Helen Mary Mug, was born in Attica, Ind., on July 16, 1860. She entered the congregation on Jan. 5, 1878, and was a gifted musician and writer. She wrote a book about the life story of Mother Theodore. †

Retreats and Programs

October 25

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Spa Day,"** 8 a.m.-4 p.m. \$100 per person, includes lunch. Information: 317-788-7581.

October 27-31

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Retreat for priests, "Preaching the Gospel of Mark,"** Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

October 28

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, 8:30 a.m. departure. Information and reservations: 812-825-4642, ext. 200.

November 7

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **First Friday reflection**, 1-3 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

November 7-9

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Marriage Encounter Weekend**. Information: 317-888-1892 or jbradleylevine@msn.com.

November 8

Monastery Immaculate Conception, Kordes Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. **"Saturday Morning at the Dome—Introduction to Celtic Spirituality,"** Theresa O'Bryan, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$35 includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 812-367-1411 or spirituality@thedome.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Fall Celebration: Sisters and Brothers of All Creation,"** Franciscan Sister Donna Graham, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$35 includes lunch. Information: 812-933-6437.

November 9

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Evensong Scripture,"** 4-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

November 10

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Men's Night,"** Franciscan Father Carl Hawver, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

November 14-16

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"The Challenges of Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark,"** Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

November 15

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Navigating Life's Changes," workshop**, 8:45 a.m.-5 p.m., Margaret Pike, R.N., and Benedictine Sister Antoinette Purcell, presenters, \$50 includes lunch. Information: 317-788-7581.

Monastery Immaculate Conception, Kordes Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. **"Saturday Morning at the Dome—Finding God in the Midst of Illness and Suffering,"** Benedictine Sister Jennifer Miller, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$35 includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 812-367-1411 or spirituality@thedome.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Grieving Losses in Our Lives: Keeping Memories Alive,"** 9-11:30 a.m., free-will offering. Information: 812-933-6437.

November 17

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org. †

VIPs

William Joseph and Mary Gayle (Leblanc) Beckman, members of



St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 18.

The couple was married on Oct. 18, 1958, at St. James Church in Louisville, Ky.

They have four children: Mary Patricia Smith, Joseph, Timothy and William Beckman. They also have two grandchildren. †

Archbishop Chaput criticizes Obama for his stand on 'abortion rights'

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver has called Democratic Sen. Barack Obama the “most committed abortion rights” candidate to lead a major party’s presidential ticket since the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973.

At the same time, Archbishop Chaput accused Democratic-friendly allies of Obama of doing a “disservice to the Church.”

One of the nation’s most politically outspoken Catholic prelates, the archbishop did not go much further in discussing the Illinois senator’s candidacy during an Oct. 17 speech to Educating on the Nature and Dignity of Women, a Catholic women’s group in Denver.

He told the group that he was stating his “personal

views as an author and private citizen,” and was not speaking for the Church or telling people how to vote.

“To suggest—as some Catholics do—that Sen. Obama is this year’s ‘real’ pro-life candidate requires a peculiar kind of self-hypnosis, or moral confusion, or worse,” Archbishop Chaput said in a presentation titled “The Homicides Involved in Abortion Are ‘Little Murders.’”

“To portray the 2008 Democratic Party presidential ticket as the preferred ‘pro-life’ option is to subvert what the word ‘pro-life’ means,” he said.

The archbishop refuted the arguments advanced by lifelong Catholic Douglas Kmiec, a constitutional law professor at Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., and former legal counsel to Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. Kmiec has been a vocal supporter of Obama since last spring. His book, *Can a Catholic Support Him?: Asking the Big Question About Barack Obama*, has sold well in the five weeks since its release.

Saying he was speaking for himself and not as a representative of the Church or the archdiocese, Archbishop Chaput also questioned the work of several organizations that have emerged in recent years and have urged voters to consider the gamut of Catholic teaching on abortion, war, the economy, poverty, the environment and other issues when they cast their vote.

“And here’s the irony,” he said. “None of the Catholic arguments advanced in favor of Sen. Obama are new. They’ve been around, in one form or another, for more than 25 years. All of them seek to ‘get beyond’ abortion, or economically reduce the number of abortions, or create a better society where abortion won’t be necessary.”

“All of them involve a misuse of the seamless garment imagery in Catholic social teaching. And all of them, in practice, seek to contextualize, demote and then counterbalance the evil of abortion with other important but less foundational social issues,” he said.

Archbishop Chaput credited Catholic supporters of the Democratic ticket for repackaging their arguments in an attempt to “neutralize the witness of the bishops and the pro-life movement by offering a ‘Catholic’ alternative to the Church’s priority on sanctity of life issues.”

“I think it’s an intelligent strategy,” he said. “I also think it’s wrong and often dishonest.”

In introducing his speech, Archbishop Chaput said he was not telling Catholics how to vote.

“I don’t want to do that. I won’t do that and I don’t use code language. So you don’t need to spend time looking for secret political endorsements,” he said.

The archbishop also addressed widespread questions about his book *Render Unto Caesar*, which was published in August 2008 and was frequently cited by Kmiec in his defense of Obama.

“Unfortunately, he either misunderstands or misuses my words, and he couldn’t be more mistaken,” the archbishop said of Kmiec.

Archbishop Chaput said that the book had its origins after the 2004 election when he was approached by a young attorney who ran for office as a pro-life Democrat and nearly won in a heavily Republican district. The lawyer asked the archbishop to put his thoughts about faith and politics into a form that other young Catholics thinking about a political career could use.

“The goal of *Render Unto Caesar* was simply to describe what an authentic Catholic approach to political life looks like and then to encourage American Catholics to live it,” he explained.

There was another reason for the book as well, Archbishop Chaput said.

“Frankly, I just got tired of hearing outsiders and insiders tell Catholics to keep quiet about our religious and moral views in the big public debates that involve all of us as a society,” he said. “That’s a kind of bullying, and I don’t think Catholics should accept it.” †

Pope urges doctors to respect patients’ value and human dignity

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Whether a patient wants physicians to do everything possible to save his or her life or simply wants ordinary care, doctors must form a “therapeutic alliance” with each patient, Pope Benedict XVI said.

So many diseases today are treatable and even curable that there is a risk of abandoning patients “the moment one senses the impossibility of obtaining appreciable results,” the pope said on Oct. 20 in a meeting with the Italian Society of Surgeons.

The society met the pope during its annual convention in Rome.

Pope Benedict told the surgeons that every patient, even those who are incurably ill, have value and have a dignity that must be honored.

“Respect for human dignity, in fact, requires unconditional respect for every single human being, born or unborn, healthy or ill, in any condition,” the pope said.

Pope Benedict said an effective therapeutic plan—one that leads the patient to serenity and hope—can be formulated only when a physician truly listens to the patient and understands his or her history and family life.

Whether the patient chooses “bold lifesaving interventions” or decides “to be content with the ordinary measures medicine offers,” mutual respect must characterize the patient-physician relationship, he said.

A patient, the pope said, “wants to be looked at with kindness, not just examined; he wants to be heard, not just subjected to sophisticated tests; he wants to be certain that he is in the mind and heart of the doctor treating him.” †



Archbishop Charles J. Chaput

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Vatican prepares three alternative endings for dismissal at Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has prepared three alternative endings for the priest's words of dismissal at Mass to emphasize the missionary spirit of the liturgy.

Pope Benedict XVI personally chose the three options from suggestions presented to him after a two-year study, Cardinal Francis Arinze told the Synod of Bishops in mid-October.

The Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, published an interview on Oct. 17 with Cardinal Arinze, head of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

He said along with "*Ite, missa est*," the Latin phrase now translated as "The Mass is ended, go in peace," the new options are:

- "*Ite ad Evangelium Domini annuntiandum*" (Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord).
- "*Ite in pace, glorificando vita vestra*

Dominum" (Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life).

- "*Ite in pace*" (Go in peace).

The idea for alternative words at the end of Mass was raised at the 2005 Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist. Many bishops wanted the final words to reflect a more explicit connection between Mass and the Church's mission of evangelization in the world.

Cardinal Arinze said the concern was that, for many Catholics, the present words of dismissal sounded like "The Mass is ended, go and rest."

The cardinal said his congregation undertook a wide consultation and came up with 72 different possible alternative phrases. Of these, the congregation chose nine and presented them to the pope, who chose the final three.

The three alternatives were published in October in the latest edition of the *Roman Missal*, with "*Ite, missa est*," which has

not been abolished, Cardinal Arinze said.

The cardinal said the congregation still was studying another suggestion made during the 2005 synod, that of moving the sign of peace to a different part of the Mass.

In 2005, the pope said the sign of peace had great value, but should be done with "restraint" so that it does not become a distraction during Mass. He asked for the study on moving the sign of peace from a moment just before Communion to another time in the liturgy.

Cardinal Arinze said that, after consultation, the congregation had written to bishops' conferences asking their preference between leaving the sign of peace where it is now and moving it to an earlier moment, after the prayer of the faithful.

He said the responses from bishops' conferences were expected to be in by the end of October, and the question would then

be presented to the pope for a final decision.

Cardinal Arinze said that in addition to its timing some have suggested that the sign of peace be limited to an exchange between the Massgoer and those in his or her immediate vicinity. He said that in some churches today, the sign of peace is extended to the point that it becomes "almost a jamboree."

Cardinal Arinze said a third suggestion from the 2005 synod, a "eucharistic compendium," also has made progress and is near publication.

He said the compendium would include doctrinal notes on the Mass as well as prayer texts, passages of papal liturgical teachings, canon law tracts and other explanatory materials. He emphasized that the compendium would propose ideas, not impose them. †

Campaign for Human Development ends ACORN funding over financial irregularities

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Catholic Campaign for Human Development suspended funding a nationwide community organizing group after it was disclosed on June 2 that nearly \$1 million had been embezzled.

Funding was suspended for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, popularly known as ACORN, because of the financial irregularities, said Ralph McCloud, executive director of CCHD, the

U.S. bishops' domestic anti-poverty and social justice program.

"We're not funding them at any level," McCloud told Catholic News Service on Oct. 15.

The suspension covers all 40 ACORN affiliates nationwide that had been approved for \$1.13 million in grants for the funding cycle that started on July 1, 2008.

McCloud said the suspension came soon after his office

learned that ACORN disclosed that Dale Rathke, the brother of ACORN founder Wade Rathke, had embezzled nearly \$1 million from the organization and its affiliates in 1999 and 2000. Dale Rathke stepped down from his position with the organization in June when the matter became public; no charges were filed against him. Wade Rathke stepped down as the group's lead organizer at the same time, but remains chief organizer for ACORN International LLC.

CCHD has hired specialists in forensic accounting to investigate whether any of its grant funding has been misappropriated, McCloud added.

Since revealing its financial troubles, the organization has come under intense scrutiny because of its voter registration practices. In several states, voter registration forms have been found to include nonexistent or dead people. Some registrants have told elections officials they completed multiple cards at the urging of ACORN canvassers who claimed they would be fired if they did not meet a daily quota for signing up new voters.

McCloud released information showing that CCHD funded more than 320 ACORN projects with grants totaling more than \$7.3 million during the last 10 years. He said the community organization also had received funds since early in CCHD's history.

CCHD's Web site reveals the campaign gave about \$1.11 million to 40 ACORN affiliates in 2007, and \$1.17 million to 45 affiliates in 2006.

Over the years, some of the funds undoubtedly were used for voter registration drives, McCloud said.

"It probably was," he told CNS. "But by the same token, we didn't find any voter registration irregularities, the allegations we are finding now."

McCloud also said that CCHD guidelines require that organizations in line for funding "go through a great deal of scrutiny."

Prior to the awarding of grants, applications from local organizations are vetted at the diocesan level by a funding committee, endorsed by the local bishop, and then scrutinized by the national CCHD staff and a committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, McCloud explained. †

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Chris, heart valve replacement patient

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Gay marriage: Locating the question for the common good

(Editor's note: In preparation for the 2008 U.S. elections, experts at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have drafted essays on several topics to guide voters in the decision-making process by using the bishops' 2007 statement "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" as a blueprint on how Catholic social teaching should affect political participation by Catholics. The following is the ninth article in a 10-part series. For more information, log on to www.faithfulcitizenship.org.)

By H. Richard McCord

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Gay marriage is a significant question that needs to be discussed, and most



H. Richard McCord

important in the discussion is how the issue is framed. The U.S. bishops, in "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship," urge people to study the issues before they vote in the coming elections.

Whether homosexual persons should be allowed to marry each other is one issue.

The central issue is about the nature and purposes of marriage as fundamental social structure and civil institution. It is not first a question about civil rights or discrimination or achieving the full social enfranchisement of homosexual persons nor about stabilizing a lifestyle.

The Catholic position begins not with sacramental theology, moral teachings and biblical passages. It begins with what can be observed in human nature and behavior, and what we can conclude using our reason. This is the natural law position.

You don't need religious faith to see that marriage is a unique relationship between a man and a woman.

What defines this relationship is the fact that it is a partnership based on sexual complementarity. That makes possible the fulfillment of the two co-equal purposes of marriage: mutual love between the spouses and the procreation of children.

No other human relationship, no matter how loving or caring or generative it might be, can make this claim or deliver on it.

Marriage is the union of a man and a woman. This is a truth discoverable by human reason. It is written in the law of nature, and in the language of the human body and spirit. It is a truth enshrined from the beginning of time. Church teaching about marriage starts with this truth.

Since marriage is a fundamental social structure based on human nature, neither the Church nor the state can change it at its core.

Marriage, and the family it produces, is a society that precedes all other societies. It is an institution we don't own, but rather one that we receive.

This does not mean that Church and state cannot regulate marriage, for example, placing minimum age limits, but it does mean we are not free to alter its basic structure.

Marriage of a man and a woman makes a unique contribution to society. It is the fundamental pattern for male-female relationships. It models the way women and men live interdependently and commit, for the whole of life, to seek the good of each other.

The union also serves the common good of society. It brings forth the next generation and does so by providing the best conditions for raising children, namely, the stable, loving relationship of a mother and father present only in a marriage. Other relationships can and do build up the common good, but they don't do in a complete sense what marriage does.

Should there be same-sex marriage? The Catholic Church frames this question in terms of the nature of marriage and its contribution to the common good.

As a result, the Church concludes that same-sex marriage is, by definition, an impossibility, a contradiction in terms.

Some people seek to locate the issue

within the framework of individual rights and justice. Catholic teaching affirms the dignity of homosexual persons and demands that they be treated with respect.

This means, among other things, that the state may fashion laws to protect the rights of these individuals and to provide social benefits. Examples include access to employment, housing, health care, joint ownership of property, and the ability to make medical decisions for another.

There are social benefits and rights to be guaranteed for every individual. But the remedy for specific cases involving injustice—the lack of benefits or rights—cannot be an even greater injustice, namely, to change the definition of marriage.

Marriage is oriented to serving the common good, not to providing rights and benefits to individuals within that relationship. It is not necessary or even desirable, therefore, to tamper with a fundamental social structure in order to protect individual rights and to grant all citizens their legitimate social benefits.

The issue of same-sex marriage must be understood as a question about marriage as it has been received from the Creator and subsequently received from each generation throughout history.

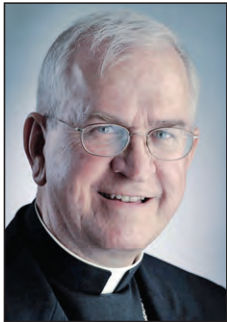
To perceive it as a question of justice for homosexual persons starts the conversation on the wrong path.

(H. Richard McCord is executive director of the Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.) †



Bishops establish new ad hoc committee to promote, protect marriage

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A new ad hoc committee of the U.S. Conference of



Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz

Catholic Bishops will work to raise awareness of the "unique beauty of the vocation of marriage" and the many threats it faces today, according to its chairman.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., said Cardinal Francis E.

George of Chicago, USCCB president, asked him to chair the committee, whose work is being funded by the Knights of Columbus.

In addition to its educational component, the committee's work will involve public policy advocacy efforts against moves to redefine marriage through legislatures or the courts.

In a telephone interview from Chicago on Oct. 14, Archbishop Kurtz said precise

details about the committee's strategies, whether its membership will be expanded and how long its work will continue remain to be determined by its members, who have only held one conference call thus far.

"Cardinal George felt it was important to begin with a small group that can move quickly," said the archbishop, who also chairs the USCCB Subcommittee on Marriage and Family Life.

Other ad hoc committee members are Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Conn., chairman of the bishops' Committee on Doctrine, and Auxiliary Bishop Gabino Zavala of Los Angeles, chairman of the USCCB task force on strengthening marriage. Carl A. Anderson, supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus, will serve as a consultant.

Initial plans include the redistribution of the 2003 USCCB statement "Between Man and Woman: Questions and Answers About Marriage and Same-Sex Unions" to dioceses, parishes and schools around the country and the development of a brief video on marriage that will be available on the Internet and through social

networking sites.

In a letter to his fellow bishops announcing the initiative, Archbishop Kurtz said the conference wants to "make known the uniqueness and beauty of the institution of marriage," while at the same time addressing "inadequacies in the ongoing public debate on the nature of marriage through education and public advocacy."

"The direct attempt to restructure the institution of marriage places the family, society and the institution of marriage itself in a precipitous position," he said in the letter. "It may also bring serious consequences to the Church as she seeks to carry out her sacred mission in our society."


Within the first month of the ad hoc committee's establishment, Connecticut was expected to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples to comply

with an Oct. 10 decision of the state Supreme Court. In addition, voters in California, Arizona and Florida are to vote on Nov. 4 on proposed constitutional amendments that would define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

"There has been an erosion of institutional and cultural support for the time-honored understanding of the institution of marriage," Archbishop Kurtz said in the interview with Catholic News Service. One of the committee's goals is to find "the best ways to be effective advocates" for traditional marriage, he added.

The archbishop said much of the committee's work will parallel the National Pastoral Initiative for Marriage, a multi-year effort launched by the bishops in 2005 to communicate "the meaning and value of married life for the Church and for society." †

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Without conception, there is no life

When does life begin? That seems to be the question often asked of those who are wanting to lead our country.

We are asked to put people into high positions who may or may not honor precious, innocent life.

When does life begin? At conception, of course.

Without conception, there is no life. Each of us was created at that miraculous moment.

To think otherwise is to deny God. To not cherish that tiny life and to end it before it can have a chance to reach its potential as a beautiful human being is out and out murder. There is simply no excuse for a planned abortion.

Some politicians try to straddle the fence by declaring to be “personally opposed” to abortion. If they are really personally opposed, why not proudly proclaim so?

Is being elected more important? I see these pro-choice banners held by outraged women and I think, “You are proud of being potential killers?” You are saying, “Leave us alone! If we want to rip that baby from the womb, it is our right to do so!”

I have never and will never cast my precious vote for any person who is not pro-life—no matter what his or her other qualifications may be.

If he or she can be so deadly wrong in that, then he or she could very possibly be deadly wrong in other important decisions.

Rosalynn DeFelice
Indianapolis

Right-to-life issues include more than abortion

I just finished reading the “Be Our Guest” column in the Sept. 19 issue of *The Criterion*.

The letter writer expressed disdain regarding Sister Simone Campbell, a Sister of Social Service who is executive director of Network, a Washington-based Catholic social justice lobby, and an earlier article printed in the Sept. 5 issue of *The Criterion* in which Sister Simone expresses support for Sen. Barack Obama.

The letter writer says that “Sister Simone’s opinion is not in alignment with the spirit of the teaching of the Church,” and appears to base her own opinion on Sen. Obama’s failure to support legislative action to legalize abortion.

I feel that this is a short-sighted and narrow interpretation of right-to-life issues. Obama’s position on access to health care, support of social programs for the poor, implementation of gun control with regard to assault weapons, war and capital punishment are all pro-life.

The letter writer hopes to end abortion by making it illegal while ignoring the infant mortality rate due to lack of funding for health care, medication and nutrition among the poor.

Right to life is about much more than abortion, and the way to end abortion is about much more than legalities.

Pat Browne
Fairland

The critical issue when casting your ballot

The old adage that “Actions speak

louder than words” certainly applies to Sen. Barack Obama. Let us examine the facts instead of listening to his rhetoric.

Fact: Sen. Obama has a 100 percent pro-abortion voting record and has the complete support of NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League). He has never voted for a piece of pro-life legislation in his career.

Fact: Sen. Obama voted against the ban on the gruesome act of partial-birth abortion.

Fact: Sen. Obama is so pro-abortion that he even voted against the “Born-Alive Infants Protection Act,” which would save babies who survive late-term abortions.

Fact: Sen. Obama is a co-sponsor of the so-called “Freedom of Choice Act,” which, if passed, would make partial-birth abortion legal again, provide taxpayer funding of abortion and strike down all limitations on abortions, including parental notification laws.

Fact: Sen. Obama has repeatedly stated that he will appoint justices to the Supreme Court who will uphold legalized abortion throughout the nine months of pregnancy.

On the other hand, Sen. John McCain and Gov. Sarah Palin have a very strong pro-life voting record, and have committed to protecting the unborn in legislation and court appointments. Sen. McCain’s voting record is irrefutable proof of his pro-life convictions.

The points listed above are not my opinion, simply the facts. The following is my opinion.

Americans are a life-embracing and optimistic people. While the European, Japanese and Russian populations are shrinking due to their pessimistic and oftentimes pro-abortion national policies, America stands almost alone in the world in embracing new life and believing in a future for our children.

We are still a country where the majority of our citizens believe that we are made in the “image and likeness” of a loving God, and that we are endowed by that same God with the inalienable right to life.

America is truly a great country. We simply cannot continue to accept the ugly and brutal crime of abortion. There can be no greater concern, when voting for the leader of our country, than where the candidate stands on the issue of the protection and sanctity of innocent human life. How a candidate stands on the protection of the unborn is like a window into the soul of the individual and a powerful indication of his true character.

Please, my fellow citizens, vote pro-life in the upcoming election.

Some day, in the not so distant future, you will be asked how you cared for the “least of these.” I hope you will be comfortable with your answer.

Jerry Mersch
Brookville

Pray for the wisdom to change what we can change

Again this year, certain bishops and certain Catholics have publicly denounced certain politicians. These bishops and others would have us believe that voting for their preferred candidates will result in the criminalization of abortion and increased justice for the unborn.

In past years, we were told we had to vote for them. We were told that one issue was of paramount importance.

Yet, we have received no significant change in the law to date. No abortionist or mother is in jail. There is no martial law.

Voting for Sen. John McCain would not end abortion. His position is to send the issue to the individual states. Seven states already have “trigger laws” in place to preserve *Roe v. Wade* if overturned, and any other state could follow.

It is naïve to think the abortion problem

can be resolved by an election, or a politician, or even a political party.

The issue can only really be decided once and for all in the hearts and minds of the people, and I do hope and pray that they choose life, unlike our Catholic chief justice who has already supported the death penalty twice.

As with abortion, we should be concerned about social justice and be concerned for the least among us. A war has caused well over a million deaths. A tax plan more favorable to anyone earning under \$112,000 a year would be more just for the poor, the workers and families. A possibility exists for many millions to have health insurance or four more years of do-nothingness.

Spending recklessly creates a huge debt burden on our children so that we can avoid our responsibilities now. Social Security privatization would give the security and dignity of our seniors to failed brokerage houses.

We are taught that God is love, that we are here on Earth to know, love and serve him.

We are taught to change the things we can, and we pray for the wisdom to do it right.

I intend with a clear conscience to vote accordingly.

Donald V. Traub
Indianapolis

Voting our conscience in this election

In the Oct. 10 issue of *The Criterion*, there is an editorial by John F. Fink on page 4 with the headline “Abortion and Politics.”

In the editorial, it was stated that “support for the right to abortion, by a politician or anyone else, is objectively a grave sin.”

Simply stated, a grave sin (or mortal sin) takes all grace away from the soul, and if that person dies without grace, they cannot enter into heaven.

In an article I read recently, it brought to light that if every Catholic in the U.S. voted for pro-life politicians, we could overturn *Roe v. Wade* and stop this war on the innocents.

Sen. Barack Obama, if elected president, will legalize abortion on demand. This means there will be no restrictions on abortion. Anyone at any time can get an abortion, even without parental consent for young girls, and from conception to birth.

There are already between 3,000 and 4,000 partial-birth abortions that occur every year (and this is with a partial-birth abortion ban signed by President George W. Bush).

In addition, a study at the University of Minnesota showed that teenage girls are 10 times more likely to attempt suicide within six months of having an abortion. Imagine if your teenage daughter had an abortion without your consent, and she was experiencing thoughts of suicide.

As Catholics, we have a moral obligation to vote for pro-life candidates. If we put God first, everything else will work out (the economy, the war, health care, etc.).

We must trust in God and have confidence that he is on our side, if only we will be on his side. Please pray that every U.S. Catholic will follow their conscience during this election.

Rhonda Branham
Bloomington

Sister’s statement in line with ‘Faithful Citizenship’

Like the letter writer who penned the “Be Our Guest” column in the Sept. 19 issue, I was surprised that *The Criterion* published an article in which Sister of Social Service Simone Campbell supported

Sen. Barack Obama, pointing out that better health care would probably reduce abortions.

But unlike the letter writer, I was pleasantly surprised to see another point of view in *The Criterion*.

The “Faithful Citizenship” summary recently published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states, “A candidate’s position on a single issue that involves an intrinsic evil, such as support for legal abortion or the promotion of racism, *may* legitimately lead a voter to disqualify a candidate from receiving support.”

“*May* lead,” not “*must* lead.”

And the document goes on to point to many other considerations to be taken into account in a voter’s decision: the rights to food, shelter, health care, education and meaningful work, and the candidates’ stand on the death penalty, hunger, war and “unjust immigration policies.”

I think Sister Simone’s statement was quite consistent with the bishops’ publication.

John C. Moore
Bloomington

Don’t lose sight of strengths in U.S. health care

Any discussion of reforming health care is naturally going to focus on the problems, and the recent article in the Sept. 19 issue of *The Criterion* was no exception.

But we should not lose sight of the strengths of the U.S. health care system or we may end up with something worse. And we need to have all the facts.

For example, the article focused on the statistic that 47 million Americans have no health insurance.

But it is important to note that perhaps one-third of the uninsured—many of them young and healthy—could afford coverage but choose not to pay for it. Another third of the uninsured are already eligible for existing government programs, such as Medicaid.

Yes, there is a problem, but there are many things we can and should do to expand coverage without requiring a government-run system for all.

Other countries may have universal coverage, but that doesn’t necessarily mean better access to care. Countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom have notoriously long waits for treatment. They also have less access to new medicines. The U.S. spends more per capita on health care for the uninsured than most other developed countries spend on care for those with insurance.

Many of the health problems in our country reflect our lifestyle more than our health care. The health care system is not to blame for deaths from violence, drunk driving or unhealthy habits that are more prevalent in the U.S.

Where the health care system can make a difference—on cancer survival rates, for example—the U.S. outperforms other developed countries.

The way that government systems ration health care should cause Catholics to stop and think.

Just a few weeks ago, a prominent “ethics expert” and government adviser in the United Kingdom said that elderly people with dementia should consider euthanasia because they unduly burden the National Health Service and their caregivers. With the NHS budget pressures of an aging population, how long before voluntary consideration becomes mandatory?

Too often, it is assumed that anyone who truly cares about better health care for Americans must support greater government control of the system. The U.S. health care system surely has room for improvement, but it is the best foundation for providing broad access to truly life-affirming health care through a combination of public and private, including Catholic, efforts.

Bob Collins
Indianapolis

O'BRIEN

continued from page 1

brother that was a priest and two sisters that were nuns. At points in their lives, both were missionaries. One was a missionary in Peru. The other was a missionary in India. They were always around our house and they had a really positive impact on all of us, as well as my parents did.

My father was a devout Catholic, but was not a person that beat you over the head with his religion. He was more of a guy who let you feel your own way. It was interesting. Sometimes I give talks and I talk about my parents. My mom was the dean of discipline and my dad was the dean of happiness. Even though my parents were very Catholic, they would just try to pass on the joy of Catholicism, and why the sacraments were so important to all of us.

Any specific memories in your Catholic education that stand out to you?

O'Brien: I was always an altar boy. I think the turning points were around the sacraments. First holy Communion was always a huge part of our lives. In college, I was a business major but my favorite subjects were theology and philosophy, just because I liked things that made you think and go to a deeper level than normally.

When Father Michael O'Mara at St. Mary Parish recently asked you and your wife, Sharon, to speak during the Masses for the parish's Legacy for Our Mission campaign, was that something you had to think about or was that something you wanted to do?

O'Brien: When we were looking for a place to live in Indianapolis, we knew we wanted to live downtown. When we said it's important for us to be near a parish, we were told that we probably wouldn't want to be parishioners at St. Mary's because it's quote-unquote a *poor parish*. And we said, "Well, that's exactly where we want to be."

We're having a campaign there, and Father [O'Mara] asked all the parishioners to pray on how they could be involved in the campaign. So we got involved very early and we asked Father if we could be of any help to just let us know. So we made that commitment. He wanted us to speak at church, and we were more than happy to do it.

From all accounts, you and your wife, Sharon, seem to have a close, caring marriage. How important has your relationship with Sharon been in your career and your life?

O'Brien: We've been married 32 years. I wouldn't have the success and happiness in life without her. Sharon is, in the very truest sense, a partner in life. We always say there's only one sacrament that you can take part in that is with another person. It's marriage. Our marriage is Christ-centered. We prayed from the very beginning. We understood how important marriage is.

I feel I'm the luckiest guy in the world. We were best friends before we were married, and she's my best friend now. We have a tremendous amount of fun together. She's made enormous sacrifices in her life to allow me to do what I'm doing. She certainly has the education and the intelligence and the leadership skills to be an executive in any company.

You have three grown children, including your youngest, Caitlyn, who has Down syndrome. She's 25, she lives at home and she works. What has she meant to your family's life and your faith?

O'Brien: We can't imagine life without Caitlyn. It was unexpected when we had Caitlyn. She was the youngest. To me, I have so much admiration for the job that my wife has done with our children. It is certainly not 50-50 from the standpoint of raising children because basketball, at least the way I go about it during the season, is somewhat all-consuming. It really challenged Sharon and she just raised the three best kids.

We had a strong family and a strong marriage before Caitlyn and she helped solidify it even more. She's been an absolute joy for us. Raising a child with special needs is a great challenge and it was even more of a challenge for my wife because she, a lot of times, was doing the brunt of the work. She did a brilliant job of it because Caitlyn is just a special person and a great person to know. She has just flourished.

A significant effort has been made to change the make-up of the Pacers this year. Besides talent, what attributes do you look for in players?

O'Brien: Stephen Covey talked about the seven habits of highly effective people. You look for people in your



Indiana Pacers' head coach Jim O'Brien shares his thoughts with his team during a timeout against the Seattle Supersonics on Oct. 13, 2007.

Submitted photos courtesy Indiana Pacers

JIM O'BRIEN

• **Age:** 56

• **Job:** Second year as the head coach of the Indiana Pacers' National Basketball Association team.

• **Family:** Married for 32 years to Sharon (Ramsay) O'Brien. The couple has three grown children, Shannon, Jack and Caitlyn.

• **Hometown:** Philadelphia. Grew up there in St. Stephen's Parish.

• **Current parish:** St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis.

organization—any organization, including our team—to be honest people, people who are dependable, who want to improve, who want to live the Golden Rule. It doesn't matter what you do for a living, they're the people you want to be around. Certainly, they're the kind of people we want in the Pacers' organization.

My high school coach at Roman Catholic was Speedy Morris, and Jack McKinney was my coach at St. Joe's. They were outstanding coaches and Christian gentlemen. I was also lucky enough to be married into the family of Jack Ramsay [a former Pacers' head coach and a member of the Basketball Hall of Fame], who is the same way—outstanding coach but more an outstanding gentleman. These are the guys who are the mentors in my life. If you played for Speedy or Jack McKinney, you had to be men of character.

You try to go to Mass at St. Mary's during the week when you're not out of town with the team. Talk about that.

O'Brien: Especially during the season. We have a routine on game days

where we practice in the morning. And because I get the afternoon off, we try to go to the noon Mass in the chapel at St. Mary's. Sharon tries to go on a fairly regular basis 12 months a year. When we have the luxury of going to daily Mass, that's the best part of our lives.

Why is daily Mass so important to you?

O'Brien: It's because Christ is the center of our lives. Sharon and I are very much focused on the Eucharist. It's the center of our faith. If you can have a day where you're receiving the Eucharist, that's a good day. When we can go to daily Mass together, that strengthens everything about us, including our marriage.

How much has being a Catholic defined your life?

O'Brien: It's a large part of who I am. I just wouldn't be the same person without that influence. I couldn't even imagine life without having the Eucharist available. It is who we are in our marriage. I couldn't even fathom what life would be like if we weren't centered around our faith. †

St. Mary's pastor says coach and his wife are 'authentic' people

By John Shaughnessy

Father Michael O'Mara laughs as he remembers the first Sunday that



Fr. Michael O'Mara

Indiana Pacers' head coach Jim O'Brien came to worship at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis.

After that Sunday Mass during the summer of 2007, Father O'Mara had been talking to different people in the back of the church when O'Brien, his wife, Sharon, and their daughter, Caitlyn, approached the pastor to introduce themselves.

"It didn't hit me right away who he was when they said they were the O'Briens," Father O'Mara recalls, laughing about his failure to recognize the coach. "In the following weeks, I read about him and put two-and-two together. I thought that was really, really cool that they were going to be with us at St. Mary's."

The pastor thought it was even more special when Jim and Sharon O'Brien volunteered to speak during recent weekend Masses, sharing their testimonies in support of the parish's efforts to raise funds for the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future capital campaign. In its 150th year of being a spiritual home for immigrants, St. Mary Parish seeks to

raise \$2.2 million for building renovations, a preschool and a medical clinic.

"When you meet Jim and Sharon, you won't meet any people who are more authentic," the pastor says. "They are very sincere, they want to do their part. They are people who truly see the opportunity before us as a parish. They see us as a developing, diverse parish. Having the O'Briens here is a true blessing because of their authenticity."

That authenticity shows in their love and encouragement for Caitlyn, who has Down syndrome.

"With Caitlyn, they open doors so she can have opportunities in her life," Father O'Mara says. "Caitlyn volunteers here on Thursdays with mailings and different activities in the office. She's a very special young woman. You can see Jim and Sharon in her. They have a very, very special relationship with each other."

"Their commitment to their family is incredible and they want to create that sense of family in the community where they live. We're going to do an art auction on Nov. 16 and Sharon is part of that committee. They just participate in everything the parish has going on whether by being on a committee or by their presence."

Their authenticity is also revealed in their fidelity to daily Mass and the Eucharist.

"When they're not traveling, they'll be at noon Mass," Father O'Mara says. "I remember the opening game of last season. Coach was here. I said to him,



Pacers' coach Jim O'Brien, right, and his wife, Sharon, center, talk with Oldenburg Franciscan Sister Therese Wentz on the occasion of her recent retirement. The O'Briens met Sister Therese while she served as a pastoral associate at St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis.

'Coach O'Brien, on a day like this, you know about anxiety.' He said, 'Oh, yes.' He puts everything in perspective. When he talks, he always talks about a team effort. It's not about him. It's about *us* and how we work together."

That commitment to family, community and the Church makes the O'Briens powerful witnesses of their faith, the priest says. It has also made Father O'Mara a fan of the Pacers again.

"Knowing them has brought out in

me a new interest in the Pacers," he says. "I feel I know what it's like to be a parent watching a child play a sport. I want to see him and the Pacers do well. When I watch Coach O'Brien down on the floor, I feel a sense of pride, a sense of unity."

"I see his parents, his faith and the way he grew up being expressed in the way he coaches. During a game, he maintains a true sense of calm. I think that's so much rooted in his faith." †

Senior citizen, teens connect through community service project

By Mary Ann Wyand

Pansy Mitchell smiled as she watched 15 members of Roncalli High School's varsity volleyball team scrape and then paint the peeling wood siding on her old garage.

Mitchell, who is 89, has lived in her modest Victorian house on Regent Street south of downtown Indianapolis for 62 years.

This painting project on Sept. 27 marked the first time that Angels from the Heart volunteers from throughout the city had helped her with home maintenance during Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish's annual community service program for low-income neighborhood residents.

"Since my husband passed away about 14 years ago, I haven't had that kind of help so it means a lot to have [the painting] done," Mitchell said. "It's been good to have them here."

While the teenagers painted the garage, Mitchell said, she enjoyed listening to the girls talk, laugh and sing a variety of songs.

"I've lived here since 1946," Mitchell recalled. "My husband, Charles, and I were married before World War II. He served in the Navy in the Pacific Theater during the war. We had three little kids when he went into the service."

Health problems limit her mobility now, she said, and she could not afford to hire someone to paint the garage.

Roncalli seniors Katelyn Dawson, Ashley Holmes and Jordan Sudzina, all members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, said the team enjoyed helping with the Angels from the Heart program for the first time.

"I'm really glad that we all came out here together to help," Katelyn said. "It's important to us to help others and represent

Roncalli volleyball in the community."

Ashley said this volunteer project was "a good bonding experience" for team members, who practiced that morning to prepare for the Marion County girls' volleyball tournament before painting Mitchell's garage.

"It feels good to know that we helped her," Ashley said. "It's cool ... that a bunch of people care about helping others."

Their coach, Missy Marsh, said it is important for the girls to "come together in their faith ... and build teamwork skills in this way."

Roncalli's varsity volleyball team members were among 450 Indianapolis area volunteers who helped with the ninth annual Angels from the Heart program.

John Heinzelman, a St. Jude parishioner who serves on the Angels from the Heart organizing committee, said two Roncalli religion teachers, Gerard Striby and Sean Winningham, were instrumental in getting so many Roncalli students to participate in the volunteer project.

"They truly enjoyed themselves and the experience, and grow from that," Heinzelman said of the teenagers. "Obviously, the homeowners are just ecstatic to have this help. We had 50 service projects that we completed all over the neighborhood with 450 [adult and teenage] volunteers. ... The Angels from the Heart program is a tremendous opportunity for these kids to help others."

Heinzelman said his family is from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish and he enjoys coming back to his old neighborhood to help the residents.

"We painted four properties, did five concrete projects and had seven remodeling projects this year," he said. "People from the Indianapolis parishes were instrumental in cleaning up the entire



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

Senior citizen Pansy Mitchell of Indianapolis watches members of Roncalli High School's varsity volleyball team paint her faded garage on Sept. 27 during the ninth annual Angels from the Heart community service project coordinated by Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish. The service program was organized in 2000 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of Sacred Heart Parish in 1875 on the near-south side of the city.

neighborhood—sweeping every street and cutting the grass in every front yard, literally hundreds of homes, in the Sacred Heart neighborhood—for the

first time. We want to make an impression on the neighborhood residents that we are here to try to help them make this neighborhood better." †

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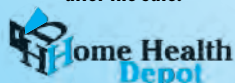
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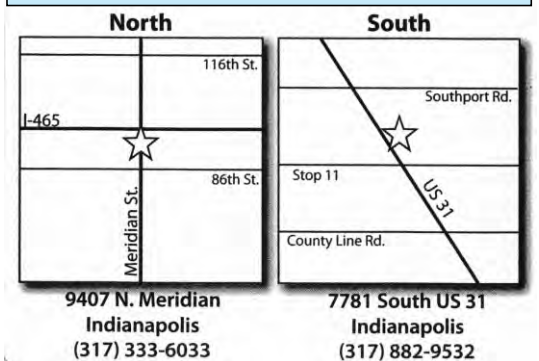
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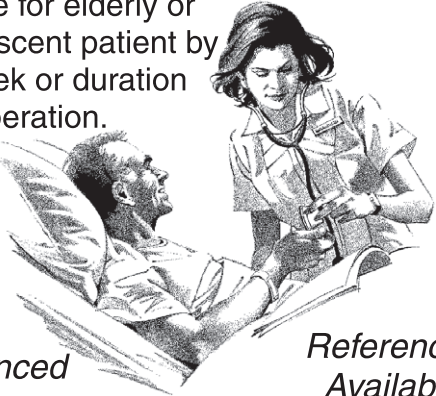


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We are called to listen attentively to the word of God

By David Gibson

Is it possible to “hear” someone’s words without really “listening” to them?

That’s an important question. Simply being present in the room while someone speaks isn’t enough to make a person a good listener.

Much is written about how to become a good listener. Listening is considered an essential skill in human relationships, especially in marriage and parenting. The concern is that weak listening skills may weaken good relationships.

Good listeners focus on the person who is speaking. This requires taking a real interest in what the other person says—taking the focus off oneself and turning attention to the other person.

Experts on marriage say such listening is a way that spouses can demonstrate their interest in each other, and express their respect and love.

A good listener tries to hear more than words, in hopes of hearing what is present in the other person’s heart.

One obstacle to good listening is a busy mind that focuses on other matters while someone is speaking. A suspicion that the other person is talking about something unimportant is another obstacle. Or a person may quietly think, “I’ve heard this before,” or “This has nothing to do with me.”

Good relationships call for listening skills, but all communication is a two-way street. Good relationships also demand that when we speak we attempt

to be clear, to make ourselves understood by others.

But what does this have to do with the Bible or eucharistic celebrations?

As the working paper developed for the October 2008 world Synod of Bishops in Rome made clear, God enters into a dialogue with people through the Scripture readings during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. The Bible was selected as the theme for this synod.

In every true dialogue, a point comes when someone speaks and others listen actively—not passively—in order to respond well. Wouldn’t this imply that to participate fully in the Liturgy of the Word—in the dialogue initiated at that point by God—that we need to exercise good listening skills?

According to the working paper, while learning more “about” the Bible is vital, the Bible is not just another book to learn about.

The paper explained that:

- The Liturgy of the Word during the Mass is less a time for meditation or catechesis than for a dialogue between God and those present.
- “Scripture and the liturgy converge in the single purpose of bringing the people into dialogue with the Lord.”
- “Maximum attention” should be given “to a clear, understandable proclamation of the texts.”

Pope John Paul II made similar points in his 1998 apostolic letter titled “Observing and Celebrating the Day of the Lord.” He wrote: “The risen Lord is encountered in the Sunday assembly at the twofold table of the word and of the Bread of Life” because Christ speaks when sacred Scripture is read.

Thus, the Liturgy of the Word clearly has a lot to do with communication. Dialogue is a form of communication. But as we’ve seen,



Reading and meditating on the Scripture readings before Sunday Mass enhances our understanding of the word of God during the liturgy. *Lectio divina* is a spiritual reading of Scripture that attunes us to listening to God silently, reading God’s word meditatively and resting in the presence of God’s living word.

communication is complicated for human beings.

Communication makes demands on those who speak and those who listen. Those who proclaim the Scripture readings at Mass should be prepared and able to be understood. Nonetheless, listening well to the Scripture readings may remain a challenge:

- Maybe we consider the Bible to be ancient history that has nothing to do with life today.
- Maybe our minds are overloaded with other concerns.
- Maybe we have a plan for God and find it hard to take in God’s plan for us.
- Maybe we think that we “have heard this before and don’t need to hear it again.”

Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, known as the preacher of the papal household, spoke in February 2008 to Pope Benedict XVI and others in the Roman Curia about listening to the readings during Mass.

Father Cantalamessa described how what happened in biblical times can happen today. He recalled listening one day to the Gospel reading about the tax collector Zaccheus (Lk 19), who climbed a tree to see Jesus when he

passed by on the road.

The preacher was struck at Mass that day by this reading’s “relevance,” which he said inspired him to take action.

“The words were addressed to me,” he explained. “‘Today I must come to your house.’”

Father Cantalamessa noted that, “It was about me that it could be said, ‘He went to stay with a sinner!’ And it was about me, after having received him in Communion, that Jesus said, ‘Today salvation has entered into this house.’”

We can be struck often by the “relevance” of the biblical readings at Mass, according to Father Cantalamessa.

“It is to us, there present, that the word is addressed,” he said. “We are called to take the place of the characters who are evoked.”

Many words of God are spoken in every Mass, he said, but “there is almost always one that is especially destined for us.”

Father Cantalamessa called the Liturgy of the Word “nothing other than the liturgical actualization of Jesus who preaches.”

(David Gibson is the former editor of Faith Alive! and Origins, the Catholic News Service Documentary Service.) †



Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, the preacher of the papal household in Vatican City, reflects on a Scripture passage as he delivers the homily during a morning Mass celebrated on Feb. 18, 2007, in Detroit. Bible study helps Christians appreciate that the stories in Scripture are their stories, too.

Discussion Point

Bible study group helps deepen faith

This Week’s Question

Have you ever participated in a Bible study group? If so, how did it help you? If not, why not?

“Yes, I’ve participated in many. They’ve helped deepen my faith, and taught me how Catholicism and the Bible are completely related. ... They go hand in hand.” (Terry Bolduc, Manchester, N.H.)

“I’ve even led them. They have deepened my knowledge and interest, and led me to the work I do today as the RCIA [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults] director at our parish.” (Marydith Chase, Bakersfield, Calif.)

“It did help, especially hearing other peoples’ perspectives. When you see how things have touched

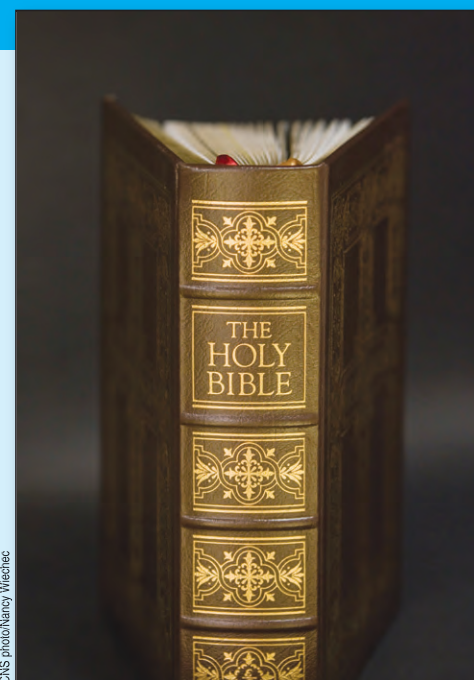
others’ lives and hearts, it opens your eyes to a whole new aspect of ... the Bible.” (Susanne Manocchia, Portland, Maine)

“In our church, it was a program called ‘Alpha.’ Our pastor has tried different programs, but this is the best. Any question you can think of is answered logically through the program.” (Sandy Buzby, Morrisville, Pa.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: How is Christmas a time of light for you?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †



From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Possible saints: Rose Hawthorne Lathrop

(Twenty-second in a series of columns)

Rose Hawthorne Lathrop was born in 1851, the daughter of novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne and Sophie Peabody, who traced her ancestry to the Mayflower at Plymouth Rock. Rose married George Parson Lathrop and they had a son. She also became an acclaimed poet and short-story writer.

When she was 29, their 4-year-old son died. When she was 40, she and George both converted to Catholicism. However, George became an alcoholic and, when Rose was 44, she separated from him. He died of liver disease three years later.

Through all this, Rose was searching for a greater purpose in life. Her parents had instilled in her a compassion for the poor, and she greatly admired St. Vincent de Paul and Father Damien de Veuster, the "leper priest" of Molokai. She finally found her calling when she realized the plight of cancer

victims.

Cancer was considered a contagious disease in the late 19th century. Those with the disease were not treated in regular hospitals for fear of exposing other patients. Things came to a head for Rose when she encountered a young girl with cancer who could not afford medical care and had to move to New York's almshouse on Blackwell's Island in the middle of the East River.

After taking a three-month nursing course at New York Cancer Hospital, Rose moved to a small house in New York's Lower East Side. From there, she visited the cancerous poor, wrapped their bandages, cooked their meals and cleaned their homes. Soon, she welcomed a few of the cancer victims into her home.

She realized that she needed help so she advertised in a newspaper, ending her appeal with, "Let the poor, the patient, the destitute, and the hopeless receive from our compassion what we would give to our own families." A woman named Alice Huber, 36, saw the ad, contacted Rose and moved into her home.

In February 1899, a Dominican priest visiting the home noticed a statue of St. Rose

of Lima, Rose's patron saint. He suggested that the women consider becoming Dominican tertiaries as St. Rose was. With the approval of Archbishop John Corrigan, they did, with Rose taking the religious name Mother Alphonsa and Alice becoming Sister Rose. A year later, the archbishop permitted them to wear the Dominican habit, pronounce vows and form a community they called the Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer.

In 1901, with the help of wealthy friends, the women bought nine acres of land, previously the property of French Dominican nuns who had returned to France, 30 miles north of New York in Sherman Park. It included a 60-room building suitable for their patients that Mother Alphonsa named St. Rose's Home.

Thanks to donated services of doctors, their work with cancer patients flourished. In 1902, the townspeople changed the name of their town to Hawthorne in honor of Rose.

She continued her work, never charging any of her patients, until her death in 1926 at age 75. By then, her community had grown to 31 members. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Reckoning what is important on All Souls Day

Did anyone besides me see any irony in the recent news stories about the gala opening



of Lucas Oil Stadium and the death of Lucious Newsom? Stories about the two events appeared on the same day, and I couldn't help but think they contrasted sharply in their essential significance.

Now, both of these subjects were newsworthy, of course, but their juxtaposition struck me as a lesson in what human life is, can be or should be. But then, maybe I am just old and crabby.

We must have heard by now that Lucious Newsom was a 93-year-old Catholic convert who devoted his retirement years to serving the poor. Not that he exactly ignored them previously since he was a Baptist minister many years before he moved to Indianapolis.

Lucious took the Gospel literally as so few of us can do. Dorothy Day and Blessed Teresa of Calcutta come to mind, but otherwise such people are scarce.

Lucious truly believed that when we have faith, God will provide everything we need. Not only did he believe it, he acted upon it.

He spent his days looking for people in dire straits, and he didn't have far to look, unfortunately. He furnished food and clothing for them, and scrounged housing, jobs, transportation and medical care for them. Whatever they needed, he tried to provide it promptly, cheerfully and without condescension.

Naturally, being a humble retired minister, he hadn't much money to share.

But he had lots of faith, both in God and in other people. He was not afraid to beg from anyone, including church congregations, local celebrities, merchants and politicians. And his charm, despite his bib overalls and missing teeth, prevailed with almost everyone he met while begging. He got results.

Lucas Oil Stadium, on the other hand, is a different kind of success story. It is the culmination of efforts by sports enthusiasts, businessmen, politicians and captive taxpayers to produce the latest thing in sports palaces. It is a tribute to the pursuit of entertainment, luxury and superiority among cities. It cost a tremendous amount of money, but supporters feel it was definitely worth it. And I am not here to say it isn't.

Now, I love to watch sports as much as the next woman (which truthfully may not be as much as some), but I found the contrast

between the importance of Lucious and Lucas to be a bit disturbing. I thought, what do we find praiseworthy and, by implication, necessary for a satisfying life? With what causes do we want to share our attention and our treasure?

It isn't just about money. Certainly, the amounts spent on the stadium would have covered a multitude of needs presented by the poor. But that is the same tired argument as selling off Vatican treasures to feed people. It is a fine idea, but it is short-term. As Jesus noted, the poor will always be with us and their needs will not go away.

Rather, I think it is a matter of perspective. Are we more interested in serving the poor or in serving our own appetites? There is nothing wrong with enjoying sports competitions, but do we do it at the cost of neglecting what we say we believe in as Christians?

Considering the worthy values expressed in the character of many current Indianapolis Colts team members, is it not even more incongruous to enshrine their work in symbols of excess and luxury far beyond typical human needs? It is something to think about. †

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

Is God's power perfected in our weaknesses?

Sometimes our own character traits are a double-edged sword.



For instance, I am flexible—so flexible, in fact, that I am sometimes accused of being indecisive. Sometimes, like last Halloween, my dithering decisions rule.

My husband was out of town on business when Sara, our youngest daughter, drove home

from cheerleading practice with a request.

"Can we go to Lynn's house for dinner?" she asked. Our oldest daughter had invited us.

I shifted my feet, unwilling to admit that I wanted to stay home and distribute candy.

"I don't know," I said. "Do you want to?"

"Yes," Sara shot back. "I'll take a quick shower and we'll go."

"OK," I said, halfheartedly.

I really wanted to stay home, visit my neighbors, admire the ballerinas and ghosts, and dispense candy. It was a tradition that I treasured.

But I wanted to make my daughters happy, too.

Indecision reigned.

As Sara hopped in the shower, I dumped miniature chocolates and assorted lollipops into an oversized bowl and placed it on the doorstep. But as I scrawled a note suggesting that trick-or-treaters help themselves to the sweets, I changed my mind.

"I'm not going," I announced when Sara was ready to leave.

She urged me to go, but I explained my desire to personally deliver the treats.

"OK," she said.

Moments later, Sara grabbed her car keys and headed to the garage. As the engine roared, I changed my mind and signaled to her to wait for me. But as I flicked on the porch light and locked the front door, I wavered.

"Go ahead," I said. "I'm not going to go."

Sara sighed and I watched, somewhat wistfully, as her vehicle's taillights disappeared into the darkness.

I called Lynn to tell her that I wasn't coming, and hung up with a sense of regret and yet another decision—I would join them for dinner, after all!

As I settled in for the solitary drive, I phoned my longtime friend, Gloria. We chuckled about my nonsense, which resulted in two cars traveling separately to the same destination and me missing Halloween at my

house as if it were a grave mistake.

Then Gloria, who was recently widowed, told me how happy she was that I phoned. She had received a promotion at work that day and wanted to tell someone, but she didn't know who to call. Mourning the death of her husband, she felt her loss in a painful way when she couldn't share the news with him.

"Your call was like an answer to prayer," Gloria said. "It's like God used you to reach me at just the perfect moment when I needed it most."

And I wondered ... Could our weaknesses play a role in God's greater plan?

After all, I wouldn't have phoned Gloria had I stayed home to distribute candy. I wouldn't have phoned her had I traveled with Sara.

It had to be as it was—a goofy, mixed-up, belated decision to go, resulting in my solo travel. And, unbeknownst to me, with exact timing, it prompted me to contact, of all people, my friend, Gloria—right when she needed it most.

(Debra Tomaselli lives in Altamonte Springs, Fla. Her column appears in several diocesan newspapers. Her e-mail address is dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.) †

The Bottom Line/Antoinette Bosco

Author heralds the pope who 'revolutionized' the Church

A conversation with Catholic author Jean Maalouf quickly puts you on a spiritual journey.



Having just read the latest of his 20 books, *Pope John XXIII, Essential Writings* (Orbis Books), I wanted to meet the man who could so deeply see into the heart of the Church leader that I have most admired, a truly holy

man, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of his election as pope.

"He changed the entire Church, and even the world," said Maalouf about Don Angelo Roncalli, who became pope on Oct. 28, 1958.

"Pope John was obsessed with the Gospel, and he wanted to communicate its message to others in a way they could understand it," Maalouf explained. "He wanted the Gospel to permeate their consciousness, their minds and hearts, their decisions and actions—their entire lives. Only such a deep transformation was capable of bringing about a new order of human relationships."

The major appeal that John XXIII would make as pope was "to underscore the great urgency of world peace," Maalouf continued. "This was a primary and essential focus of his pontificate. ... He felt that any means should be used to help bring peace on Earth."

"*Pacem in Terris*," Pope John's "visionary encyclical on world peace, is openly optimistic," said Maalouf. "It assumes that peaceful coexistence, based on trust instead of fear among nations, is possible and urgent. That would make the stockpiles of weapons unnecessary and an agreement on disarmament reachable."

Maalouf said that most Catholics may not know that Pope John's determination to seek peace and social justice had its precise origins in war—the horrible, forgotten World War I. That war had a great effect on Pope John when he was then a young priest assigned to a medical unit in a primitive military hospital in Milan, Italy. There, he tried to comfort injured and dying men shrieking in pain.

Don Angelo, as Pope John was called then, also served on the terrible battlefields, according to Maalouf. He called that time the most moving experience of his long life, and World War I "a useless massacre." He founded a "House for the Soldiers," and searched for unaccounted ones. As Don Angelo brought the love of Jesus to the soldiers, the seeds were sown for his yearning for peace on Earth.

Maalouf relates that, on retreat in 1940, Don Angelo wrote: "War ... is desired by men, deliberately, in defiance of the most sacred laws. That is what makes it so evil!"

Maalouf underscores that "Christians should never forget that Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and that working for peace is not an optional choice for them. Peace on all fronts—peace of heart, peace in families, peace between different groups, peace between nations—is a constitutive part of Christian life."

Don Angelo was still to live through another war. During World War II, he assisted many Jewish refugees in escaping from the Nazis, signing false certificates of baptism for Jewish children. No one imagined then that this priest would one day become Pope John XXIII, launching the Second Vatican Council and opening the door to "allow the full participation of the laity in the Church," Maalouf noted.

When I asked Maalouf what motivated him to become a writer, he said, "Our life is unceasing prayer. Whatever you do, it ties in with God. I want to prove that human values are the Gospel values. The Holy Spirit is writing the same Scripture that is in the Gospel through our lives."

Proof of that is in his book, and in the life of Pope John XXIII.

(Antoinette Bosco writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Oct. 26, 2008

- Exodus 22:20-26
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5c-10
- Matthew 22:34-40

The Book of Exodus provides this weekend with its first reading.



In ancient Jewish tradition, Exodus came from Moses. Therefore, in a most special way, it is the very word of God since Moses represented God and was the link between God and the Chosen People.

Through Moses, God gave the Hebrews directions for every aspect of their lives. This weekend's reading from Exodus addresses certain very specific realities in daily life, such as the lending of money.

Primary in the Hebrew religion from the beginning was a respect for each person, a respect founded on the notion of God as Creator and final governor of human lives.

Every person has the right to be respected and treated justly. No one can be exploited or mistreated, not even strangers or enemies.

Of course, the details are important, but of even more importance is the spirit underlying human obedience to God.

For the second reading, the Church presents a reading from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

The Apostle Paul's advice is firm. He urges obedience to God. He offers his own devotion to the Lord as an example and insists that following Jesus brings joy.

Bearing witness to Christ—evangelization—to use a theological term often appearing in modern times, is an opportunity for Christians.

Paul urged the Christian Thessalonians to be a model for all the people of Macedonia and Achaia. He tells the Thessalonians that their faith, their turning away from idols, was an inspiration to many people.

St. Matthew's Gospel provides the last reading. It is a familiar and beloved text.

Often seen as an effort to trick Jesus, the question of the Pharisees in this story may have had a more pragmatic

purpose.

The Pharisees were teachers, constantly instructing others about the law of Moses and constantly calling others to obey this law.

Reducing any teaching to a summary is always a good educational technique. Even so, good will cannot be assumed without any other possibility. After all, many Pharisees disliked Jesus and would have liked to discredit the Lord's message.

The Lord's reply is obvious. It certainly is no departure from or repudiation of Jewish religious tradition. It echoes ancient and fundamental Jewish belief.

His lesson is to the point. God is supreme. The true disciple must balance every decision against the standard of love for God, uncompromised and absolute. True discipleship also means active respect for every other person since every human being is God's treasured creation.

God's law is one and inseparable. It is supreme. It is a mandate to love others. It cannot be set aside.

Reflection

True Christianity is more than an intellectual assent to certain theological propositions. While the creed of the Church is vital, Christianity is a way of life.

Christianity means a heartfelt, personal choice to recognize God's supremacy. Christianity is more than lip service. It means loving others as God loves them, caring for others and resisting any effort to belittle or exploit others.

First Thessalonians reminds us Christians of the need to bear witness to God's love and justice far and wide.

The message is especially important today in a world in which so many people are used and exploited, indeed even in advanced, free societies.

Free, advanced societies can be very guilty in offenses committed against God and against vulnerable people. Not only tyrannies are at fault.

People in free societies are even more responsible before God since they truly can influence public policy and form the culture.

Christians in democracies not only have the opportunity but, in fact, the duty to show God's love for all people and to insist upon respect for everyone. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Oct. 27
Ephesians 4:32-5:8
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 13:10-17

Tuesday, Oct. 28
Simon and Jude, Apostles
Ephesians 2:19-22
Psalm 19:2-5
Luke 6:12-16

Wednesday, Oct. 29
Ephesians 6:1-9
Psalm 145:10-14
Luke 13:22-30

Thursday, Oct. 30
Ephesians 6:10-20
Psalm 144:1b, 2, 9-10
Luke 13:31-35

Friday, Oct. 31
Philippians 1:1-11
Psalm 111:1-6
Luke 14:1-6

Saturday, Nov. 1
All Saints
Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14
Psalm 24:1b-4b, 5-6
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12a

Sunday, Nov. 2
The Commemoration of
All the Faithful Departed
(All Souls)
Wisdom 3:1-9
Psalm 23:1-6
Romans 5:5-11
or Romans 6:3-9
John 6:37-40

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Catholics must observe moral obligation to vote responsibly

Q If two candidates from opposing parties both have pro-abortion positions, how is a Catholic to vote?



candidate over the other? (Pennsylvania)

A My mail is heavy these days with questions like yours from Catholic voters and some Christians from other denominations who are wondering how to work their way through the moral obligation to vote responsibly.

The question must be resolved on basic Catholic moral principles of cooperation with evil.

In Catholic tradition, there are two kinds of such cooperation—formal and material.

Pope John Paul II defined formal cooperation in this context as "a direct participation in an act against innocent human life or a sharing in the immoral intention of the person committing it" (*Gospel of Life*, #74).

In other words, anyone who cooperates in any way in an evil action because he or she agrees with and intends the evil act is a formal cooperater in the evil. Such participation or intention is never morally lawful.

Material cooperation is an action which may enable a sinful act, but does not directly participate in it and does not concur in the evil intention of the perpetrator. Material cooperation could cover anyone from a nurse who is present at a "mercy killing," for example, to a bookkeeper or someone who scrubs the floor where the killing happens.

Obviously, there are degrees of such cooperation, depending on how close or necessary that individual cooperative act is to the evil being done.

Material cooperation, therefore, is not automatically sinful, but is lawful for a proportionate reason.

What that proportionate reason might be depends on the seriousness of the evil, and would weigh such factors as how important one's action is to achieve a good or avoid an evil and the relative benefits of one option over another.

In November 2007, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops applied these principles to the difficult choices that Catholics have on how to vote: "It is so important to vote according to a well-formed conscience that

perceives the proper relationship among moral goods. A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who takes a position in favor of an intrinsic evil, such as abortion or racism, if the voter's intent is to support that position."

In other words, intending to support abortion or racism would be formal cooperation and a grave evil.

Turning to material cooperation, the bishops continue: "There may be times when a Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position may decide to vote for that candidate for other morally grave reasons. Voting in this way would be permissible only for truly grave moral reasons" (*Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, #34-35).

In July 2004, Washington Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, presenting a task force report to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, cited a letter from then-Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, who was head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, applying that distinction to voters.

A Catholic would be guilty of sinful formal cooperation in evil, Cardinal McCarrick said, "only if he were to deliberately vote for a candidate precisely because of the candidate's permissive stand on abortion."

At the time, as Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, wrote, specifically referring to abortion, "When a Catholic does not share a candidate's stand in favor of abortion and/or euthanasia, but votes for that candidate for other reasons, it is considered remote material cooperation, which can be permitted if there are proportionate reasons." This past July, Los Angeles Cardinal Roger Mahoney was asked in an interview about whether a Catholic could in good faith vote for a Democrat.

Cardinal Mahoney replied: "There is nobody running for office at any level who is with the Church on every single issue. We have to weigh the various goods and consider what's best for our people, and then each of us has to decide who is better going to represent the many concerns we have."

Whether one agrees with them or not, these are weighty authorities whose guidance can be safely followed in such moral judgments.

Their insights can help resolve many questions about conscience formation, which, as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes, is "a lifelong task" (#1784).

Furthermore, all this is simply good traditional ethics. Without going through all these moral technicalities, I believe most people of good will, Catholic or not, almost intuitively use this process for making important moral distinctions and decisions. †

My Journey to God

Expectations

Do we expect our God
To cushion every blow?
What happened to our part—
The prayers we used to know?

Are we aware at all
That there is much to gain
When we accept our lot
And tolerate the pain?

Do we see God's goodness
Though clouds have veiled our eyes?
Must there be a rainbow
Each time we scan the skies?

By Dorothy M. Colgan

(Dorothy M. Colgan is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad. The crucifix of St. Paul Church in Pass Christian, Miss., was framed by broken glass in the heavily damaged worship space in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The parish is located in the Diocese of Biloxi, Miss.)



CNS photo by Greg Tarczynski

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.

BUETER, Betty S., 76, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Sept. 24. Mother of Clara Dixon and Deborah Johnson. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of three.

BURKE, Bridget, 35, St. Mary, New Albany, Oct. 6. Mother of Christopher Burke. Sister of Cherie Branson.

COLLINS, David W., 59, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Sept. 28. Husband of Sandy Collins. Father of Bessie, Brandi, Dolly and David Collins II. Grandfather of three.

DEUTSCH, Rita A., 86, St. Michael, Brookville, Oct. 9. Mother of Bonita Knecht, Melissa Knoller, Rebecca Teece, Marsha, Donal and John Deutsch. Sister of Georgia Cobb, Agnes Race, Viola Stenger, Marilyn Ziegler, Charles and Paul Kunkel. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of 11.

KNIGHT, Eugene J., 91, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 6. Husband of Christine Knight. Father of Mary Hornbuckle, Margie Leap, Jean Raney, John and Paul Knight. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of seven.

LOHMOELLER, David, Sr., 72, St. Andrew, Richmond, Oct. 9. Husband of Linda (Slattery) Lohmoeller. Father of David, Jeff and Steve Lohmoeller. Stepfather of Michael and Stephen Slattery. Son of Al Lohmoeller. Brother of Peg Grove, Fred and Jim Lohmoeller. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of one.

MADDEN, Austin Charles, 90, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Oct. 11. Husband of Delores (Hertz)

Lannan Madden. Father of Mary Ann Kaiser, Jeanne, Jim, John, Paul and Dr. Tom Madden. Stepfather of Becky, Donna, Julie, Kathy, Mary, Suzie, Teresa, Tim and Tom. Brother of Ed Madden. Grandfather of 56. Great-grandfather of 17.

MERRICK, Charles E., 75, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Oct. 13. Husband of Alice Merrick. Brother of Dalene Nordyke, Jim and Kenny Merrick.

MILLER, Jerome G., 82, Holy Family, New Albany, Oct. 7. Brother of Germaine Day, Kenny and Larry Miller.

MOCK, Thomas J., 53, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Sept. 28. Brother of Patricia Jakacky, Valerie Young and Marvin Mock. Uncle of several.

MURPHY, Marie (Kirby), 76, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Oct. 5. Mother of Margo Angelo, Maureen Ward, Molly Kinnett, Michele, Terry, Todd and Tom Murphy. Sister of Tish Brafford, Margot Burke, Sue Leonard, Mike and Robert Kirby Jr. Grandmother of 12.

OHOLOROGG, Thomas W., 59, St. Bernadette, Indianapolis, Oct. 7. Husband of Willa (Schmidt) Oholorogg. Father of Don McInnes, Brenda and Ed

Oholorogg. Brother of Carol Beck, Janice Foddrill, Mary Starnes and Kenneth Oholorogg. Grandfather of two.

PROBST, Dr. Gerald W., 86, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Oct. 5. Husband of Kathleen (Fischer) Probst. Father of Jennifer Connor, Douglas, Gregory and Michael Probst. Grandfather of nine.

SMITH, Mildred Joanne (Walsh), 75, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 8. Wife of Farrell Smith. Mother of Susan Holtz, Lorie, Kevin and Steven Smith. Sister of Charlotte Bray. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of four.

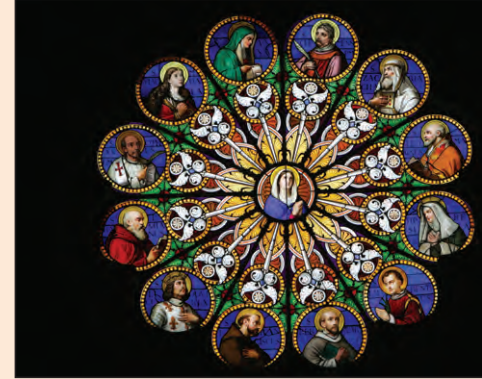
SNYDER, Wilma V., 88, St. Joseph, Indianapolis, Sept. 28. Mother of Kathryn Godwin, Charlotte Martinez and Phyllis Pancake. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of two.

SOWERS, Gertrude E., 92, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Sept. 30. Mother of Dave Sowers.

STRACK, Winifred Ann, 82, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Oct. 13. Mother of Marie Ameis, Peggy Sappenfield, Greg and Joe Strack. Sister of Margaret Maxwell, William and Franciscan Father Sebastian Leonard. Grandmother of nine.

WHITE, Barbara, 70, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Sept. 15. Mother of Deborah Burks, Marla Marks, Danielle and Ross Mullis. Sister of Marydel Moran and Daniel Ross.

WICKENS, Countess, 93, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Oct. 5. Mother of Merilee Andrews. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of four. †



Mary and saints

Depictions of saints surround an image of the Virgin Mary in the rose window at the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome. The Catholic Church marks the feast of All Saints on Nov. 1. The feast commemorates all those in heaven, especially those with no special feast.

Providence Sister Mary Joanita Walsh taught school for 34 years

Providence Sister Mary Joanita Walsh died on Sept. 1 at Mother Theodore Hall at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 99.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Sept. 5 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery at the motherhouse.

The former Ellen Catherine Walsh was born on Nov. 24, 1908, in Chicago.

She joined the congregation of the Sisters of Providence on Aug. 22, 1931, professed first vows on Feb. 27, 1934, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1939.

Sister Mary Joanita earned a bachelor's degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in

education at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

During 77 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered as a teacher for 34 years at Catholic high schools in Indiana, Oklahoma and Illinois.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Joanita taught at the former St. Agnes Academy in 1934 and the former St. John Academy in 1957-58.

She also served as a librarian and did clerical work before retiring from active ministry in 1989 and returning to the motherhouse. In 2006, she began the ministry of prayer full-time with the senior sisters.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †



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Vatican: Stop pressuring pope on Pope Pius XII's beatification

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has asked those supporting and opposing the beatification of Pope Pius XII to stop pressuring Pope Benedict XVI on the issue.

The Vatican statement came after the latest public clash over whether Pope Pius did enough to help Jews during World War II.

Jesuit Father Peter Gumpel, one of the promoters of Pope Pius' sainthood cause, said in an interview on Oct. 18 that Pope Benedict could not possibly travel to Israel until curators of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem removed a photo caption stating that Pope Pius did nothing to condemn the Nazis and their slaughter of the Jews.

Father Gumpel, speaking to the Italian news agency ANSA, said the caption was "an obvious historical falsification" and that, as long as it remained, a papal visit to Israel "would be a scandal for Catholics."

A few hours after the interview appeared, the Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, reiterated the Vatican's objections to the Yad Vashem display, but said it was not a

decisive obstacle to a papal trip.

Pope Benedict wants to travel to the Holy Land, but for now nothing has been planned, the spokesman said.

Father Lombardi emphasized that Pope Benedict has not signed the decree of heroic virtues of Pope Pius, the next step necessary for his sainthood cause to advance.

"That is the subject of study and reflection on [the pope's] part, and in this situation it is not appropriate to exercise pressure on him in one direction or the other," Father Lombardi said.

In recent months, many Catholic experts have expressed their strong hope that the sainthood cause for Pope Pius would be moved forward, after the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes completed its documentation work and unanimously recommended beatification.

At the same time, Jewish groups have reiterated their strong opposition to beatification of Pope Pius, saying it would set back Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

At the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem, the controversy surfaced in 2007, when the Vatican's nuncio to Israel,

Archbishop Antonio Franco, threatened to skip a ceremony there because of the offending photo caption.

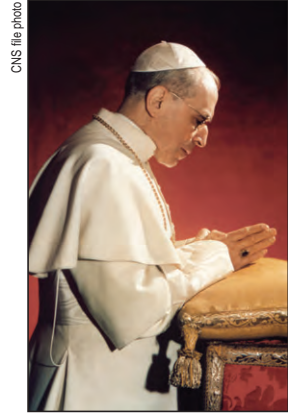
In his latest statement, Father Lombardi noted the Vatican's previous objections.

"It is hoped, therefore, that this be the subject of a new, objective and thoughtful reflection by those responsible for the museum," Father Lombardi said.

The photo of Pope Pius and its accompanying caption were placed at Yad Vashem in 2005. The text states that Pope Pius shelved a letter against anti-Semitism, did nothing to protest the mass murder of Jews, refused to sign a 1942 Allied condemnation of the massacre of the Jews, and failed to intervene when Jews were deported from Rome to the Auschwitz death camp.

Vatican and other Church officials, supported by some Jewish experts, have made recent highly publicized efforts to defend Pope Pius and his wartime record, saying that his behind-the-scenes efforts saved thousands of Jewish lives.

They have said Pope Pius was ultimately responsible for establishing a clandestine



Pope Pius XII is pictured at prayer in an undated file photo. The Vatican has asked those supporting and opposing the beatification of Pope Pius XII to stop pressuring Pope Benedict XVI on the issue.

network of safe houses for people escaping Nazi persecution, utilizing the Church's religious orders, communities, convents and seminaries—and even the pope's own summer residence outside Rome.

At a Mass on Oct. 9 marking the 50th anniversary of the death of Pope Pius, Pope Benedict said the late pope had done all he could to help Jews, working quietly and in secret because he knew that was the only way "he could avoid the worst and save the greatest possible number of Jews." †

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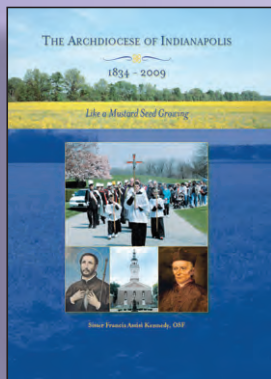
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Making history

Thomas Day is first director of religious education to take sabbatical

By Sean Gallagher

After being a director of religious education (DRE) at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis for 31 years, Mary Jo Thomas Day was tired.



Msgr. Paul Koetter

And who could blame her? When she started her ministry at the parish in the late 1970s, she oversaw a religious education program with eight catechists and 80 students.

Three decades later, the program has 85 catechists and more than 500 students. Thomas Day also oversees a burgeoning children's Christian initiation program that has dual tracks in English and Spanish.

After so many years of tireless service, Msgr. Paul Koetter, St. Monica's pastor, strongly advised that Thomas Day take a three-month sabbatical partially funded by the parish, something that, according to her and archdiocesan director of catechesis Ken Ogorek, was a first for DREs in the archdiocese.



Ken Ogorek

"I was surprised. I asked him, 'Are you serious?' And he said, 'Yes,'" Thomas Day said. "I would never have asked for something like that for myself. I wouldn't have thought of it because it hadn't been done."

"In my 31 years as a priest, I have been blessed with two sabbaticals," Msgr. Koetter said.

"They were rich times of personal renewal, and I can see how they would be the same for our lay ministers."

Although she was making history by taking the sabbatical, Thomas Day was more interested in viewing history and taking it into her soul.

And for a woman of faith like herself, there is no better place to do that than in the Holy Land.

Beginning on Monday of Holy Week in April, Thomas Day was a pilgrim there for 12 days. She traced Jesus' steps during Holy Week, and was accompanied by several St. Monica parishioners and Msgr. Koetter on the parish-sponsored Holy Land pilgrimage.

The sabbatical continued over the summer when she took two weeklong courses on Scripture at the Pastoral Institute of Spirituality at Loyola University Chicago.

During the rest of the summer, Thomas Day read a stack of books and spent time with her family, both in Indianapolis and on vacations in Michigan and New Mexico.

"I came back ready to begin again with 110 percent," Thomas Day said. "When I left, I loved it after 31 years, but I just didn't have that enthusiasm. I came back with a new enthusiasm."

"And everyone told me that I didn't look so tired. I must have looked terrible," Thomas Day said with a laugh.

Ogorek said that a sabbatical for a DRE can benefit both the lay minister and the parish that he or she serves.

"People in catechetical ministry need a deep well to draw from in serving God's people," he said. "And so a sabbatical, after several years of dedicated and successful service, can provide a DRE with an even deeper well."

Amy McClelland, a third-grade catechist at St. Monica Parish for the past four years, saw that firsthand.

She was Thomas Day's roommate on the Holy Land pilgrimage. Now she is seeing how the DRE is integrating her experiences into the parish's religious education programs.

"There's a greater interest in bringing the Bible alive," McClelland said. "We're actually trying to come up with a program for vacation Bible school [next summer] based on our Holy Land experiences."

"That's something that she and I are trying to work on."



Mary Jo Thomas Day, director of religious education at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, kneels down in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and places her hands on the stone of unction where Jesus was prepared for burial. She participated in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with St. Monica parishioners last April as part of a three-month sabbatical. Thomas Day and her family are members of Holy Cross Parish in Indianapolis.

[It's] a way to bring what we saw and how we experienced it to the kids."

McClelland is also grateful that her hard-working catechetical leader got a chance to renew herself.

"It's important for all of our spiritual leaders to have some chance to be renewed and rejuvenated," she said. "I don't know that everybody really realizes how hard they work and how much they give of themselves."

Although most archdiocesan parishes are smaller and don't have as many financial resources as St. Monica, Msgr. Koetter said that, through some creativity, providing a sabbatical for a DRE is a real possibility for lots of faith communities.

"I don't believe the expense need be huge," he said. "Of course, the parish would continue to pay salary and benefits, but with a proper blend of timing and volunteers, responsibilities can often be covered temporarily."

Thomas Day gained a new appreciation for one more thing from her sabbatical—that, at 66, retirement isn't too far away.

"I love the work, but I will know when I'm ready to retire," she said.

Although the sabbatical helped her see the end of the road, Thomas Day said her time off helped her value the time she has left.

"I think that's what I learned, too, in my sabbatical. Be present to the moment and appreciate the moment you have." †

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