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Winning Combination

Coaches savor the joys and help overcome the doubts of their teams, page 3.

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Gabriel Project: 25 years of offering ‘hand up, not handout’ to women in crisis pregnancy

By Natalie Hoefler

Savanna McPherson was a “young—very young” woman in an unplanned pregnancy when she visited an abortion center on the east side of Indianapolis more than 20 years ago.

“I was already a single mother of one,” she says. “I wasn’t sure if I could handle having another child. I didn’t want an abortion, but I felt like my back was against the wall.”

Outside of the abortion center, she spoke with a pro-life sidewalk counselor who told her about an organization called Gabriel Project designed to help women in a crisis pregnancy just like hers.

McPherson credits the organization not only with saving the life of her son, Lance, now 21, but with the very success of her life today.

“They take care of people, of families, of hearts,” she says. “The love and support from this program is one of the

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Photo: Savanna McPherson, right, smiles with Linda Kile, executive director and president of Great Lakes Gabriel Project, at Garfield Park in Indianapolis on Oct. 5. McPherson credits the organization and parish-based Gabriel Project volunteers with saving her now-21-year-old son from abortion and serving as “the wind under” her wings for two decades. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Synod members vote to dialogue with study groups set up by pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Members of the Synod of Bishops have voted to give up one of their few free afternoons to “dialogue” with the leaders of the study groups that Pope Francis has set up to reflect on important questions raised by the synod in 2023.

Paolo Ruffini, president of the synod’s communications committee, said synod leaders received Pope Francis’ approval for putting the idea to a vote on Oct. 5. It was approved overwhelmingly, and the dialogue is scheduled for Oct. 18.

The study groups are investigating questions such as how bishops are chosen in the Latin-rite church, how to improve seminary formation, how to improve relations between bishops and the religious communities that minister in their dioceses, ministry to LGBTQ Catholics and possible ministry roles for women in the Church.

Short videos about the work of each of the 10 groups and a brief report on what had been accomplished thus far were shared with synod members on Oct. 2. Synod officials also said that synod members and any other Catholic could share their perspective or concerns with any group by writing to the synod office—synodus@synod.va—before June, when the groups are due to report to Pope Francis.

At a synod briefing for reporters on Oct. 7, none of the participants would confirm a rumor that the synod vote to dialogue with the group leaders was provoked specifically by concern over the report from the group looking at women’s roles in the Church.

Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and chair of that group, had told members of the synod on Oct. 2 that the question of ordaining women deacons was not yet “mature.”

“The opportunity for a deepening remains open, but in the mind of the Holy Father, there are other issues still to be deepened and resolved before rushing to speak of a possible diaconate for some women,” he said.

See SYNOD, page 2

Archbishop: Encountering Christ in Eucharist, others is central to promoting life

By Natalie Hoefler

Across central and southern Indiana—and across the country—the Catholic Church celebrates Respect Life Month in October, with the first weekend of the month marked by Respect Life Sunday.

The theme this year selected by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is “I came so that they might have life” (Jn 10:10).

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson reflected on that theme in his homily during the archdiocese’s Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 6.

See RESPECT LIFE, page 10

Emily Mingus, a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, beams as she receives the Archbishop O’Meara Respect Life Award from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 6. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)





Pope Francis and members of the Synod of Bishops on synodality pray at the start of their working session on Oct. 8 in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

SYNOD

continued from page 1

Our Lady of the Apostles Sister Mary Barron, president of the International Union of Superiors General and leader of her order, told reporters at the briefing on Oct. 7 that synod members felt the reports were “very short and we wanted to know about what is actually happening.”

And, she said, with some groups—for example, the one looking at relations between bishops and religious—“we’d like to know more about who’s involved and be perhaps more directly involved going forward.”

Sister Mary also said that in the synod, “I find that there are as many men convinced of the need to change the position in the Church with regards to the participation of women” as there are women.

Indian Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai said the issues were not “taken off the table” when the pope set up the study groups in March, but Pope Francis was concerned that synod members would focus so much on those issues that they would not “focus sufficiently on synodality itself.”

The cardinal said he was asked repeatedly—sometimes with “alarm”—over the past several months about the study groups and specifically about the group on women’s ministry and whether the pope set up the groups because he wanted to avoid having the synod discuss the question.

“I said, ‘No, we don’t want to avoid that; we’ve entrusted it into a particular group, but we do not want to focus on that’ ” to the exclusion of other issues, he told reporters.

Members of the Synod of Bishops have also begun looking for ways to make relationships within the Church more transparent and more harmonious, so that witnesses may become more credible.

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg, relator general of the synod, told members that was their task as the second week of the monthlong assembly began on Oct. 7.

While opening discussions about the second module of the synod’s working document, the cardinal said it would be easy for the assembly to “remain on a general level and simply reiterate the importance of relationships for the development of people and communities.”

But, he said, “the people of God are waiting for guidance and suggestions from us on how to make that vision concretely livable.”

The question, the cardinal said, is: “What is the Holy Spirit inviting us to do to move from a pyramidal way of exercising authority to a synodal way?”

During the first week of synod proceedings, members discussed their understandings of the foundations of synodality in the Church.

Cardinal Hollerich said that during the second week, members will “seek ways to make operative today the ecclesiological perspective outlined” by the Second Vatican Council.

The challenge, he said, will be to avoid the risk of falling “into an excess of abstraction on the one hand, and in an excess of pragmatism in the other.”

The cardinal asked members not to be afraid “to draw an outline of concrete proposals that individual Churches will then be called upon to adapt to different circumstances.”

Offering a reflection on the morning Mass’ Gospel reading in which Jesus recounts the parable of the good Samaritan, Benedictine Mother Maria Ignazia Angelini, a spiritual adviser to the synod, said that the story “reveals that the commandment of God is understood through an instinctive ‘seeing’ ” of the other and a call “to surrender to the relationship.”

“The Samaritan is the living symbol of relational transformation,” she said,



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

October 16–25, 2024

October 16 – 10 a.m.

Department Heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 17 – 9 a.m.

Breakfast with Catholic legislators at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 19 – 10 a.m.

Pastoral Planning Listening Session at St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Clarksville

October 19 – 2 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Michael Parish, Charlestown; St. Francis Xavier Parish, Henryville; St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Clarksville; and St. Mary Parish, New Albany, at St. Anthony of Padua Church

October 20 – 1 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of Holy Family Parish, New Albany; St. Bernard Parish, Frenchtown; St. John the Baptist Parish, Starlight; St. Mary Parish, Navilleton; St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyd County; and St. Michael Parish, Bradford, at St.-Mary-of-the-Knobs Church

October 20 – 5 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish,

New Albany; Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine parishes, Jeffersonville; St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg; St. Joseph Parish, Corydon; and St. Mary Parish, Lanesville, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

October 22 – 10 a.m.

Fall Clergy and Parish Life Coordinator business meeting at St. Joseph Parish, North Vernon

October 22 – 2 p.m.

Council of Priests meeting at St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

October 23 – 7 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

October 24 – 10 a.m.

Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 24 – 6:30 p.m.

Mass for National Catholic Network *de Pastoral Juvenil* at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

October 25 – 6 p.m.

Marian University Annual Gala at JW Marriott, Indianapolis

Pope Francis believes in it. So does Ted Lasso. What is your favorite story of the great gift of hope in your life?

The TV series “Ted Lasso” focuses on the story of an American who knows nothing about soccer moving to England to coach a city’s professional soccer team. As the team prepares for the last game of its season as a heavy underdog, Ted gathers the players together and says, “So I’ve been hearing this phrase y’all got over here that I ain’t too crazy about—‘It’s the hope that kills you.’ Y’all know that? I disagree, you know? I think it’s the lack of hope that comes and gets you. See, I believe in hope. I believe in belief.”

Hope has always been one of the foundations of the Catholic Church, along with faith and love. And starting on Christmas Eve of this year and extending until Jan. 6, 2026, the

Church will mark a Jubilee Year that has the theme, “Pilgrims of Hope.”

As we prepare to celebrate this Jubilee Year, *The Criterion* is inviting you, our readers, to share your stories of hope—how embracing hope has helped and guided you in the toughest moments of your life, how others have given you hope for your present and your future, how your faith in God has sustained you and uplifted you in hope during your life.

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

because he forms a sense of relationship that testifies “to God, not himself.”

“We are called by the synodal way to see the other in weaving, complementary

relationships, stemming from that moment in which we are both the Samaritan and the half-dead man,” she said, “saved, pitied and called to be merciful.” †



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Coaches savor the joys with their teams—and strive to overcome the doubts

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

By John Shaughnessy

Even more than striving for the five state championships that her teams have won in the past 11 years, one emphasis has guided Terri Purichia in her 26 years of coaching girls' volleyball at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

"The best part of coaching for me is the relationships I have built over the years with my players and coaches," Purichia says. "It's always been so much more than just volleyball here at Providence. The relationships we make each year are the best."

That emphasis shows in a Providence volleyball tradition that Purichia has established and that she calls "the circle of love."

It's a time when players and coaches get in a circle, link arms with the people next to them and then look into the eyes of their teammates, telling them without words how much they mean to you, how you will give everything you have for them, and how much you love them.

The ritual can often lead to an outpouring of emotion, including tears. But the depth of these relationships can also show in the joy, laughter and fun moments that the players and coaches share.

"A time this season that most reflects these awesome relationships is our beginning of the season retreat," Purichia recalls. "This season, one of the varsity assistants organized a murder mystery dinner for the team. We all got a character to play during dinner. The theme of the mystery was 'Deadwood Saloon,' and the players and coaches all dressed in their best country outfits to reflect their characters."

"During dinner, we interviewed each other, in character of course, and tried to gather clues to determine who the 'killer' was. It was such a blast. Our parents got involved as well because they prepared the food for the dinner. It was such a fun night—and an awesome way to start the season."

'It's great to see them realize they can succeed'

While a coach savors moments of joy with players, there are also times when helping team members overcome doubt and frustration can be just as fulfilling.

Nick Jamell has experienced that feeling this season as the head coach of the girls' golf team at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.



Nick Jamell

"One of my favorite parts of coaching is seeing the kids realize what they're capable of accomplishing," Jamell says. "After working at something and encouraging them, it's great to see them realize they can succeed and fix some aspect of their game or shoot a desired score."

"After a rough start to the season, we went out for a practice round with just our top six. After having struggles all season and confidence falling off, the girls had really started doubting their game. But, in a relaxed environment, with coaches there helping all along the way, they began to turn a corner, scored some season lows, and fixed a couple key pieces."

"We did it again, and the improvement was huge. The attitudes coming off the last green were better, and they seemed ready to play the next round with confidence."

A moment to savor, a team to celebrate

Melba Jackson began to worry, fearing that one of her cross-country runners was about to repeat a heartbreaking finish in an important race.

"Last year, Bradley Hilbers missed



The girls' volleyball team of Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville poses for a team photo this season. (Submitted photo)



Melba Jackson, head coach of the cross-country teams of Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis, left, and assistant coach Kevin Egan pose for a photo with most of the teams' runners. (Submitted photo)

making All Conference by one place," recalls Jackson, the head cross-country coach of Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis. "He was running upfront this year, but towards the end of the race he started to fall back a little bit. He is very consistent, so I got worried."

"Just when I thought we were going to have a repeat of last year, Bradley had a little surge and was able to place in the top 10 and make All Conference. He is one of the kindest humans. He works hard and is an asset to the team. It is a great feeling when student-athletes achieve goals and the team rallies together."

That moment defines coaching for Jackson who thrives on "watching my students grow, change and unlock their potential."

"Nothing makes me happier than to celebrate their victories," says Jackson, who is also a business teacher at Seccina. "Even when there is disappointment, we find a way to learn and grow."

"Our cross-country team acts like a family and always celebrates together. We create memories every meet." †



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

Editorial



Pope Francis prays during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Aug. 28. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

The prayer list grows—for peace in people's lives, for peace in our world

What are you praying for these days? Family, friends, co-workers and your parish community probably top the list.

Like others, you may include the hungry, the homeless, the elderly, the unborn, the imprisoned—our brothers and sisters who many of us don't often see, but we know are in need of our assistance and prayers.

But do you stretch yourself beyond those petitions and allow your prayer routine to evolve?

If you stay up to date with the news on both the national and international level, your prayer list invariably grows each day.

Our prayers and support are still desperately needed for those impacted by Hurricane Helene and its remnants that have resulted in more than 230 deaths in the southeast region of the United States. Some communities throughout the region were decimated and will have to be rebuilt. The storm damage was catastrophic, and it will be quite some time before a sense of normalcy returns. In some cases, that may never be possible. Visit tinyurl.com/CCUSAHeleneRelief to donate to recovery efforts. And as of the writing of this editorial, millions of residents along Florida's central Gulf coast were bracing for Hurricane Milton to come ashore.

The upcoming presidential election on Nov. 5 is also near the top of thoughts for many residents of the U.S. as we decide who will lead our country for the next four years. We are again realizing there is no perfect candidate, but we are still encouraged to exercise our civic responsibility to vote.

As in past elections, we encourage Catholics to peruse the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' document "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" before they cast their ballot. It can be found at tinyurl.com/USCCBFormingConsciences. As the document reminds us: "We bishops do not intend to tell Catholics for whom or against whom to vote. Our purpose is to help Catholics form their consciences in accordance with God's truth" (#7).

While many in society try to go beyond party affiliation and label individuals as liberal or conservative, we need to remind them—and ourselves, in some cases—that our faith as Catholics defines who we are. And those tenets must guide us as we go to the ballot box.

Overseas, we see tensions rising by the day in the Middle East, a more than two-year conflict continuing between Ukraine and Russia, and the Church being persecuted in Nicaragua, among other signs of worldly disorder.

The totalitarian regime of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and his wife, Vice President Rosario Murillo, have continually attacked religious liberty. Beside clergy—including Bishop Rolando Álvarez of the Diocese of Matagalpa, who spent more than 500 days in custody after police arrested him—being exiled from the country, the regime has also forbidden expressions of faith, shuttered Catholic media outlets, cancelled Church charitable projects and halted processions and patron saint celebrations outside of Church property. We must lift up in prayer those in that Central American country who are constantly threatened for having the courage to live out their faith.

It has also been a year since Hamas (a militant movement and one of the Palestinian territories' two major political parties in the Gaza Strip) launched a brutal attack on Israel that left 1,200 people dead and thousands injured. During the siege, 250 people were taken hostage—many who are still being held captive. The tragedy has been referred to as "Israel's 9-11," and sadly, the conflict that ensued continues, with Israeli forces killing nearly 42,000 Palestinians since the attack, according to Palestinian health authorities. As a result, tensions are rising throughout the region. Please, Lord, we pray for peace.

The conflicts are always on Pope Francis' mind and in his prayers. His unwavering commitment as our universal shepherd to bring peace to our troubled world never ceases. In fact, the pope each day calls the Gaza Strip's only Catholic parish, Holy Family, to provide spiritual solace.

During the 38th "International Meeting for Peace" in Paris organized by the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Holy Father again said working for peace in the world must be a priority.

In a message sent to the gathering and read during a closing event in front of Notre Dame Cathedral on Sept. 24, Pope Francis said that "the risk that the many conflicts will dangerously spread instead of ending is more than real," and that he takes up "your cry and that of the many people affected by war, and I address it to political leaders: Stop the war! Stop the wars! We are destroying the world! Let us stop while there is still time!"

As members of God's family, we are called to pray for our brothers and sisters across the globe. In our call to missionary discipleship, we must always remember: faith is not something we do, it is something we live.

—Mike Krokos

Sight Unseen/Brandon A. Evans

There but for the asking

In the Gospel of Luke, a woman afflicted with hemorrhages reaches out to touch the tassel of Jesus' cloak and is healed.



He stops and notes, "Someone has touched me; for I know that power has gone out from me" (Lk 8:46).

It's a curious phrase: *power has gone out from me*.

It implies that while the power of God is infinite, it's also *quantifiable*—like a bottomless river still bounded by its banks; something that could be tapped by mere human hands and measured out by faith.

In the very next chapter of Luke, the nature of miraculous power is taken even further: the Apostles—even Judas—are *given* the power to heal.

It's a shocking thought: ordinary men walking around, the ability to draw out spiritual poison tingling in their fingertips; fishermen and scoundrels choosing who among the incurable would wake whole the next morning.

As Peter would later say in the Acts of the Apostles, the miraculous was *his* to give.

What seems extraordinary to us was an ordinary part of Jesus' ministry. He even harshly called out the failure of his disciples to cure a lunatic—not because such a thing is preposterous but because *he expected them to do it*.

Does he want less of us today?

We live our faith considering that miracles are the exception, but they are not. We are not meant to be resigned to timid prayer excused by the idea that God only rarely wills the extraordinary, or that we're not worth asking for it. We are called to believe boldly—to summon the mercy of God as if it were ours to command.

Christ beckons us to reach into an endless ocean of mercy and bend streams

of grace toward the parched corners of the world: to rush peace into chaos and light into darkness.

St. Faustina Kowalska knew this. The diary of her visions of Jesus bristles with his seemingly endless insistence that we have no idea what his mercy is capable of, and how little we have invoked it.

St. Faustina's power with God came not from her holiness but from her trust in that mercy. Her faith was so certain that she once requested of Jesus an inconceivable miracle: that he save the souls of *every person* who died on a certain day: Friday, Jan. 8, 1937. (*Divine Mercy in My Soul*, #873).

Every person. In the world.

Every sinner and unbelieving soul and flawed human being, regardless of circumstance or virtue or vice. *All of them*.

And, she records almost calmly, he did as she asked because she asked in love and with confidence.

By that measure, being able to command a mulberry tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea is a mere parlor trick.

Jesus' words about mustard seeds and moving mountains are deadly serious, and he expects us to find a way to believe them. It was not hyperbole when he said nothing would be impossible for us (Mt 17:20).

Our ailing world is filled with sickness, war, despair, unreason, cruelty and malice. We nobly struggle to make things right with the work of our hands and the might of our intellect, but it isn't enough. The wounds are too deep, and the task too big.

It's easy to look and despair. How can we expect to heal so much suffering? Or put off the inevitable defeat?

It's true: there is no possible way. But there is an *impossible* way.

(*Sight Unseen* is an occasional column that explores God and the world. Brandon A. Evans is the online editor and graphic designer of *The Criterion* and a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield.) †

Be Our Guest/Michael O'Connell

Are you following God's will?

One of the greatest gifts our Lord gave to each of us is our free will. This gift which we all possess is a gift that can be used for good, or we can abuse it, causing us to sin and fall out of grace with our Redeemer.

As I reflect on my life, I am still trying to determine if I am following my own will or the Lord's will. I know that at times we all try to justify our actions and tell ourselves this is my Father's will, as long as we satisfy our egos and convince ourselves we are doing the right thing.

Many even interpret the Scriptures falsely believing that this Scripture passage means this, so I must be doing God's will. Not everyone who believes they are doing God's will enters the kingdom of heaven.

This brings me to the question we all should be asking and trying to discern in our lives: *What is God's will for me?* Any priest or holy person will tell you this is not an easy question to answer and that it takes prayer, discernment, spiritual direction, an examination of conscious and effort.

In the Scriptures, we read, "Everything is lawful, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is lawful, but not

everything builds up" (1 Cor 10:23).

It continues, "No one should seek his own advantage, but that of his neighbor" (1 Cor 10:24).

In determining what is our will versus what is God's will, we must ask ourselves: *does my freedom of choice align with the Church's teachings and the word of God in the Scriptures?*

Second, always pray to our Lord, seeking his graces and wisdom to determine if you are making the right choice or decision.

Third, why not seek out a spiritual director? God often helps us through other people; it may be a parish priest, a holy layperson or maybe even a friend who is informed in Scripture.

Next, look to the saints and resources that help you to determine what is Godly and follow those examples.

Now ask yourself: what *will* my next choice be and *will* this decision lead me, hopefully, into our eternal home in heaven?

So, what will you do? I pray you follow God's will!

(Michael O'Connell is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters must be signed, but, for

serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Open your mind and heart toward growing in holiness

Today, Oct. 11, 2024, is the 62nd anniversary of the opening session of the Second Vatican Council. Today is also the memorial of Pope St. John XXIII, whose visionary leadership made Vatican II possible.

Pope Francis has warmly embraced the pastoral style of his predecessor John XXIII.

In fact, the Synod of Bishops that is taking place in Rome this month is continuing the teaching of the Second Vatican Council by deepening our understanding and practice of the concept of synodality. By its commitment to themes such as listening, dialogue and missionary discipleship, the synod is effectively implementing the pastoral vision of John XXIII, who is affectionately known as “the Good Pope.”

The theme of the 2020–2024 Synod, “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission,” reflects the spirit and the teachings of Vatican II. The theme of the current session, “How to be a Missionary Synodal Church,” directly addresses the Second Vatican Council’s concern for an openness to the world that makes genuine dialogue possible—despite the significant religious, cultural and political differences that threaten to

divide Christians from each other and from their sisters and brothers who do not share their beliefs.

Synodality is not a new phenomenon. Long before Vatican II, dating back to the experiences of the Apostles and the first Christians, the leaders of our Church have gathered to listen to God’s word, to pray together, and to respond to the opportunities and challenges of their time.

As noted in the *Instrumentum Laboris* (working document) for the 2024 synod:

Growing as missionary disciples means answering Jesus’ call to follow him, responding to the gift we received when we were baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It means learning to accompany each other as a pilgrim people journeying through history toward a common destination, the heavenly city. By walking this path, nourished by the word of God and the Eucharist, we are transformed into what we receive.

The transformation that takes place when missionary disciples open their minds and hearts corresponds to the universal call to holiness that is emphasized in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, especially in “*Lumen Gentium*” (“The Dogmatic

Constitution of the Church,” #39–42).

All the baptized without exception are called to be transformed by the grace of God and to grow in holiness. A Church whose pastoral style is characterized by listening, openness and dialogue promotes the growth in holiness that Vatican II teaches is of primary importance to the work of evangelization.

The life and ministry of St. John XXIII, including his many years of diplomatic service before being elected pope at the age of 76, demonstrate the pastoral style recommended by the council he initiated in 1962. While many examples could be cited from the life and ministry of this great saint, his interaction with Muslims and Jews is especially remarkable today.

Pope St. John XXIII was absolutely clear about his commitment to the truth of our Catholic faith. But he did not hesitate to dialogue with those who do not share our beliefs. His years as papal nuncio in predominantly Muslim Turkey, and his efforts to assist Jewish refugees both before and during the Second World War, were clear signs of his openness to other faiths and cultures.

In a powerful address to Jewish victims of antisemitism, he offered this

statement of repentance:

We are conscious today that many, many centuries of blindness have cloaked our eyes so that we can no longer see the beauty of thy chosen people nor recognize in their faces the features of our privileged brethren. We realize that the mark of Cain stands upon our foreheads. Across the centuries, our brother Abel has lain in blood which we drew or shed tears we caused by forgetting thy love. Forgive us for the curse we falsely attached to their name as Jews. Forgive us for crucifying thee a second time in their flesh. For we know not what we did.

This is the pastoral style that the Second Vatican Council sought to adopt and that the contemporary Synod on Synodality hopes to establish as a permanent way of “being Church” in our dioceses, parishes, schools and other Catholic organizations.

As we remember Good Pope John XXIII, let’s recommit ourselves to the vision he had when he opened the Second Vatican Council 62 years ago. May we be a Church that listens attentively to God’s Word and that has a deep reverence for the truth of our Catholic faith as it extends an open hand to people of all faiths and cultures. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Abramos la mente y el corazón para crecer en santidad

Hoy, 11 de octubre de 2024, se cumplen 62 años de la sesión inaugural del Concilio Vaticano II y también celebramos el memorial del Papa San Juan XXIII, cuyo liderazgo visionario hizo posible dicho Concilio.

El Papa Francisco ha hecho suyo el estilo pastoral de su predecesor Juan XXIII.

De hecho, el Sínodo de los Obispos que se está celebrando en Roma este mes da continuidad a las enseñanzas del Concilio Vaticano II y profundiza en nuestra comprensión y práctica del concepto de sinodalidad. Por su compromiso con temas como la escucha, el diálogo y el discipulado misionero, el sínodo está aplicando eficazmente la visión pastoral de Juan XXIII a quien se conoce cariñosamente como “el Papa Bueno”.

El tema del Sínodo 2020–2024, “Por una Iglesia sinodal: comunión, participación y misión” refleja el espíritu y las enseñanzas del Concilio. El tema de la sesión actual, “Cómo ser una Iglesia sinodal misionera”, aborda directamente la preocupación del Concilio Vaticano II por lograr una apertura al mundo que facilite un auténtico diálogo, a pesar de las importantes diferencias religiosas, culturales y políticas que amenazan con dividir a los cristianos entre sí y con respecto a sus hermanas y hermanos

que no comparten sus creencias.

La sinodalidad no es un fenómeno nuevo ya que mucho antes del Concilio, remontándose a las experiencias de los Apóstoles y de los primeros cristianos, los líderes de nuestra Iglesia se han reunido para escuchar la Palabra de Dios, rezar juntos y responder a las oportunidades y desafíos de su tiempo.

Como se señala en el *Instrumentum Laboris* (documento de trabajo) para el sínodo de 2024:

Crear como discípulos misioneros significa atender al llamado de Jesús a seguirle, respondiendo al don que recibimos cuando fuimos bautizados en el nombre del Padre, del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo. Significa aprender a acompañarnos unos a otros como pueblo peregrino que viaja a través de la historia hacia un destino común, la ciudad celestial. Al recorrer este camino, alimentados por la Palabra de Dios y la Eucaristía, nos transformamos en lo que recibimos.

La transformación que ocurre cuando los discípulos misioneros abren sus mentes y corazones corresponde al llamado universal a la santidad que se destaca en las enseñanzas del Concilio Vaticano II, especialmente en “*Lumen Gentium*” (“La Constitución Dogmática de la Iglesia”, n.º 39–42).

Todos los bautizados, sin excepción, están llamados a ser transformados por

la gracia de Dios y a crecer en santidad. Una Iglesia cuyo estilo pastoral se caracterice por la escucha, la apertura y el diálogo promueve el crecimiento en santidad que el Concilio Vaticano II enseña que es de primordial importancia para la labor de evangelización.

La vida y el ministerio de San Juan XXIII, incluidos sus muchos años de servicio diplomático antes de ser elegido papa a la edad de 76 años, demuestran el estilo pastoral recomendado por el Concilio que comenzó en 1962. Aunque podrían citarse muchos ejemplos de la vida y el ministerio de este gran santo, su interacción con musulmanes y judíos resulta especialmente notable hoy en día.

El Papa San Juan XXIII fue absolutamente claro sobre su compromiso con la verdad de nuestra fe católica. Pero no dudó en dialogar con quienes no comparten nuestras creencias. Sus años como nuncio papal en la Turquía predominantemente musulmana, y sus esfuerzos por ayudar a los refugiados judíos tanto antes como durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, fueron claros signos de su apertura a otras creencias y culturas.

En un poderoso discurso dirigido a las víctimas del antisemitismo, ofreció esta declaración de arrepentimiento:

Hoy somos conscientes de que muchos, muchos siglos de ceguera

han cubierto nuestros ojos de modo que ya no podemos ver la belleza de tu pueblo elegido ni reconocer en sus rostros los rasgos de nuestros hermanos privilegiados. Nos damos cuenta de que en la frente llevamos la marca de Caín y que por siglos, nuestro hermano Abel ha yacido en la sangre que le arrancamos o ha derramado lágrimas por nuestra causa ya que hemos olvidado tu amor. Perdónanos por la maldición que falsamente les atribuimos por ser judíos y por crucificarte por segunda vez en su carne, porque no sabemos lo que hicimos. (“Nos han cubierto los ojos”, *Catholic Herald*, 14 de mayo de 1965).

Este es el estilo pastoral que el Concilio Vaticano II trató de adoptar y que el sínodo contemporáneo espera establecer como una forma permanente de “ser Iglesia” en nuestras diócesis, parroquias, escuelas y otras organizaciones católicas.

Conforme recordamos al buen Papa Juan XXIII, volvamos a comprometernos con la visión que tuvo cuando inauguró el Concilio Vaticano II hace 62 años. Que seamos una Iglesia que escucha atentamente la Palabra de Dios y que siente una profunda reverencia por la verdad de nuestra fe católica que le tiende la mano a personas de todos los credos y culturas. †

Events Calendar

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

October 14

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Madonna Hall, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Confraternity of Christian Mothers**, 6 p.m. Mass followed by meeting, for all Catholic women, free. Information: 217-638-7433, paulabeechler@gmail.com.

October 16

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

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Providence Hall Dining Room, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Memory Café**, 2-3:30 p.m., third Wednesday of each month, for people with early-to-moderate memory loss and their caregivers, beverages and snacks provided, free. Information, registration: events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2873, memorycafe@spsmw.org.

October 17

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road,

Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour. **Seymour Deanery Evangelization Gathering**, 7-8:30 p.m., hosted by the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, all are welcome, free. Information: 317-236-1466, archindy.org.

October 18

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, author and former Indiana Secretary of State Ed Simcox presenting "He Leadeth Me," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Oct. 15. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

October 19

St. Joseph Parish, 1125 E. Broadway, Shelbyville. **Oktoberfest**, 5-9:30 p.m., beer, brats, music, eat-in or drive-through, food

prices TBA, free admission. Information: 317-398-8227.

Cornerstone Center for the Arts, 520 E. Main St., Muncie, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). **Muncie Catholic Men's Conference**, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Pew Ministries founder John Edwards and author Kramer Soderberg presenting, \$50 adults, \$25 high school or college students, lunch included, opportunities for Mass, confession and adoration, register by Oct. 16. Information, registration: 765-288-6180 ext. 110, munciecatholicmensconference.com.

October 20

Monte Cassino Shrine, 13312 Monte Cassino Shrine Road (off S.R. 62), St. Meinrad. **Rosary Procession Pilgrimage**, 2 p.m. CT, Benedictine Archabbot Kurt Stasiak presenting "Mary the Teacher: Lessons from a Mother," includes sermon, rosary procession, Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, free. Advance information: 812-357-6501, khall@saintmeinrad.edu. Day-of information: 812-357-6611.

October 22

Immaculate Conception Church, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Foundation Day Mass**, 11 a.m., Mass honoring Sisters of Providence founders, all are invited, free. Information: events.sistersofprovidence.org, 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

St. Mary Church, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Memorial Mass for Miscarried Babies**, 5:30 p.m., submit baby's name by Oct. 13 to be read at Mass, free, sponsored by Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry. Information, name submissions: 812-212-3463, contactus@covenantresources.org.

October 24

Vigo County History Center, 929 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute. **4th Annual Cheers for Charity**, 6-8:30 p.m., benefiting Terre Haute Catholic Charities, four-course dinner by Edibles Catering & Foods to Go, silent auction, live music, cash bar, \$130. Information, tickets:

tinyurl.com/cheerstix24, 812-232-1447, option 3.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, Priori Hall, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Defenders of Life: A Pro-Life Apologetics Workshop for Teens**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., regional coordinator for Students for Life of America Benjamin Ice presenting, snacks and drinks, activities for younger siblings and parents, RSVP requested, free. Information, RSVP: homeschoolers4life.indy@gmail.com.

October 25-27

Daughters of Charity, 9400 New Harmony Road, Evansville, Ind. (Evansville Diocese). **Come and See Vocation Discernment Retreat**, Fri. 5 p.m.-Sun. noon CT, for single Catholic women ages 18-35, register by Oct. 18. Information, registration: 812-963-7563, sisterliz@doc.org.

October 26

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church.

Information: holyrosary.prolife@gmail.com.

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Polidor 5K Run/Walk**, 8:30-10 a.m., benefitting ALFA literacy program in Northern Haiti, \$20. Registration, information: 812-350-5250, saleeb9287@att.net, tinyurl.com/polidor24.

October 27

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

Monte Cassino Shrine, 13312 Monte Cassino Shrine Road (off S.R. 62), St. Meinrad. **Rosary Procession Pilgrimage**, 2 p.m. CT, Benedictine Brother Jean Fish presenting "Mary the Comforter: In Anticipation of All Souls Day," includes sermon, rosary procession, Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, free. Advance information: 812-357-6501, khall@saintmeinrad.edu. Day-of information: 812-357-6611. †

Wedding Anniversaries

RICHARD AND PHYLLIS (BEAGLE) HELLMICH, members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on Sept. 11.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Greensburg on Sept. 11, 1954.

They have ten children: Sue Nitchen, Vickie, David, James, Michael, Philip, Richard II, Steven, Thomas and Trevor Hellmich.

The couple also has 21 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



CLIFFORD AND JEAN (SIMMERMEYER) MEER, members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on Oct. 9.

The couple was married St. Mary-of-the-Rock Church in Franklin County on Oct. 9, 1954.

They have 12 children: Susan Gigrich, Karen Eckstein, Elene Gunter, Mary Beth Linville, Marla Littlefield, Rosalie Meyer, Andy, Bill, Cliff, Jr., Joe, Rick and Ted Meer.

The couple also has 50 grandchildren and 52 great-grandchildren.



L.H. AND DIANNE (OROS) BAYLEY, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Sept. 26.

The couple was married in Holy Angels Church in Aurora, Ill., on Sept. 26, 1959.

They have three children: Kim Bayley Fisher, Mike Bayley and the late Chris Bayley Bennette.

The couple also has four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



JACK AND ANN (HURON) BRAKE, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 29.

The couple was married in Blessed Sacrament Church in West Lafayette, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette), on Aug. 29, 1964.

They have three children: David, Joseph and Richard Brake.

The couple also has six grandchildren.



ED AND JOANN (BUENING) BURKHART, members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Oct. 10.

The couple was married in Immaculate Conception Church in Millhousen on Oct. 10, 1964.

They have three children: Annette Hunger, Karen and Darren Burkhart.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



MICHAEL AND BARBARA (BEST) GRIFFIN, members of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Aug. 30.

The couple was married in St. Jude Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 30, 1969.

They have three children: Brian, Mark and Sean Griffin.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



GREG AND PAM (LINDEN) CAFOUROS, members of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 11.

The couple was married in Sacred Heart Church in Indianapolis on Oct. 11, 1974.

They have three children: Katie Cafouros, Kari Kite and Kristen Leffel.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



GARY AND SUSAN (OLIVER) OSLOS, members of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 6.

The couple was married in St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 6, 1974.

They have two children: Elizabeth Joseph and Michael Oslos.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



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



The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



Form your conscience to choose the lesser of two evils

In a recent interview on his return to Rome from his pilgrimage to Asia, Pope Francis was asked the following question:

With the U.S. elections coming up, what advice would you give a Catholic voter faced with a candidate who supports ending a pregnancy and another who wants to deport 11 million migrants?

Pope Francis said in response: “Both are against life: the one that throws out migrants and the one that kills children. Both are against life. I can’t decide; I’m not American and won’t go to vote there. But let it be clear: denying migrants the ability to work and receive hospitality is a sin, a grave sin.”

The Holy Father continued, “The Old Testament speaks repeatedly of the orphan, the widow, and the stranger—migrants. These are the three that Israel must care for. Failing to care for migrants is a sin, a sin against life and humanity.”

The plight of migrants and refugees is a major concern of Pope Francis. At every available opportunity, he reminds Catholics, and all people of good will,

that indifference to the needs of migrants is “a sin against life and humanity.”

“I celebrated Mass at the border, near the Diocese of El Paso [Texas],” the pope said. “There were many shoes from migrants, who met a bad end there. Today, there is a flow of migration within Central America, and many times they are treated like slaves because people take advantage of the situation. Migration is a right, and it was already present in sacred Scripture and in the Old Testament. The stranger, the orphan, and the widow—do not forget this. This is what I think of migrants.”

Next, the Holy Father turned to the grave sin of abortion. “Science says that at one month after conception, all the organs of a human being are present. Everything. Having an abortion is killing a human being. Whether you like the word or not, it’s murder,” the pope said.

“The Church is not closed-minded because it forbids abortion; the Church forbids abortion because it kills. It is murder; it is murder!”

Both issues have serious moral implications.

As Pope Francis said in this interview, “We need to be clear about this: sending migrants away, not allowing them to grow, not letting them have life is something wrong, it is cruelty. Sending a child away from the womb of the mother is murder because there is life. And we must speak clearly about these things. ‘No ‘but however.’ Both things are clear.”

So, when confronted with a choice between a presidential candidate who threatens to deport millions of immigrants and another who strongly supports abortion on demand, what are faithful citizens supposed to do? What morally responsible options do Catholics and people who share our moral convictions have in the upcoming election?

Pope Francis insists that choosing not to vote is not an option. We must participate in the political process, or we abdicate our rights and responsibilities as citizens and as people of faith.

“In political morality, it is generally said that not voting is ugly, it’s not good,” the Holy Father says. “One must vote. And one must choose the lesser evil. Which is the lesser evil? That lady

or that gentleman? I don’t know; each person must think and decide according to their own conscience.”

How can we choose the lesser of two evils? We must first pray for wisdom, for the ability to understand what is at stake.

Then we must assess who the candidates are and what they represent. This involves much more than simply listening to what they say on the campaign trail. Candidates too often say one thing and do another. That’s why it’s important to keep in mind past positions and actions, to assess the candidate as a whole and not simply as he or she appears in the present moment.

Finally, we must make a choice. We must trust that if our conscience is properly formed, and if we are acting out of genuine concern for the common good—rather than out of tunnel vision or bias—we will make an informed, responsible choice.

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

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

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

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

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

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

Forme su conciencia para elegir el menor de dos males

En una entrevista reciente a su regreso a Roma de su peregrinación a Asia, al Papa Francisco le hicieron la siguiente pregunta:

Con las elecciones estadounidenses a la vuelta de la esquina, ¿qué consejo le daría a un votante católico que se enfrenta a un candidato que apoya la interrupción del embarazo y a otro que quiere deportar a 11 millones de inmigrantes?

A lo que el Papa Francisco respondió: “Ambos están en contra de la vida, tanto el que expulsa a los inmigrantes, como el que mata a los niños. Ambos están en contra de la vida. No puedo decidirme; no soy estadounidense y no me toca votar allí. Pero que quede claro: negar a los inmigrantes la capacidad de trabajar y recibir cobijo es un pecado y grave.”

“El Antiguo Testamento—prosiguió el Santo Padre—habla repetidamente del huérfano, la viuda y el extranjero o migrante. Estos son los tres grupos por los que debe velar Israel. No atender a los inmigrantes es un pecado, un pecado contra la vida y la humanidad.”

La difícil situación de los migrantes y refugiados es una de las principales preocupaciones del papa Francisco. En cada oportunidad que tiene, nos recuerda

a los católicos, y a todas las personas de buena voluntad, que la indiferencia ante las necesidades de los migrantes es «un pecado contra la vida y la humanidad».

“Celebré la misa en la frontera, cerca de la diócesis de El Paso [Texas]”—comentó el Sumo Pontífice—. “Había allí muchos zapatos de emigrantes que encontraron en ese lugar un final nefasto. Hoy en día, existe un flujo migratorio dentro de Centroamérica, y muchas veces se los trata como esclavos porque la gente se aprovecha de la situación. La migración es un derecho que ya estaba presente en las Sagradas Escrituras y en el Antiguo Testamento. El extranjero, el huérfano y la viuda: no lo olviden. Eso es lo que pienso de los migrantes.”

Seguidamente, el Santo Padre se refirió al grave pecado del aborto. “La ciencia dice que al mes de la concepción ya están presentes todos los órganos de un ser humano. Todo. Abortar es matar a un ser humano. Les guste o no la palabra, se trata de un asesinato.”

“La Iglesia no es cerrada de mente porque prohíba el aborto; la Iglesia prohíbe el aborto porque es matar. Es un asesinato; ¡es un asesinato!”

Ambos temas tienen graves implicaciones morales.

Como expresó el Papa Francisco

durante la entrevista: “Tenemos que ser claros al respecto: echar a los emigrantes, no dejarlos progresar, impedirles llevar una vida normal, es algo malo, es crueldad. Sacar a un niño del vientre de la madre es un asesinato porque hay vida. Y debemos hablar claramente de estas cosas. “No, pero es que ...” No. No hay justificación. Ambas cosas están claras. El huérfano, el forastero y la viuda. No lo olviden.”

Así pues, ante la disyuntiva de elegir entre un candidato presidencial que amenaza con deportar a millones de inmigrantes y otro que apoya con ahínco el aborto como opción, ¿qué se supone que deben hacer los ciudadanos fieles? ¿Qué opciones moralmente responsables tienen en las próximas elecciones los católicos y las personas que comparten nuestras convicciones morales?

El Papa Francisco insiste en que no votar no es una opción. Debemos participar en el proceso político o estaremos renunciando a nuestros derechos y responsabilidades como ciudadanos y como personas de fe.

“En el ámbito de la moral política, normalmente se dice que no votar está mal visto, que no es bueno,” comenta el Santo Padre. “Hay que votar. Y hay que

elegir el menor de los males. ¿Cuál es ese? ¿Esa señora o ese señor? No lo sé; cada uno debe pensar y decidir según se lo dicte su conciencia.”

¿Cómo podemos elegir el menor de estos dos males? Primero debemos rezar para tener sabiduría, para tener la capacidad de comprender lo que está en juego.

A continuación, debemos evaluar quiénes son los candidatos y qué representan. Esto implica mucho más que simplemente escuchar lo que dicen en sus discursos de campaña. Los candidatos dicen con demasiada frecuencia una cosa y hacen otra. Por eso es importante tener en cuenta las posiciones y acciones pasadas, para evaluar al candidato en su totalidad y no simplemente como se muestra en este momento.

Por último, debemos tomar una decisión. Debemos confiar en que si nuestra conciencia está bien formada, y si actuamos movidos por una auténtica preocupación por el bien común, en lugar de por una visión restringida o por prejuicios, tomaremos una decisión informada y responsable.

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

GABRIEL

continued from page 1

biggest reasons why I stand strong today.”

This year, Gabriel Project celebrates its 25th anniversary of helping women in a crisis pregnancy in central and southern Indiana. In that time, more than 15,000 women have benefited from the material, emotional and spiritual support of the 11 parishes and volunteers committed to the ministry.

“It’s as much a ministry of accompaniment as it is resources,” says Linda Kile, executive director and president for Great Lakes Gabriel Project, a non-profit created in 2004 to assist local parish Gabriel Projects (see related article on page 9). “We’re about relationships. We want to empower a woman as much as possible and give her a hand up, not a handout.”

The blessings of the ministry began in 1999 at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus with one Hispanic woman in need of help—and a group of parishioners’ lesson in trust.

A message ‘like the archangel Gabriel’

In May 1999, a member of the Columbus faith community sought to find the most effective parish-based pro-life program. In the process, he learned about Gabriel Project, a ministry founded in Houston in 1973 after the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision legalized abortion.

He shared the information with a small group of parishioners. They liked the concept of the ministry but decided to study Gabriel Project groups in other states for six months before starting the ministry at St. Bartholomew.

But six months was not God’s timeline. Just two months into their research, a young, unwed Hispanic woman in a crisis pregnancy sought help from the parish.

Eileen Hartman, a member of the group who later became Great Lakes Gabriel Project’s first executive director, shared the rest of the story in an April 12, 2002, article in *The Criterion*:

“After we went through this process with her and her baby was born, we finally realized that the whole message of the Gabriel Project is that, like the archangel Gabriel, we bring a message to women that they need not be afraid because God loves them and will help them with their pregnancy.

“We also realized that we couldn’t teach women that lesson until we learned it ourselves, and that’s what God was doing. He was teaching us that lesson and showing us that we didn’t need a grand plan. We needed him.”

Gabriel Project at St. Bartholomew helped 18 women in its first year. People in other parishes heard about the ministry and reached out for help in launching their own Gabriel Project. Today,



A table decorated by Gabriel Project volunteers at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood is ready for a baby shower the ministry recently held for a mom in a crisis pregnancy. (Submitted photo)

11 parishes in central and southern Indiana offer the ministry.

The keyword above is “parishes.”

‘It’s a parish thing’

“When a Gabriel Project launches, the whole parish becomes a Gabriel Project, not just the pro-life committee,” says Kile.

Parish fundraisers, diaper drives and donated items help a ministry provide moms with gift baskets, layettes, baby showers and more.

But Gabriel Project is also “a parish thing because [trained volunteers] can reach out to other parishioners who might be able to help the mom in their own special way, like a car mechanic or handyman, or someone who can teach how to set and manage a budget,” says Kile. “You’re drawing on the resources of the entire faith community.”

Most often, moms in need in central and southern Indiana are put in touch with the nearest parish project through Great Lakes Gabriel Project’s toll-free hotline, with help available in English and Spanish.

“Poverty and financial concerns are what bring most moms to us,” Kile explains. “Especially a woman living paycheck to paycheck or not relying on the father, and especially if she already has kids. Often the relationship with the father is gone. She’s scared, terrified and doesn’t see a vision for herself for how she can provide for a child or another child.”

That includes women like a mother helped by SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood “who was kicked out in the middle of the night, along with her twin babies, by the father of their children,”

says parish Gabriel Project coordinator Donna Kelker.

Or like the mom “who didn’t really have anything but the clothes on her back,” says Kelly Elkins, Gabriel Project coordinator for St. Ann, St. Joseph and St. Mary parishes in Jennings County.

Still, the trained volunteers, called Angels, are the faces—and hearts—of Gabriel Project for the moms.

Practically speaking, Angels meet with the mom to assess her needs. They remain in touch with her before, during and after the birth of her baby, making sure she’s connected to resources she needs. Some help provide transportation to doctor offices and other necessary appointments.

Those are the general duties. But it’s the Angels’ compassion, encouragement and love that become, as McPherson says, “the wind under your wings.”

‘A relationship that gives a bigger picture’

McPherson, a single mother of six children ages 8-23, tears up when she talks about the impact Gabriel Project and various Angels have had on her and her children’s lives.

“There’s been several times where I got help that

prevented what would’ve been a major setback,” she says, from help during a child’s dental emergency to finding a reliable car mechanic so she could go to work.

The emotional support has been just as impactful from each of McPherson’s Angels in the last 20 years. But she particularly cites her first Angel, Kathy Stadler, who now lives in Colorado.

“The encouragement and support and positivity and prayers and love—,” says McPherson, pausing to hold back tears. “I really felt loved by Kathy. I really felt like I wasn’t alone.

“But all my Angels were super. They were like, ‘You’ve got this, keep going!’ When you don’t have that in your personal life, that’s everything. I literally have no support outside Gabriel Project.”

Elkins has found that many moms the Jennings County Angels encounter are lonely.

“They want to make life better for themselves and their children, so they leave old friends and bad environments behind,” she says.

“They can get in a cycle where they think things will never get better. We provide a relationship that gives a bigger picture and can lead them to Christ and put them on a more positive road.

“We help them set goals, help them know that they aren’t alone and just try to encourage them to just be the best mom they can be and let them know God has them where he wants them.”

While some women prefer not to talk about God, “some really do appreciate the outreach and the prayers,” says Elkins. “We can be sometimes the voice of peace, of reason, of hope for these women.”

McPherson is proof of the difference such support can make.

“Linda [Kile] recommended a budgeting class to me, and that’s turned into working with a career coach,” she says. “I work, but just to make ends meet. Now it’s time to look at a career path so I can earn more.”

McPherson credits Gabriel Project with her children’s success, too. Based on an Angel’s suggestion, she sent her three oldest children to Providence Cristo Rey, a Catholic college and career preparatory high school in Indianapolis serving families with limited means.

“Their experience there helped them gain a good work ethic and gave them direction, and now all of them are in college,” says McPherson. “They’re happy and going after what they love, and that always makes you happy as a parent.”

‘We’re the hands and feet of Christ’

McPherson’s story is an example of the long-term effects parish Gabriel Projects and Angels can have.

But most needs are more immediate—especially now. With the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 and the 2023 enactment of a law restricting most abortions in Indiana, the need to help women in a crisis pregnancy is at a critical level.

Even now, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Gabriel Project is helping 10 to 20 women at any given time, says Kelker. And just a year since its launch, Elkins says the three Jennings County parishes’ group has already helped 12 women.

“We’re going to be seeing moms in unplanned pregnancies who don’t know what to do,” says Kile. “Some of them will need extra handholding.

“These moms need the services of a parish-based Gabriel Project. We need to grow the number of Gabriel Project parishes we have throughout the archdiocese.

“And we need more people willing to step up and walk this journey with them, because that’s what we do—we’re the hands and feet of Christ.”

(For information on Gabriel Project, go to goangels.org, call 317-213-4778 or e-mail linda@goangels.org.)†



A toddler enjoys a piece of cake during a party held by Gabriel Project volunteers at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood for her first birthday. Her mom was helped by the parish-based ministry that walks with moms in need. (Submitted photo)

Non-profit helps parish Gabriel Projects, set to re-open pregnancy care center in 2025

By Natalie Hoefler

The Gabriel Project ministry, begun in Houston in 1973 to help moms in a crisis pregnancy, was first launched in the archdiocese at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus in 1999.

Parishes began reaching out to St. Bartholomew team member Eileen Hartman about starting the ministry in their own faith community.

As that number grew, she recognized a need for help in coordinating and supporting the parish efforts and promoting the Gabriel Project mission in the broader community.

Thus began the non-profit Great Lakes Gabriel Project (GLGP) in 2004. Hartman served as executive director and president—the organization’s only paid position—guided by a board of directors.

Linda Kile, a member of St. Ann Parish in Indianapolis, has led the organization since Hartman’s retirement in 2016.

“We’re mostly just referred to as ‘Gabriel Project,’ so I think a lot of people don’t understand the difference between a parish-based Gabriel Project and what the non-profit does,” says Kile.

Following is a look at GLGP’s three-fold mission—and what it takes to make it all happen.

‘Someone to walk beside them’

To fulfill GLGP’s mission regarding parish-based Gabriel Projects, Kile helps interested parishes by talking with pro-life committee members, speaking at Masses and training volunteers.

“Once a parish launches a Gabriel Project, we’re always here for them,” she says of GLGP. “I give them advice and guidance, and we provide financial assistance if they have a need their budget won’t cover.”

Kile works with non-Gabriel Project parishes, too, organizing fund and item donation drives to help support GLGP’s two resource centers for moms in need.

Occasionally, a pregnancy care center will reach out to GLGP for help with women “who need extra handholding and someone to walk beside them in their unplanned pregnancy,” says Kile.

“For example, one pregnancy care center contacted me this year to help a pregnant woman flee a sex-trafficking situation. I was able to find shelter for her and arranged to get her to safety.”

As part of her role with GLGP, Kile promotes the general Gabriel Project mission wherever and however she can.

“I go to all kinds of community events, pro-life events, send out mailings,” she says. “I’m even going to a trunk-or-treat with marketing material because it’s right next to our pregnancy care center property.”

Which leads to a third GLGP mission: operating 1st Choice for Women pregnancy care center.

‘Dignity, compassion and love’

The effort began because “Eileen had a desire in her heart to have a pregnancy care center close to the Planned Parenthood” abortion center on the northwest side of Indianapolis, says Kile.

“She wanted a nearby place for sidewalk counselors to refer women for free ultrasounds, pregnancy tests, material resources and referrals—with the dignity, compassion and love for moms and their babies so absent in abortion facilities.”

With the gift of free rent in an office building less than a mile from the Planned Parenthood abortion center, 1st Choice for Women opened in 2010.

It remained there until a building fire caused its closure in 2019.

“After much prayer, discernment and searching,” says Kile, a home was purchased with cash in 2022 on the southwest side of Indianapolis as 1st Choice for Women’s new location, “an area where the next closest pregnancy care center is 10 miles away,” she adds.

Renovations have since been underway. The new site will offer the same services originally provided and will become the home of GLGP’s resource center currently located at St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis—but with more of a “baby store” than a “resource center” feel, says Kile.

She is particularly excited about a new service the pregnancy care center will offer: free “earn-as-you-go” educational classes for moms.

“They’ll cover everything from prenatal care to parenting, single parenting, finances—the curriculum we can choose from is huge,” Kile says. “As a mom completes a class, she’ll earn points for items in the baby store.”

The goal is for the new site to open in the first quarter of 2025.

Supporting each of GLGP’s efforts requires “a whole lot of fundraising,” says Kile.

To cut costs, she seeks volunteer help and donated items and services whenever possible (see related article at left).

Still, some things just cost money, she says. Marketing material, digital marketing, postage for mailings, utility bills for the pregnancy care center, funds to help parish-based Gabriel Projects, and the list goes on.

“If we could raise \$75,000 to cover operating expenses for 1st Choice for Women, we would be good,” says Kile. “But we also still need \$125,000 for the rest of Great Lakes Gabriel Project’s efforts.”

“And that doesn’t take into consideration that after 1st Choice for Women opens, we’ll probably need more money than prior years.”

Much of the needed GLGP funds are raised at the organization’s annual fundraiser dinner—the next is set



At Great Lakes Gabriel Project’s (GLGP) resource center at St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis, a mom selects a warm winter outfit—displayed by GLGP executive director and president Linda Kile—for her child on Oct. 5. Assisting at right is GLGP volunteer Paula Stahl of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Linda Kile, executive director and president of Great Lakes Gabriel Project, smiles with joy on Jan. 12, 2022, as she holds the keys to the southwest side Indianapolis home the non-profit had just purchased as the new site of its 1st Choice for Women pregnancy care center, slated to open in the first quarter of 2025. (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

for Nov. 7—although “getting more monthly donors would be a tremendous help,” she notes.

But Kile isn’t worried. “God always provides,” she says with serene confidence.

Twenty-five years after launching the first parish-based Gabriel Project ministry, Hartman agrees.

“That’s what happens when God puts his finger on something,” she says. “He brought it about and made it happen, and it’s going to keep happening. I don’t think anyone can stop it now!”

(For more information about Great Lakes Gabriel Project, to register for its Nov. 7 fundraising dinner by Oct. 18 or to donate, go to goangels.org, call 317-213-4778 or e-mail linda@goangels.org.) †

Great Lakes Gabriel Project volunteer needs:

1st Choice for Women

- Client advocates to work one on one with the women coming for pregnancy testing, (training provided)
- Resource Center volunteers to work with women, sort and clean items
- Receptionist
- Client database entry (training provided)
- Scheduler to set appointments for moms coming to resource center

Other

- Event planning team members
- Communications/Social Media coordinator
- Volunteers interested in launching or re-launching a Gabriel Project at their parish (training provided)
- Donation drive coordinator to reach out to churches about material donation drives, baby bottle fundraisers, etc.
- Community outreach volunteers to host tables at events. †

Love is beautiful when lived generously, pope says at Angelus

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Love is demanding, but it is also beautiful when



Pope Francis

a woman and a man love each other fully, “without half measures,” Pope Francis said.

Love is “the beginning of a new life, destined to last not ‘as long as everything goes well’ but forever, accepting each other and living united as ‘one flesh,’” he said, before

praying the *Angelus* on Oct. 6.

Speaking to people gathered in St. Peter’s Square, the pope used the day’s Gospel reading from the 10th chapter of Mark to reflect on love between a man and a woman and on marriage.

Jesus teaches “that woman and man were willed by the Creator as equal in dignity and complementary in diversity” so that they could be each other’s helper and companion, the pope said. But it also is a challenge for each of them to grow.

For this to happen, Jesus

“emphasizes the need for their mutual gift to be full, to be engaging, to be without ‘half measures’—this is love,” the pope said.

“Of course, this is not easy, this requires fidelity, even in difficulties; it requires respect, honesty, simplicity” and being open to confrontation and even to disagreements, he said.

A husband and wife may argue “as much as you like, provided you always make peace before the day is over,” he said.

Pope Francis also encouraged married couples to have lots of children.

“Let us not forget, also, that for spouses it is essential to be open to the gift of life, to the gift of children, that are the most beautiful fruit of love, the greatest blessing from God, a source of joy and hope for every home and all of society,” he said.

The pope asked people to reflect on their love: “Is it faithful? Is it generous? Is it creative? How are our families? Are they open to life, to the gift of children?”

“Love is demanding, yes, but it is beautiful,” he said, and the more people let themselves love fully, “the more we discover true happiness in it.” †

RESPECT LIFE

continued from page 1

Two archdiocesan awards were also presented at the end of the Mass. Emily Mingus of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis received the Archbishop O'Meara Respect Life Award, and Julia Langdon of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg received the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award.

In promoting life, both recipients embody the archbishop's comment in his homily that "no life is a thing or a problem but a person of inherent dignity."

'Seek to encounter the person of Jesus'

The USCCB chose an image of the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance to accompany the Respect Life theme.

Archbishop Thompson explained that the design "reflects the importance of grounding efforts on behalf of life in the Eucharist, while eliciting our response to inherently include respect for the dignity of every person in sacredness of all human life."

The Eucharist is not a thing or an event, he noted, but "a person to be encountered."

Likewise, he said, "We seek to encounter the person of Jesus Christ in others and lead others to a personal encounter with him through our witness of faith."

By such witness, others can come to know not just Christ, but their worth as beloved children of God.

This witness is something all Christians are called to take part in, Archbishop Thompson said, noting that "Respect Life Sunday provides a wonderful opportunity to renew our commitment to the sanctity of life, proclaiming the dignity inherent in every person as created in the image of God."

That dignity begins at conception and ends at natural death. Thus, promoting life spans more than the issue of abortion—and involves more than opposing actions.

"We do not combat the evils of abortion, divorce, euthanasia, racism, sexism, scapegoating, the death penalty and so many other forms of injustice because we are against certain behaviors or policies," Archbishop Thompson said. "We do so because of what we stand for, taking to heart the words of Jesus, 'I came so that they might have life.'"

"This is what motivates our authentic engagement in the various means of advocacy, defense and proclamation of human life."

In closing, the archbishop offered a reminder: "Each opportunity to encounter [Christ] in the Eucharist or the lives of others is a grace moment. May we never take a single such moment for granted."

'Standing for babies, but also for women'

Mingus felt a call specifically to encounter Christ in—and witness Christ to—women experiencing a crisis pregnancy after June 2022, when the Supreme Court overturned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

"I think the beginning was a desire after that decision, wanting to reinvigorate a walking with women and letting women know that the Church isn't just standing for babies, but also for women and their dignity as well," says Mingus, a married mother of two small children.

That desire led to Mingus feeling called to reinvigorate St. Joan of Arc's respect life ministry. She raises awareness in the parish of dignity-of-life issues and events through bulletin inserts and a ministry webpage she redesigned. And she broadened the ministry's scope to examine all issues in society that affect human life, inviting the parish to engage with these issues more deeply.

Mingus' work as music therapist at the Little Sisters of the Poor's St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis informs her promotion of life at all stages.

"I recognized that the Lord was calling me to not just focus on moms as a mom

myself, but also to just really engage with all the areas of life—with the elderly, with mental health, with grief, with loss, with so many different avenues," she said.

'The biggest injustice in our day'

Julia Langdon's involvement in promoting the dignity of all life was inspired by pro-life advocate Lila Rose, who founded the pro-life organization Live Nation in 2003 at the age of 15.

Rose wrote a book in 2021 called *Fighting for Life: Becoming a Force for Change in a Wounded World*.

"I read her book, and then later on I listened to it a couple times because it was so good," said Julia, 17. She listened to Rose's podcast and was further inspired.

It was around that same time that Julia and her family were welcomed into the full communion of the Church at St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg during the Easter Vigil Mass there on April 8, 2023.

"She brought with her a burning desire to stand for all human life, and pro-life matters seem to be a mission for her," wrote parish youth minister Kim Sprague in nominating Julia for the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award.

Sprague noted that, due to the Langdon family's location near the Indiana-Ohio



Julia Langdon smiles as she holds the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award presented to her by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 6.

(Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

border, much of the young woman's pro-life activity takes place in Cincinnati, where she and a group of Catholic youths pray outside a Planned Parenthood abortion center "October through April every Wednesday, rain or shine."

In November 2023, Ohio voters approved a constitutional amendment protecting abortion access. Prior to the vote, Julia worked for Protect Women Ohio, raising awareness of the effects of abortion on women as well as the unborn.

She now volunteers with a Cincinnati Right to Life group, canvassing one Saturday morning a month to promote conversation around the need to care for the life of the unborn.

"I think abortion is the biggest injustice in our day," said Julia. "And I think that it's most important that we stand for those who can't stand for themselves." †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Multifaceted care promotes the dignity of those at the end of life

By Peter J. Colosi

(OSV News)—If you ask people today how they hope to die, many will say, “In my sleep, painlessly and suddenly, without noticing.” Yet, there is a prayer, long forgotten now, that Catholics prayed regularly: “Oh Lord, deliver me from a sudden death!”

When it comes to dying, Catholics used to pray to God for the exact opposite of what many today hope for. Why? What happened?

I think it’s safe to say that most of us Catholics have lost the more traditional sense of a Catholic approach to death and dying. That approach reveals that properly living through one’s dying is one of the most important acts of one’s entire life. So, it’s worth preparing for ahead of time.

As we prepare to enter into eternity to meet God, there is potential for profound depth in prayer and a fuller experience of the sacraments, as well as for deepening, healing and reconciling within human relationships.

In the world at large, there is not merely a loss of the meaning of dying but a death-averse culture in which we hide the sick and dying away from view and simultaneously enact a plethora of laws allowing physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia.

We have turned away from natural death surrounded by loved ones and the sacraments. Instead, we have turned toward abandonment and killing as an acceptable way to leave this world, or to allow others to leave it.

There are many wonderful Catholic apostolates that help others live a truly Catholic approach to death and dying. Yet, for the most part, the Church needs to regain an explicit awareness of a Catholic ethos in this area, as well as a deeper understanding of the immorality of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. In fact, the only way to truly end these tragic practices will be not only by our arguments, but also by our witness, which could show the world a better way.

Euthanasia is legal in a handful of countries, the most well-known being the Netherlands and Belgium. It might surprise some Americans that Canada has also legalized euthanasia. In countries where euthanasia is legal, physician-assisted suicide is also legal. Assisted suicide is legal in nine U.S. states and Washington, D.C. Euthanasia is illegal throughout the U.S., perhaps because the probability of medical malpractice lawsuits is much higher if the doctor injects the lethal dose than if the patient takes it.

The “pro-choice” and pro-life sides are in agreement that physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia are death by deliberate killing. The disagreement between them is whether that should be legal or not. They also disagree on the morality of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. In fact, the moral issues at play are the underlying basis for the disagreement on the legal question.

Some cases of killing have been allowed, but this has always required justification. Traditionally, examples were self-defense, just war and capital punishment, though the latter has been deemed “inadmissible” according to a recent change in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as directed by Pope Francis. Whenever self-defense and just war are justified, it remains nonetheless tragic, and so we strive to avoid them, and it is best if they are never needed.

And so, while tragic, killing people because they are bad and dangerous is sometimes justified. But there is no justification to kill people because they are sick and



Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., who is now retired, is pictured in a file photo blessing a patient at Good Shepherd Hospice Inpatient Center in Port Jefferson, N.Y. (OSV News photo/CNS file, Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic)

weak; doing so is intrinsically immoral and a crime.

The pro-choice side must know that there is no justification for physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, and so they want to remove the use of the term “killing” altogether, so that people’s minds don’t go looking around for a justification and realize the horror of what we are doing.

With passage of a law permitting assisted suicide, a 180-degree shift is achieved—namely, going from a situation in which doctors never use their skills and training to participate in killing patients to one where doctors do participate in killing patients.

After that change, tussling over requirements becomes a relatively minor matter. Proposed restrictions just put a figurative fence around which sick people we have decided to kill, masking the intrinsic immorality of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia in ways that give the appearance of being sensible. But after legalization, the fence is easy to expand and eventually to knock down completely, as the restrictions begin to seem unfair to those who do not meet one or more of them, and one by one they are removed.

This is referred to as the slippery slope, and it always happens.

For example, in the Netherlands and Belgium, euthanasia is now legal for mental illness. In 2020, a widely reported story told of an elderly Canadian woman with no terminal condition or serious pain who, during COVID lockdowns, was legally euthanized due to loneliness.

We must argue for the dignity and preciousness of every person and the wrongness of abandoning any person. We should not allow our shock at the slippery slope in Canada to cause us to forget the very first person who was legally killed via physician-assisted suicide lived in Oregon.

With respect to the ethics of death and dying from a Catholic perspective, there is another error to avoid: overzealous treatment. Since death is inevitable, there comes a time when the disease or physical condition is ending the life of the patient, and at that point it is morally legitimate to withhold or withdraw extraordinary or disproportionate treatment.

This is not to kill the patient, as the disease is why the patient dies. Therefore, this is properly understood as the humble acceptance of the approach of death. But even in this situation, all ordinary care remains morally obligatory.

Ordinary care is care that, if removed, would either cause the death of a patient who is not dying or, in a patient who is dying, would amount to deliberately increasing the speed of their death for reasons unrelated to the disease. Simple examples would be to deliberately discontinue bed care to prevent bed sores or to refuse to give an insulin shot to provide comfort.

The case of Terri Schiavo, a disabled woman who died in 2005 of starvation and dehydration when her feeding tube was removed, is an example of when nutrition and hydration via a feeding tube was ordinary care, since she was not dying and her body was assimilating food and water normally. There are, however, some situations in which assisted nutrition and hydration may morally be withdrawn.

Many people want to know whether there is a list of all the things that count as ordinary care. Abstractly speaking, there is no such list because this will depend on the unique situation of each patient.

This is because, in each unique case, it can be determined which treatments are extraordinary and which are ordinary. Once that is clear, the patient or health care proxy can decide whether or not to remove the extraordinary treatment, but they may never stop ordinary care.

In many cases, it can take careful, difficult discernment and discussion with doctors and spiritual directors to determine whether a treatment is extraordinary or ordinary. As long as the intention is not to kill, but always to care, then the family should pray, discern and then act, trusting God with the final decision. There are many helpful Catholic guides to aid discernment in these situations.

The Catholic view includes the humble acceptance of the approach of death, which is completely different than assisted suicide and euthanasia laws, which are about legalizing the killing of patients with an overdose.

In a place where physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia are illegal, vulnerable people rest assured that everyone is committed to caring for them until they die a natural death, which frees them to die with true dignity, the dignity of a child of God.

Facing suffering and death can be overwhelming. Pope John Paul II wrote about this profoundly and sensitively in his 1984 apostolic letter “*Salvifici Doloris*” (“On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering”). With the advent of modern medicine, coupled with our death-averse culture, we can say that the fear of dying alone connected to machines is a legitimate fear. To address this, we need to re-evaluate our priorities as a society.

A long-forgotten and beautiful Catholic tradition is the “*ars moriendi*,” which means “the art of dying.” It included methods of preparing for a holy death, and it emphasized making the sick person the center of attention, surrounded by family, friends, health care providers and a priest. This is beautifully depicted in many medieval paintings.

We should build a society that surrounds the vulnerable with loving care until they die a natural death—an *ars moriendi* for the 21st century.

(Peter J. Colosi, PhD, is a professor of philosophy at Salve Regina University in Newport, R.I., and the author of the chapter “A Catholic Anthropology and Medical Ethics” in *Catholic Witness in Health Care: Practicing Medicine in Truth and Love*, published by CUA Press.) †



A nurse touches the hand of a patient on May 31 at the palliative care unit of the Clinic Saint-Elisabeth, in Marseille, France. A multifaceted approach to the care of the dying does much to respect their dignity. (OSV News photo/Manon Cruz, Reuters)

Feeling It/Effie Caldarola

Deer in the dusky evening and a renewed commitment to mother Earth

On a dusky fall evening, I take a walk down a familiar neighborhood street.

Ahead of me, a small deer looks my way at the same moment I spot him. Freezing, I realize he's being followed by seven companions. They dash across the street and disappear into a backyard.

I gaze into the yard, where I see a maze of fences. But I suppose deer can easily jump them.

The encounter brings thoughts of the juxtaposition of our natural environment and the challenges it faces. The news on climate change

grows more dire. When I check the local weather, I note how often the day is above normal for warmth. Today, as I write this, it's four degrees above the average daily high. We face melting glaciers, coastal flooding (even when it hasn't been raining), landslides, fires, brutal heat waves.

My town, with walking trails through a beautiful park, is a lovely place. But a major freeway borders one side of town.

To disguise this, an embankment was built and trees were planted. If you gaze down a dead-end street in that part of town, you see lovely homes, a bucolic setting of grasses, trees and, yes, deer. But listening, you hear the continual rumble of fast-moving traffic. It's the sound of

our dependence on fossil fuel, a nagging reminder of our environmental challenge.

We long for technological answers, and, hopefully, some will be forthcoming. But at heart, does not our fate rest on our personal commitment to living a more sustainable and simple lifestyle?

Addressing an environmental conference in 2021, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of the Archdiocese of Chicago said, "I am convinced that it is useless to talk about advancing a culture of life absent a vigorous commitment—both by individuals and communities—to making the sacrifices required for improving the socioeconomic, ecological and political crises of our time."

This includes a commitment by churches and Church leadership. Cardinal Cupich announced in 2023 that the Chicago Archdiocese, including its nearly 400 parishes, schools and offices, is shifting its entire electricity purchase to 100% renewable in 2024.

In 2015, Pope Francis gave the world his first environmental encyclical, "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home." It's a beautiful, thought-provoking call to end the greed and consumerism that threaten our mother Earth. In it, he quotes from other popes—John XXIII, Paul VI, Benedict XVI—who also warned of the dangers to the earth, to the poor and to our children from our unbridled consumption.

The dangerous individualism that we Americans cultivate sometimes makes us forget the poor and the earth itself in our quest for economic growth, success and more "stuff." Are we challenged on this issue from the pulpit?

"This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor" (#2), writes Pope Francis.

The Holy Father chose his name as pontiff from St. Francis of Assisi, and in the introduction to "Laudato Si'," he quotes from the Canticle of the Creatures given us by this saint: "Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. 'Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us ...'" (#1).

Viewed in this light, our buying habits, our consumerism and our wastefulness become moral choices.

We recently celebrated St. Francis of Assisi's feast day on Oct. 4. May we pray to him for the freedom of simplicity and a renewed commitment to our mother Earth.

(Effie Caldarola is a wife, mom and grandmother who received her master's degree in pastoral studies from Seattle University.) †



Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Catholic Charities offers assistance to victims of domestic violence

After immigrating to the United States when she was a little girl, Lucia later met a man whom she thought was a nice guy she was going to start a family with. But he turned out to be a source of physical and emotional pain that led Lucia to feelings of fear, hopelessness and worthlessness.

At Catholic Charities, we see many clients who are survivors of domestic violence, and we provide them with counseling and immigration services to help them overcome a difficult period in their lives.

In recognition of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, I'd like to share Lucia's story. This may be difficult to read, but it provided me with greater insight on the life of those who are abused.

Lucia emigrated from Mexico when she was 6 years old. When she was 15, she met "Jerrod," who showed her he was different than the other men in her life.

He started walking her to class and after getting to know each other for a while, he asked her to be his girlfriend. She said he was so sweet to her and supportive when she told him everything she and her family had gone through when she was a child. Lucia felt like she finally found someone to protect her and show her what love was.

A few months after they started dating, she found out she was pregnant. Jerrod seemed excited and happy about them starting a family together. Lucia's parents were not so happy, so she made the decision to move in with Jerrod.

During the first few months of her pregnancy, Jerrod was kind and loving. He made sure she was being taken care of and did anything he could to make Lucia feel welcomed.

One day, when they were at a get-together with Jerrod's friends, Lucia told him they needed to leave because she was hungry, which made him angry. When he finally drove her home, he slammed on the brakes and started to hit her in the face with the

back of his hand. Lucia reached for the doorknob and was almost out of the car when he pulled her back in by her hair. He hit the gas pedal and turned so hard the door closed on its own. The entire time he called her horrible names and said that he hated her.

This became Lucia's life for the next seven years. Jerrod was in and out of jail, and she was in and out of shelters trying to survive with their three children. She went through so much physical and emotional abuse that she started to believe she was worthless. Her third child was conceived on a night Jerrod treated Lucia like his property. She cried the entire night, and she remembered all the nights she cried wishing it would all just end.

The day Lucia finally left, Jerrod had physically hurt her for the last time. After all the times he hit her, dragged her by her hair, left her to deliver their three children on her own, and sexually abused her, Lucia was finally done. She recalled all the days he told her she was ugly and worthless, and all the times he abused her. Those memories gave her the strength to leave and not look back.

With the guidance of her Catholic Charities' case manager, she is now working on getting her GED in order to attend college and work in the medical field. After years of disappointment, pain and hopelessness, she now sees a better future for her life and the lives of her children.

Lucia knows there are many challenges to come, but thanks to Catholic Charities the challenge is no longer to survive day by day, but to work and strive for the life that she and her children deserve. With counseling sessions and immigration services, Catholic Charities has provided her with new hope and the opportunity for a better future.

Lucia says that Catholic Charities has changed her life, and for that reason she is immensely grateful.

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



The Eucharistic Word/Michael R. Heinlein

Ongoing eucharistic challenge allows child's faith to shine through

I've noticed a pattern lately. Whenever my 7-year-old son presents himself for holy Communion to a minister unknown to him, he is routinely denied the sacrament. I find this fascinating.

He does all the right things. He bows. He makes the sign of the cross. He waits patiently to say "Amen" before opening his mouth to receive the Sacred Host. He looks up, bright-eyed, alert and focused on who he's about to consume. But still he is denied.

I've found myself distracted by the whole episode far too much than it's worth. My heart pours out for the little guy who clearly isn't sure what the problem is and is probably developing a little bit of a complex about the whole situation.

The first time or two it happened, I thought maybe the problem was just his stature. I thought maybe he wasn't showing the proper gestures or didn't seem focused or prepared. But as time has gone on, I've found myself thinking there might be something else going on, and I've been reflecting on what this by-now-all-too-familiar scene manifests about us and our pastoral practices.

Through the years, I've witnessed, during the distribution of Communion, far too many occasions where members of the faithful have wandered off with a Host in their hands. I once saw a father break off a piece of the eucharistic host and communicate his toddler. At the same time, we have public figures receiving holy

Communion week in and week out despite a perseverance in manifest, grave sin.

With all of this happening, why is it that kids are such a concern that we need a priest to pause the distribution of holy Communion in his line just to end a standoff between an extraordinary minister and a young boy just wanting to receive Our Lord's precious body in another line?

Yes, the holy Eucharist is a treasure beyond compare, deserving our safeguarding and protection. We should and must be vigilant to ensure the Eucharist is not abused or desecrated.

But Jesus also says let the children come to me, no? Why would a boy who makes all the right gestures ahead of receiving the Eucharist, with a vouching parent standing behind him—nodding a big "yes" nod—not instinctively be given the benefit of the doubt? Does he pose the threat to eucharistic sacrilege?

Because our family travels a good bit, I have discovered that the problem doesn't center around one parish or one diocese. Instead, it's become clear to me that it's something quite common. But where is it engrained? Is this part of the training given to those distributing holy Communion? Or is it making manifest something that's lacking?

I don't have the answers. But I do have this humble column. So take this as a *cri de coeur* for those distributing holy Communion at Mass, one especially for extraordinary ministers of holy Communion—and those who train them—who in my experience are more likely to say "no" to my son.

Safeguard the Eucharist, yes. When in doubt, verify

licit reception of the sacrament, of course. But, please don't stand there ignoring a little one who presents himself to receive Jesus. Please don't try to propose a blessing if you are unsure why he isn't moving. Perhaps ask kindly, "Do you receive the Eucharist?" if you aren't sure. Do we come up with a universal gesture like arms crossed around the chest—like my 5-year-old daughter does—to indicate a blessing? We've got to find a better solution than, amid uncertainty, turning away one of the little ones by default.

But back to my son for a moment. In the face of these encounters, he inspires me. He stands his ground and doesn't move. He doesn't get bossy or demanding. He waits patiently and attentively. He takes it all in stride, showing a stiff upper lip. He laughs it off, meeting it with his characteristic happy-go-lucky attitude. "I just want to receive Jesus," he says, when I praise his attitude.

I just pray our well-meaning Church doesn't send him the wrong message. I pray we don't somehow damage his spirit.

As we continue down the road of the National Eucharistic Revival, might we also think of the little ones? Of those who we should be welcoming, encouraging and, yes, challenging? I can't help but think that we're taking a step backward in our efforts when a little guy is left standing bewildered at the altar rail.

(Michael R. Heinlein is author of *Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George, O.M.I. and a promised member of the Association of Pauline Cooperators*.) †



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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 13, 2024

- Wisdom 7:7-11
- Hebrews 4:12-13
- Mark 10:17-30

The Book of Wisdom provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. This book came to be many centuries ago as devout



Jews, distant from their homeland and from their religious and cultural roots, attempted to confront the great pressure put upon them by the overwhelmingly pagan societies in which they lived.

Jewish parents worried about their children. It is easy to imagine Jewish youths of this time, rebellious and questioning as are adolescents in any time or place, finding the strict rules of their parents' religion very binding. Whereas the pagans, who lived all around them, followed quite different codes of behavior—and the pagans flourished.

This book is part of a series of books that together compose the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. These writings concentrate upon the wisdom of human reasoning. But they insist living according to God's revelation through Moses and the prophets shows true wisdom.

Often in these writings, as is the case in this selection, wisdom is mentioned as if wisdom was a person. It is a literary technique.

The reading this week maintains that true wisdom is a greater possession than the finest silver or gold.

As the second reading, the Church this weekend offers us a passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Profound Jewish theological themes run throughout this epistle. God is wise. He is the Creator. All people must, therefore, render an account to God.

St. Mark's Gospel provides the last reading. It is a familiar story. A man asks Jesus what is needed for salvation. Jesus tells him to obey the commandments.

The man says that he does this. Then, Jesus tells the man to sell his many possessions, give the proceeds to the poor and follow him. Sad, the man walks away from him.

Jesus sees in the man a deep need to find and be with God. So, Jesus offered the man the key to salvation, calling him to a radical obedience to God. The man should not just make contributions to the poor, as Jewish custom would have required of him since he was wealthy. He should go further and give everything in his possession to the poor.

As the story closes, St. Peter speaks. This is one of the 111 references to Peter in the Gospels. He always speaks for the Twelve. He insists that he and the other Apostles have put aside everything to follow the Lord. Jesus accepts this statement and blesses them.

Reflection

The message of the readings this weekend is fundamental to Christianity. They are intense, wide-ranging, even radical. The story of the rich man in the Gospel of Mark, traditionally seen as being young, is crucial to the lesson of this weekend's Liturgy of the Word. He already obeys God's commandments, but he wants to be with God completely.

Jesus calls him to absolute commitment. It is more than lip service, indeed more than obeying the commandments. It is the total imitation of Christ's own sacrifice, an expression of total commitment to and trust in God.

The man rejects this blunt advice. He cannot forsake what he has of this world's things. Sadly, he walks away from Christ.

In the first reading, true wisdom was seen as being in divine revelation, not in limited human judgment. All things of Earth, including human judgment, are subject to flaws.

The story has wider application if the "rich young man" becomes the "rich man," or "the man." Discipleship is limited to no age. It is not limited to any class of people. It is an invitation to all and a decision for all.

The Gospel reading again reaffirms the place of Peter himself as spokesman for the community of Apostles and reaffirms the Twelve. As the rich man was asked, they had been asked to leave everything and follow Christ. They chose to follow the Lord. †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 14

St. Callistus I, pope and martyr
Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1
Psalm 113:1-7
Luke 11:29-32

Tuesday, October 15

St. Teresa of Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church
Galatians 5:1-6
Psalm 119:41, 43-45, 47-48
Luke 11:37-41

Wednesday, October 16

St. Hedwig, religious
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, virgin
Galatians 5:18-25
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 11:42-46

Thursday, October 17

St. Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
Ephesians 1:1-10
Psalm 98:1-6
Luke 11:47-54

Friday, October 18

St. Luke, Evangelist
2 Timothy 4:10-17b
Psalm 145:10-13b, 17-18
Luke 10:1-9

Saturday, October 19

St. John de Brebeuf, priest, St. Isaac Jogues, priest, and companions, martyrs
Ephesians 1:15-23
Psalm 8:2-7
Luke 12:8-12

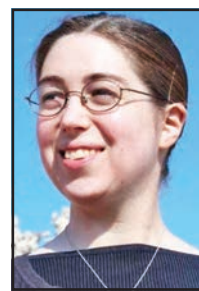
Sunday, October 20

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 53:10-11
Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
Hebrews 4:14-16
Mark 10:35-45
or *Mark 10:42-45*

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Satan's power in the world is limited and ultimately subject to Christ

Q. Why did God send Lucifer down to Earth to live and rule amongst his beloved creations? (New Jersey)



A. I don't think we can say that God truly sent the devil—also known as Lucifer, or later as Satan—down to Earth in quite the way your question envisions. While the devil was cast out of

God's direct presence in heaven, this did not happen because God actively wanted Satan to have sway over his creatures.

We can read a poetic description of Lucifer being forced out of heaven in the Book of Revelation:

"Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The huge dragon, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceived the whole world, was thrown down to Earth, and its angels were thrown down with it" (Rv 12:7-9).

In St. Luke's Gospel, it seems that Jesus himself makes a brief and somewhat mysterious reference to this same event when he says to his disciples: "... I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky" (Lk 10:18).

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* fills in some of the more precise details of how to understand this bit of celestial pre-history, noting that "the Church teaches that Satan was at first a good angel, made by God: The devil and the other demons were indeed created naturally good by God, but they became evil by their own doing. Scripture

speaks of a sin of these angels. This 'fall' consists in the free choice of these created spirits, who radically and irrevocably rejected God and his reign" (#391-392).

In other words, Lucifer was created by God as a good angel, meant to fulfill a properly angelic mission of praising God's glory and communicating God's word. But Lucifer, despite having perfect freedom and insight, nevertheless chose to reject God's plan, and convinced many other angels to do likewise.

These angels' fall from heaven was the natural consequence of their own free decisions to separate themselves from God; it was certainly not, as the catechism puts it: "a defect in the infinite divine mercy" (#393). Their fall was also not any kind of backward evil divine mission, which is why it would not be accurate to describe the devil and the bad angels as being "sent to Earth" by God.

That said, here are a few passages in the Gospel which suggest that Satan is the "ruler of this world." For example, prior to Jesus beginning his public ministry, Satan tempted Jesus in the desert by offering Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world" if Jesus would bow down and worship him (See Lk 4:5-7).

However, the idea that Satan is the "ruler" or "prince" of this world only means that Satan has some command over the passing things of this present life and is thus able to tempt us with the "empty promises" we renounce at our baptism. It does not mean that Satan has any true power over God's cosmic ordering of the universe, time and history.

The catechism echoes this point when it tells us: "The power of Satan is, nonetheless, not infinite. He is only a creature, powerful from the fact that he is pure spirit, but still a creature. He cannot prevent the building up of God's reign" (#395).

And when Jesus refers to the worldly reign of Satan in the Gospel of John, he does so only to indicate that this reign will soon be destroyed. Looking ahead to his imminent passion, death and resurrection, Jesus states: "Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the Earth, I will draw everyone to myself" (Jn 12:31-32).

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

My Journey to God

An Invitation from God

By Benedictine Sister Susan Marie Lindstrom

Journey with Me,
deeply, slowly...
find within a resting place,
a testing place,
a place that only you and I may enter.

Risk with Me,
totally, freely...
discover within a sacred place,
a tender place,
a heart on which I might write
the secret promises and dreams
I hold for you.

Grow with Me,
gracefully, gently...
unearth within a bubbling place,
a troubling place,
a place where you might be free
to listen
and to hear the call to be whole...
to be broken...
to be free!



(Benedictine Sister Susan Marie Lindstrom is a religious member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. Photo: In this file photo from Jan. 7, 2019, a young woman journals while in adoration during the national SEEK conference held in the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.) (File photo by Natalie Hoefer)

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.

BLANKMAN, John A., 59, St. Mary, Rushville, Sept. 28. Husband of Misty Blankman. Father of Jonathon Blankman. Brother of Carolyn Gordon, Linda Leising and Susan Meer.

GRAF, Michele L., 53, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Sept. 20. Wife of Matthew Graf. Mother of Madeline, Mason and Max Graf. Daughter of Judy Allgood. Sister of Mishawn Allgood.

HIRT, Barbara M., 91, St. Michael, Brookville, Sept. 9. Aunt of several.

KESSENS, Rita, 78, St. Mark, Perry County, Sept. 19. Wife of Donald Kessens. Mother of Kim Schaefer, Kandi Weber, Chris and Jeremy Kessens. Sister of Frieda Kessens. Grandmother of nine.

KONECHNIK, Frank J., 74, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Sept. 15. Stepfather of Larry and Michael Ratliff. Brother of Linda Dalton and Nancy Konechnik. Step-grandfather of several.

KONECHNIK, Katherine S., 73, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Aug. 8. Wife of Frank Konechnik. Mother of Larry and Michael Ratliff. Sister of Phillip Bruce. Grandmother of several.

MEYER, Maureen, 91, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 23. Wife of John Meyer. Mother of Kim Siegfried, Marty, Mike

and Pat Meyer. Sister of Tom Leahy. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of nine.

PAYTON, Mark D., 62, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Sept. 3. Father of Chelsea and Jackson Payton. Brother of Diane Mills, Janet Newman and Nancy Simanek.

PELSOR, Pauletta S., 68, All Saints, Dearborn County, Sept. 21. Wife of Bayard

Pelsor. Mother of Audrey and Matthew Pelsor. Sister of Judy Geiling, Rosemary Stirn and Steve Fledderman. Grandmother of two.

SEABROOK, Ellen, 72, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Aug. 25. Mother of Corinne Moore. Sister of Karen Dick. Grandmother of two.

SMITH, Jane A., 68, St. Mary, Greensburg, Sept. 20.

Wife of Mike Smith. Mother of Lauren McCracken. Daughter of Marilyn Moeller. Sister of Karen Buening, Diane Burns, Nancy Ernestes, Jan Haskamp, Marsha Proffitt and John Moeller. Grandmother of two.

SNEYD, John, 89, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Sept. 26. Husband of Margaret Sneyd. Father of Mary Keller, Beth Nickels, Theresa Peterson, Julie Russell and

Andy Standish. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of two.

SORRELLS, Mary Jo, 88, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Sept. 19. Mother of Angie Marshall, Charles, James, Kenny, Richard and Ron Sorrells. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of eight.

TAETSCH, Carolyn A., 80, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Sept. 21. Wife of Robert

Taetsch. Mother of Paula Garza, Leslie Myers and Natalie Sheridan. Sister of Pauline Kinead, Janet Williams and Harold Rose. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 10.

WISMAN, Patricia A., 90, Prince of Peace, Madison, Sept. 29. Mother of Mark, Michael and Richard Wisman. Sister of Susie Kindoll. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of several. †

Pet blessing



Father Todd Goodson, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, blesses pets on the grounds of the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community on Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, a patron saint of animals. Several dogs, a cat, a parakeet and a turtle were blessed during the service. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Parish men's ministry workshop will be held on Nov. 16 in Nashville

By Sean Gallagher

The archdiocesan Department of Pastoral Ministries is sponsoring a workshop on parish men's

ministry that will take place from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Nov. 16 at St. Agnes Parish, 1008 McClary Road, in Nashville.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

effect that a parish men's ministry can have in the faith of Catholic men.



Clayton Nunes

Titled "Brotherhood in Christ: Building a Community of Disciples," the workshop will feature keynote speaker Benedictine Father Denis Robinson, president-rector of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will celebrate Mass during the event.

Clayton Nunes helped organize the event. A member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington, he knows from experience the good

"Life is a challenge and struggle," he said. "In order for us to be the leaders that we're supposed to be in our families, helping bring our spouses and children to salvation, it's important to be able to lean on someone, knowing that there's a larger community."

Deacon Thomas Hosty, director of the archdiocesan Department of Pastoral Ministries, said that the event can be helpful for parishes that already have a men's ministry, those wanting to revive one that's been active in the past or to start a new one.

"This will be a practical workshop that explores what works and does not work at the parish level in men's ministry," Deacon Hosty said. "The workshop

will be led by other men from parishes who lead men's ministry and will provide the nuts and bolts that men can take back to their parish."

He also noted that the event will involve discussion, prayer and music in addition to the celebration of Mass.

The cost of attending the workshop is \$12 per person. Lunch is included. Registration for the Nov. 16 event will close on Nov. 11.

To describe the importance that an active men's ministry can have in individual Catholic men, parishes and the broader Church and society, Nunes shared a quote from Heroic Men, a national Catholic men's ministry apostolate.

"Strengthen the man, strengthen the family. Strengthen the family, strengthen the Church. Strengthen the Church, change the culture," Nunes shared from the apostolate. "And I add another at the end: Change the culture, you live heaven on Earth."

(To register for "Brotherhood in Christ: Building a Community of Disciples," visit cutt.ly/MensMinistry. For more information on the workshop, send an email to Deacon Thomas Hosty at thosty@archindy.org or call 317-235-5804.) †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

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

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

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

Life Chain

Life Chain peaceful pro-life prayer events took place in communities throughout central and southern Indiana on

Oct. 6, Respect Life Sunday. Below are Life Chain photos submitted to The Criterion.



Dan, left, Rose, Michelle, Greg, Isaac, Ryan and Luke Cobb, members of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, take part on Oct. 6 in the Life Chain event in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



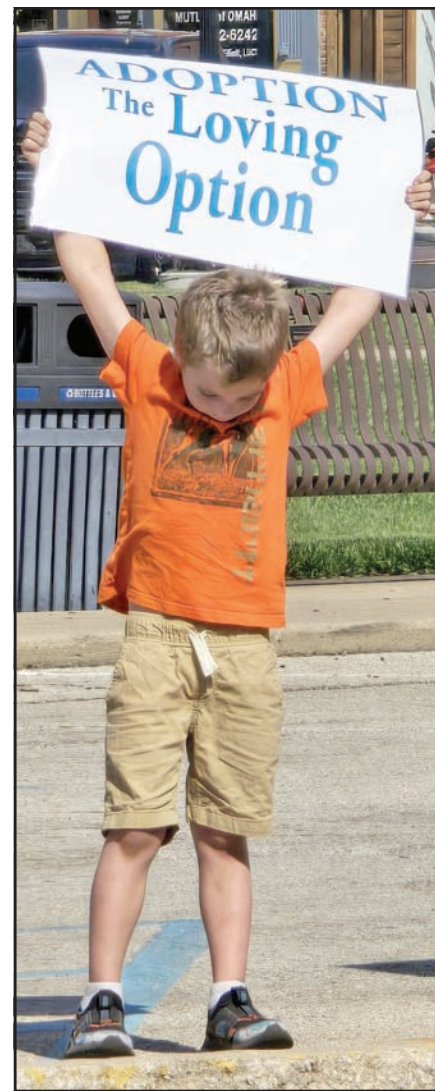
Those taking part in the Life Chain event in Columbus pose for a photo on Oct. 6. (Submitted photo)



Life Chain participants in Lawrenceburg gather for a photo near St. Lawrence Church on Oct. 6. (Submitted photo)



Jim McNulty, seated, and his twin granddaughters pose in front of Tricia Kiszka, left, Kris Taylor, Toni McNulty and Timothy O'Donnell during the Oct. 6 Life Chain event in North Vernon. (Submitted photo)



Zaiden Cool, 7, holds his sign high during the Life Chain event in Greensburg on Oct. 6. (Submitted photo)



Participants join Father Michael Keucher, St. Joseph's pastor, in prayer while holding signs in English and Spanish during the Life Chain event held outside St. Joseph School and Church in Shelbyville, on Oct. 6. (Submitted photo)

Classified Directory

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

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

Employment

ASL Interpreters Needed!

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

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

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

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Statistically speaking: How pope's choices change College of Cardinals

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Popes have made a habit of exceeding the statutory limit on the number of cardinals under the age of 80, but Pope Francis is planning to set a record.

The pope announced on Oct. 6 that he would create 21 new cardinals on Dec. 8; fully 20 of the men named are under the age of 80 and would be eligible to enter a conclave to elect a pope.

With one current member of the College of Cardinals—Venezuelan Cardinal Baltazar Porras Cardozo of Caracas—about to celebrate his 80th birthday, when the new cardinals are inducted into the college in December, there could be as many as 141 “cardinal electors.”

The previous record, set by Pope Francis in 2023, was 137 cardinal electors.

In 1975, St. Paul VI ruled that there should not be more than 120 cardinal electors at any one time.

St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and now Pope Francis regularly exceeded that limit—but usually only by a few cardinals and only for a short time.

With Pope Francis’ new nominations, the college could exceed the limit of 120 cardinal electors well into 2026.

The consistory to create new cardinals in December will be the 10th time Pope Francis has distributed red hats since his election in March 2013.

As the names were announced, nine of the new cardinals were in Rome as participants in the Synod of Bishops on synodality.

One of the cardinals-designate, Bishop Mykola Bychok of the Ukrainian Eparchy of SS. Peter and Paul of Melbourne, Australia, is only 44 years old and will be the youngest member of the college by six years. His nomination and that of six new cardinals in their 50s has nudged the average age of the electors down.

As of Oct. 6, without the new cardinals, the average age of the 122 prelates eligible to enter a conclave was 71 years, seven months and 10 days; if none of them dies by the time the new cardinals-elect are installed on Dec. 8, the average age of the group of electors will be 70 years and five months.

People often speak of Pope Francis going to the “peripheries” for the bishops and archbishops he chooses as cardinals. And he did the same this time. For example, Belgium-born Archbishop Dominique Joseph Mathieu of Tehran and Isfahan, Iran, is the first head of an Iranian diocese to be made a cardinal.

But the pope also put six countries that have had cardinal electors back on the list by naming archbishops ministering in or born in Algeria, Australia, Ecuador, Lithuania, Peru and Serbia. The number climbs to seven countries if Cardinal-designate Bychok is counted twice: once for being born in Ukraine, which currently does not have a cardinal, and once for ministering in Australia, which has not had a cardinal elector since the late Cardinal George Pell turned 80 in 2021.

Therefore, after the consistory in December, more than 70 nations will be represented among the cardinal electors. In the 2013 conclave that elected Pope Francis, the 115 cardinals who entered the Sistine Chapel to vote came from 48 countries.

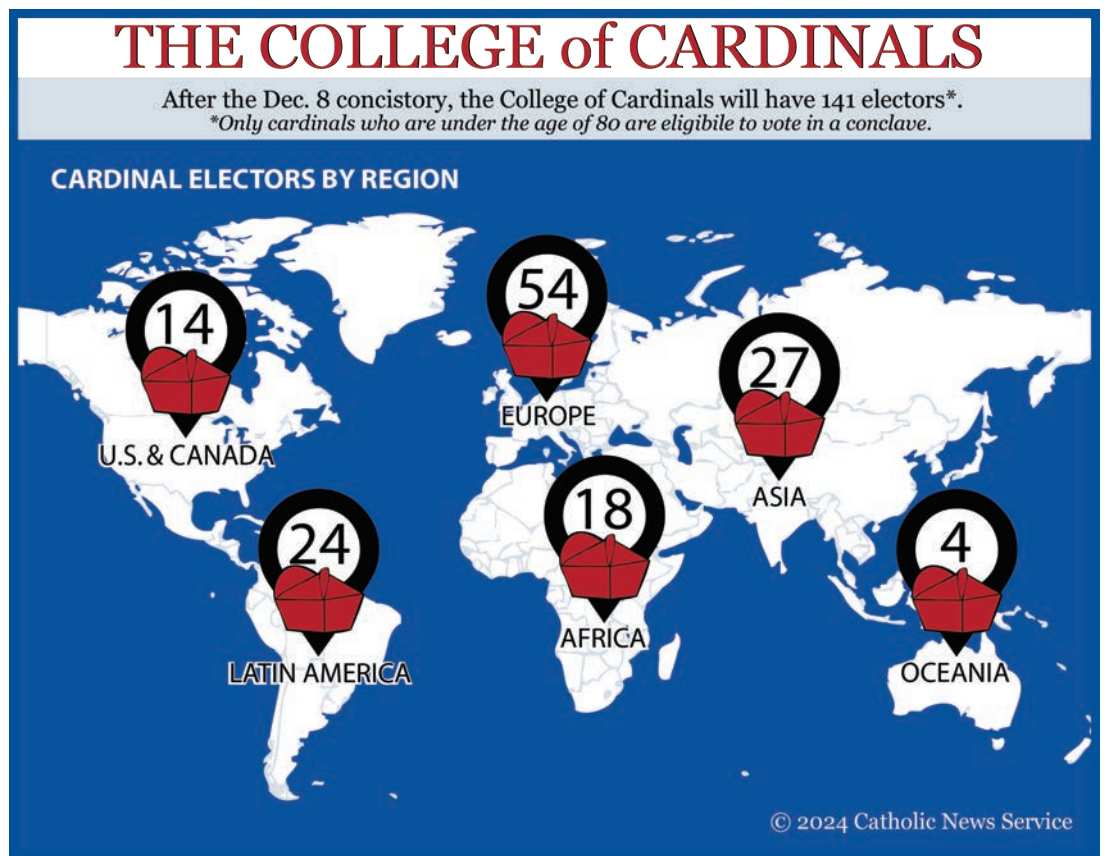
Pope Francis’ choices over time also have ended the European dominance of electors in the College of Cardinals. Even before his new picks receive their red hats, only 40% of the current cardinal electors are European, according to a table kept by the Vatican press office. The addition of the 20 new electors will drop that percentage to just over 38%.

The percentage of cardinal electors from Asia will rise to just over 19%. Latin Americans follow with 17%, and

Africans will make up close to 13% of the electors. The 14 cardinals from the United States and Canada who are under 80 make up about 10% of the electors, and the four from Oceania represent just under 3%.

More than half of the 21 cardinals named by Pope Francis on Oct. 6 are members of religious orders, which will bring to 70 the number of the world’s cardinals who trained and ministered as members of religious communities or congregations. Although neither order will have new cardinals, the Salesians will still lead the list with 11 cardinals, followed by the Jesuits with nine.

Friars following St. Francis of Assisi would lead the list, but they are divided into three families: The Friars Minor will have five members; the Capuchins will have five members; and the Conventual Franciscans will have three. †



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