



Great Expectations

“Never forget that the Church, in fact humanity itself, all the people around you now, and those who await you in the future, expect much from you young people, because you have within you the supreme gift of the Father, the Spirit of Jesus.

“There is a need for young people

who will allow God’s love to burn within them and who will respond generously to his urgent call. I assure you that the Spirit of Jesus today is inviting you young people to be bearers of the good news of Jesus to your contemporaries.”

— Pope Benedict XVI



THE CRITERION'S Youth Supplement

Editor's note: Once a year, the Archdiocesan Youth Council writes stories for The Criterion to show readers some of the activities, concerns and interests of young people who share the Catholic faith.

This year's Youth Supplement features stories that range from how changes in life can bring people closer to God to how Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the United States in April is still influencing the lives of young people.

Members of the youth council represent deaneries across the archdiocese. Their goal is to share their gifts with the Church and encourage others, particularly youths, to become more active in their faith. If you are a

high school student who wants to apply to serve on the youth council, contact the Youth Ministry department in the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education and Faith Formation at 317-236-1477 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1477. †



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Prayer marks youths' conversations with God

By Katie Groves

Special to The Criterion

In today's world, it has become harder and harder for teenagers to admit they pray. Many even struggle with the definition of prayer. I often question it myself and ask, "Am I doing this right?"

The answer to this question is, "YES!"

If you are praying, you're doing it right. There is no wrong way. Just the fact that you are praying is enough. Each person has their own unique way to pray and that is the beauty of it.

"I pray before every class and when I feel a necessity for prayer," says Jay Cougan, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis and a student at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

"I pray in my car on the way to school,"

says Andrew DeFeo, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis.

"I pray usually before a test I don't study for, asking God to help me," says Amanda Federspiel, a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.

Teenagers pray just like you in many ways every day: in the morning when waking up, before school, in the car, before a test, in stressful situations, after school, before meals and before bed.

You're not alone in questioning whether your prayers are good enough. But they are. God gives us the opportunity to choose when and how we pray every day. It is just up to us to follow through with it.

"I do petitions and thanksgivings," says Bren Doyle, a student at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis and a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove. "Sometimes I do it with my family, and other

times just by myself."

"Sometimes I'll end up using music," says Courtney Seiwert, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. "It's neat. The right song just pops up for what I'm thinking. It's crazy."

Just simply saying "Hi, God" is a prayer. We pray subconsciously every day without even knowing it's a prayer. It's not meant to be a show. Prayer is a conversation with God in order to talk and create a close relationship with him.

Prayer doesn't have to be a fancy reciting of written prayers. Those prayers are powerful, but prayer is available at any time and anywhere. Your prayer is up to you. God will always listen no matter when or how you pray.

(Katie Groves is a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.) †



Kelsey Wilson of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville prays before eating her dessert during the trip to New York to see Pope Benedict XVI in April.

Hard times can draw young people closer to God

By Linnea Miller

Special to The Criterion

Many people experience difficult moments in their young lives.

For some, it can be the devastating loss of a loved one.

For others, it can be the trauma of moving to a new city or a new school, and leaving behind familiar places and close friends.

In those hard times, it's natural for a person to feel alone and upset. In times of need, it's also natural for young people to turn to God for help.

Indeed, the stories of three Catholics show the difference that God can make when all seems lost, even drawing people closer to him.

Consider the story of Margaret Miller, a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute. When she was 18, her mother died.

"I was [at] such a young age," Miller recalls. "I had just graduated from high school, and had an elderly father. The

only thing I had left from my mother was my belief in God. God made me accountable for my actions. A priest told me that if I wanted to see my mother again, I needed to live my life as Jesus wanted me to."

That belief continues to guide her.

"I am a strong believer," says Miller, who is a mother now. "God works miracles if you believe in him."

Bren Doyle shares that belief, too, following a difficult move during her young life. A senior at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, Bren remembers how hard it was for her initially when she moved to a new home and her new school.

"My best friend used to live down the street from me and now she lives 10 miles away," says Bren, a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove. "Also, a shocker, I'm really shy. And I had to meet a whole bunch of new people."

Now, she knows the changes in her life have brought her closer to God.

"I went from a public school to a Catholic school and

the environment was so much more accepting of my faith," she says. "It seemed that I didn't have any friends except God at first, but now I would say I have a lot of friends, including God."

The experiences of Margaret Miller and Bren Doyle make sense to Janet Roth, the coordinator of youth ministry at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute.

"I've definitely had some hard times in my life and prayer helps me to get through them," Roth says. "When I have problems, I have a lot of good Christian friends that I can talk to."

Even when she struggles with those problems, she knows God is there for her.

"It's not always easy for me to see God in the moment, but when I look at the situation later, I realize that I could have never worked through it without the love and care of God."

(Linnea Miller is a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute.) †

YOUNG ADULT AND COLLEGE CAMPUS MINISTRY

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult for more information on all of these events, plus more! or call Mary Schaffner, Program Coordinator at (317) 236-1430 or (800) 382 9836 ext. 1430

Theology on Tap

Theology on Tap is a social and educational organization where young adult Catholics meet at a local Indianapolis pub, currently Vito's on Penn (20 N. Pennsylvania St.), and listen to talks about the beliefs of the Catholic Church.

The mission of the organization is to provide those in the Indianapolis area an informal platform to meet and socialize, while strengthening faith through the seeds of the Lord's word. So if you're an unfamiliar face to Theology on Tap and would like to meet fellow young adult Catholics in the area, plan to join the fun and camaraderie by checking out our calendar for all upcoming ToT talks and events.

Fall Theology on Tap Events: a series on Pope John Paul's Theology of the Body

- **November 12 - Porn: X-Rated:** An open discussion about the growing "Culture of Death" through pornography; Reclaiming a "Culture of Life" through purity.
- **November 26 - Marriage and the Eucharist:** Let's Consummate A discussion of how gift of self and communion of persons is most completely realized in each - marital embrace and the Eucharist.
- **December 10 - NFP:** The Trojan War. Hear from a local physician on the beauty and reality of Natural Family Planning.
- **December 17 - Theology of the Body Panel Discussion:** Let's Talk about Sex.

See you at the Tap! All talks begin at 7:00 p.m.

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

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Young Adult March for Life Pilgrimage – January 20-22, 2009

A chance of a LIFETIME! Join us as our Archdiocese sponsors its first young adult trip to Washington, D.C. to our nation's capital to march in support of the dignity of all human life, from conception to natural death. Priority will be offered to our college age students and young adults up to the age of 30.

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

Opportunities for Young Adults as our Archdiocese celebrates its 175th Anniversary

- **Pilgrimage to Vincennes with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein – April 18, 2009**

In conjunction with other pilgrimages of this kind, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein will lead this spiritual pilgrimage to Vincennes Indiana with our young adults on April 18, 2009. This historic city was the original location of the cathedral and home of Servant of God Simon Bruté, first Bishop of Vincennes, which pre-dated the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Pilgrims will tour the original cathedral, visit the crypt church and the remains of Bishop Bruté, celebrate Mass and enjoy a meal, all while taking advantage of the opportunity for prayer, conversion and a deeper understanding of the origins of our Catholic heritage in Indiana.

- **Young Adult Hospitality**

Young adults will act as hosts for the over 30 Bishops from around the country who will be here to help celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation as part of the celebration Mass on May 3, 2009.

Go to www.archindy.org/youngadult

Mass and Run for Vocations – May 1 and 2, 2009

May 1 and 2, 2009, will be the weekend for our second annual Mass and Run for Vocations. Mass will be celebrated on May 1 at St. John the Evangelist Church downtown beginning at 6:00 p.m., and the run/walk will follow the next morning.

For those who don't think they can – or have no desire! – to run the mini, we invite and encourage you to walk or run the 5k, sign up to hold our banner and cheer our runners on, or help out at our hospitality tent so that we have a great representation on that day! While this is sponsored by the young adults, all ages are encouraged to participate in support and awareness of vocations.

Pope's U.S. visit still resonates with youths

By Katie Stergar

Special to The Criterion

(Editor's note: On April 19, 44 youths and six chaperones from the archdiocese were among a crowd of 25,000 people in Yonkers, N.Y., who watched and listened as Pope Benedict XVI shared a message of faith and hope.

Seven months later, Katie Stergar and three other youths on that trip talk about the impact that experience has continued to have on their faith lives.)

Katie Stergar, 17, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis:

"That day changed my life. The Holy Father was telling us that as the youth of the Church we were also the future of the Church. What we did for our Church now would change everything in years down the road.

"I already led the high school youth group at my parish, but I

realized that I wanted to be a part of it in a deeper way. I mean, I led those other high school youths and helped them come to know and understand Jesus, but it never actually hit me what I was doing for those teens. I was leading by example. No matter where I went or what I did, someone was watching me. I was a role model. 'But that means that if someone was always watching me,' I told myself, 'what do they see?'

"So I made the decision to live according to what Jesus taught us. I made the conscious decision to live in a way that when people would tell me that they wanted to be like me, I wouldn't ask why. I would say thank you and move on. Shortly after this, a young girl came up to me and told me she wanted to be just like me. That was one of the scariest moments in my life. I never realized how many lives I had touched until that moment. Pope Benedict XVI brought that to light." †



Youths from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis have fun showing their dance moves as they wait in the sunshine on April 19 for the arrival of Pope Benedict XVI at a youth and seminarian rally in Yonkers, N.Y.

Andrew DeFeo, 18, St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis:

"Whether I realize it or not, I am a leader in the Church and people do look up to me. I have become more of a leader and I am taking charge more at group events."

Andrew also offers this advice to youths: "No matter what, you can overcome any obstacle if you put your mind to it. Silence is golden, too. You don't always have to speak to express yourself or pray. You also need to spend time reflecting as well." †



Even a long bus trip from Indianapolis to Yonkers, N.Y., couldn't diminish the enthusiasm of the 44 youths and six adult chaperones from the archdiocese who made the trip in April to see Pope Benedict XVI.

Timothy DeCrane, 16, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis:

"It was incredible to see how much the Holy Father loved America and how much excitement there was from all the teens that were there. My attitude has changed since going on the trip. Before, when my mom would tell me to go to daily Mass, I would not really want to go, but now I jump at the opportunity to do so. I am also more prayerful since being on the trip." †



Before the arrival of Pope Benedict XVI at a youth and seminarian rally, young people from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis pray in the adoration chapel at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y.

Kaleb Bramer, 16, St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville:

"I learned that we need to take more time to listen to what is going on around us. I definitely pray a lot more than I used to. The trip strengthened me spiritually. I feel I am closer to God." †



Pope Benedict XVI listens as pop singer Kelly Clarkson sings "Ave Maria" during a youth rally on April 19 at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y. A crowd of 25,000 people attended the rally for youths and seminarians.

Sharing talents helps youths deepen their faith

By Michael Kubancsek

Special to The Criterion

For some teenagers, waking up on time every Sunday and attending Mass with their families is enough.

Others seek to make a deeper connection to their faith and the celebration of the Mass.

Wanting a more involved part in the worship community, these youths offer their time and talents in music, altar serving, ushering and distributing holy Communion.

Similar to many teenagers, Justin Hoch has found his liturgical niche with music, singing in the choir at St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis.

"I enjoy singing because it's a way I'm involved in the liturgy," says Hoch, a sophomore at Center Grove High School in Greenwood.

Many parishes have special youth musical groups that perform at weekly or monthly Masses. Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood has just started a group called "JAMZ" under the direction of parishioner Susan Jansen and music director Jeff Havens. They plan to perform once a month at the Sunday evening youth- and young adult Masses.

Other young people get involved more deeply in the Mass by assisting the priest as altar servers. The role and specifics of altar serving vary greatly from parish to parish, especially in the number, attire and duties of the servers.

One special role that young people fulfill is serving as master of ceremonies at weekend and special events Masses, such as funerals and weddings.

Ian Barnstead is honored to assist the priest during Mass. "What I find best about being an emcee is that I actually assist in bringing Christ to people," says Ian, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "It's a role you play in the sacrifice of the Mass. As an emcee, it's my



Choir members of the Greater Indianapolis Catholic Youth Chorale and Chamber Ensemble practice on the first and third Wednesday of each month at St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., in Indianapolis.

job to take care of all the little details so the priest does not have to worry about them and can put forth all his attention on the Mass."

A third important role that young people fill is that of extraordinary minister of holy Communion. Alongside priests and deacons, they distribute the Eucharist to the congregation. Many youths that serve in this role say they feel humbled to be able to literally bring Christ in the Eucharist to their fellow parishioners.

Youths also are happy when parishioners thank them for their service to the worship community.

"We get lots of positive feedback from the parish about how well we do," Hoch says. "It's encouraging and makes me feel good."

(Michael Kubancsek is a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.) †

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Hope, heartbreak meet when youths stand up for life

By Timothy DeCrane
Special to The Criterion

(Editor's note: At 16, Timothy DeCrane is similar to many youths in the archdiocese who have made the choice to stand up for unborn children and pro-life issues.

He has taken part in the annual March for Life that is held in Washington, D.C., every January. He has also kept prayerful vigils outside an abortion clinic in Indianapolis, hoping his presence helps an expectant mother change her mind about getting an abortion. And he has volunteered at Birthline, an archdiocesan ministry that offers supplies and support to pregnant women and mothers of small children.

Timothy writes about the heartbreak he has experienced in his pro-life efforts, the courage it sometimes takes to stand up for his beliefs and the hope he has as a child of God.)

The most profound pro-life activity that I have taken part in is the March for Life. It is amazing to see the thousands of different people from different religions, ages, races and cultures come together to promote the sanctity of life.

It absolutely breaks my heart when I pass the Supreme Court and remember their decision to allow abortion. To see the pictures of the aborted babies, and to see how their bodies are not respected, is very disheartening to me.

I have pro-life views for a variety of reasons. To begin with, we are all creatures of God. He alone is the one who may give and take life when he decides. Man must never decide when life ends. The Church says, and I firmly believe, that the human body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and must be treated with dignity. Abortion treats neither the dead child nor the mother with dignity. It makes them mere objects, and not children of God.

The past two years, I have participated in "40 Days for Life" in Indianapolis. For an hour each week, I peacefully pray in front of the abortion clinic on Georgetown Road. I also participated in the Central Indiana Life Chain, which is held every first Sunday in October. Participating in these events takes courage as some people disagree with my view.

When I work at Birthline, it helps to see that babies are cared for, and that some parents respect their children as much as my parents respect me. At the Birthline ministry, I have helped sort toys, clothing, bottles, blankets and other assorted baby items that will be

distributed to mothers in need. I sometimes get to meet the mothers who need help with their pregnancies. They understand the quality of human life.

Through prayer and sacrifice, I firmly believe that abortion will be ended and human life will once more be respected as it should be. We can ensure that abortion will be overturned by voting for candidates that support life, by fervent prayer and by good example. When abortion becomes overturned, we must continue to safeguard life and make sure that abortion never becomes legal again.

God has a plan for each and every person. I try to live as God wants me to—and support his decisions, no matter how unpopular they may be with the world.

(Timothy DeCrane is a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis and the Youth of Our Lady of America.) †



Jacinta Dela Cruz, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute, shows her commitment to unborn children as she marches with archdiocesan pilgrims during the 2007 March for Life in Washington, D.C.

Women of all ages live their faith through different roles

By Amanda Federspiel and Courtney Seiwert
Special to The Criterion

She could be a daughter trying to make the most of her life and her faith as a teenager.

She could be a mother, devoting her life to her children and helping them live the faith she loves.

She could also be a grandmother, who is

always there for her children and grandchildren, who is still living her life fully with love and faith in God.

The gifts that women bring to the Church are numerous and diverse. So are the callings they receive from Christ. Yet all are blessed by the example of the Blessed Mother Mary.

At 16, Linnea Miller is a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute.

She views her role in the Church as a way to help other youths grow in their faith. She helps train altar servers, and she serves as a lector and cantor at Mass. She lives her role by attending Mass weekly and balancing her busy schedule with a focus on her faith.

"It is a big juggling act," says Linnea, a student at South Vigo High School in Terre Haute. "It is difficult, but I fulfill the role by praying to God for balance."

Deborah Seiwert also knows the challenge of juggling different roles and responsibilities as a woman. A 40-year-old wife and mother, she teaches her three children at home.

As a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, she also guides them in their faith lives, giving them the example of attending Mass regularly and participating in the sacraments.

At 79, Elizabeth Frankewich is a mother and grandmother. She is a member of Queen of Angels Parish in Fort Wayne, Ind., in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese. She views her role in the Church as being a mother to everyone she meets, someone who gives to others without expecting anything in return. She also believes her role is to educate her children and grandchildren about the possibilities that God gives to all of us if we accept them.

The lives of these three women show us the callings that God has for each of us at



Abigail Lilly, a 2008 graduate of Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville, carries the Lectionary to begin the processional for her senior class baccalaureate ceremony, which was held in May at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany.

different points in our lives.

As teenagers, we have many opportunities to serve Christ and others by living our everyday lives with a generous heart.

Those who are called to motherhood have a special tie with God and the Blessed Mother.

Grandmothers represent the teenagers and mothers who have grown up and created a strong bond with the Blessed Mother.

We are all called by God to different vocations, and we all share the oneness in following God's will.

(Amanda Federspiel is a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis. Courtney Seiwert is a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.) †

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