



The Criterion

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See our National Catholic Educational Association Convention Supplement, pages 1B-8B.

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Seven Hoosiers to be honored at education convention

Criterion staff report

A science teacher from the archdiocese will receive a national award.

Another award winner from the archdiocese once led the world's largest humanitarian agency.

And an Indianapolis woman who has dedicated 47 years of her life to Catholic education will also be honored.

They are among the seven individuals from the archdiocese who will receive national awards during the National Catholic Educational Association convention in Indianapolis on March 25-27.

The archdiocese will also have a school, a parish, an organization and two lay governance bodies that will receive national recognition at the convention.

Here is a list of the award winners from the archdiocese:

Annette "Mickey" Lentz

The archdiocese's executive director of Catholic Education and Faith Formation will receive the 2008 F. Sadlier Dinger Award, established to honor people for their outstanding efforts in Catholic education. The award is given by William H. Sadlier Inc. Educational Publishers.

When he announced the award, company president William Sadlier Dinger wrote to Lentz, "Your remarkable work has had a tremendous effect on Catholic education locally and nationally."

Lentz has worked in Catholic education in the archdiocese for the past 47 years. She was a teacher and principal before joining the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Education.

She was appointed executive director by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein in 1998.

She has overseen intense progress in Catholic education with the receipt of a major challenge grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. that resulted in Project EXCEED—a multi-year school improvement initiative that has become a national model. She also headed an effort to organize an innovative consortium of urban schools in Indianapolis, now known as the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies.

Catholic Identity Awards

Five awards will be made to individuals, families, schools or parishes in the archdiocese as a joint recognition by William H Sadlier Inc. and the archdiocese. These awards affirm faith-filled work that effectively demonstrates our identity as a Catholic people. They are:

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

He was installed as Archbishop of Indianapolis on Sept. 9, 1992. The archbishop currently serves as consultant to the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy and as co-moderator of the Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic International Dialogue. He has also been a leader in the efforts of the U.S. bishops to bring religion textbooks into conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

During his 15 years in Indianapolis, Archbishop Buechlein has provided strong support to our Catholic schools with a special devotion to maintaining a Catholic

presence in the Indianapolis center city.

James and Jackie Morris

Individually and as a married couple, James and Jackie Morris have made their mark on Catholic education and faith-filled leadership.

James Morris currently serves as special adviser to the chief executive officer and president for Pacers Sports and Entertainment in Indianapolis. Previously, he spent five years as the executive director for the United Nations World Food Programme, where he oversaw the world's largest humanitarian agency. He has spent more than 35 years in leadership roles in business, philanthropic and humanitarian ventures along with a personal life of public service and volunteerism.

Jackie Morris is a volunteer teacher at St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis, was appointed to the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies board of directors, and is a member of St. Margaret's Guild, the Children's Museum Guild and the Day Nursery Auxiliary. She served as a longtime trustee on the board of Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis.

St. Mary School in North Vernon

Since 1865, St. Mary School in North Vernon has created a rich Catholic tradition that focuses on moral values, academic excellence and spiritual, Christ-centered faith development. There is a strong partnership between parents, school, parish and community.

The school's principal, Franciscan Sister Joanita Koors, serves on the special education committee of the Jennings County School Corporation. St. Mary School received a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education in 2004.

St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis

This parish is an open and diverse community of faith which exists to love and serve God, members of the parish, St. Joan of Arc School and the neighborhood through prayer, worship, evangelization, outreach, education and stewardship.

Under the leadership of Father Guy Roberts, pastor, and school principal, Mary Pat Sharpe, this center city parish has become revitalized in recent years.

The Guardian Angel Guild of Indianapolis

This organization was founded in 1959 to financially support resource programs and resource teachers serving special needs populations in the archdiocese. The guild has been an "angel" to St. Mary's Child Center and to elementary and high schools throughout the archdiocese. The guild works closely with the Office of Catholic Education to help best serve students with special needs. They are truly angels as they live their motto: "Assisting God's children with developmental disabilities to reach their potential."

Susan McGregor

A science teacher at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis, McGregor is one of 12 teachers from across the nation to receive

Welcome, Catholic educators!

In this week's issue of *The Criterion*, we are including a special B section welcoming the thousands who are attending the annual National Catholic Educational Association Convention on March 25-27.

It's the first time in the 105-year history of the association that the convention will be held in Indianapolis.

This year's convention theme is "At the Crossroads: Where Challenge Meets Opportunity."

More than 400 workshops and 500 educational exhibits will be available at the convention, which will be held at the Indiana Convention Center. The convention is open to anyone who works in or is interested in Catholic education, including teachers, clergy, administrators, parents and students.

(Details for all local events can be found at www.archindy.org/ncea or at the local hospitality booth at the convention.) †

NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION CONVENTION
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...Welcome educators to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

the 2008 NCEA Distinguished Teacher Award from the NCEA Department of Elementary Schools.

McGregor has taught in various Catholic schools in Indiana, including the last 25 years in the archdiocese. With a strong belief that Catholic education is rooted in the examples of Jesus, McGregor states, "We are called to provide students with more than a curriculum. As teachers, we help students appreciate the gifts [that] God has given them and help them to communicate that appreciation to God in prayer."

"Susan exudes the professionalism that is so important when working with colleagues and the adolescents she meets each day," says Kathleen Wright, principal of St. Simon School.

E. Jo Hoy

The principal at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis will receive a Catholic Secondary Education Award from the NCEA Department of Secondary Schools, recognizing her distinguished service to Catholic education.

She was nominated by Ritter's president, Paul Lockard.

"Mrs. Jo Hoy's leadership has been significant in the renaissance of Cardinal Ritter High School," Lockard says. "The mission of the school is to serve a diverse student body to achieve their academic, spiritual, social and physical potential. As a Hispanic, she has embraced the understanding that students of diverse backgrounds need the opportunity to interact in a safe, caring manner, but also in an environment of high expectations. She is an outstanding and deserving leader in Catholic education."

She helped start a program of Everyday Spanish for police officers, teachers and other public workers with Marian College in Indianapolis, where she also teaches classes. Enrollment at Cardinal Ritter has risen from 380 students to 540 students during her tenure.

Board of Trustees at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville and St. Luke Parish School Commission in Indianapolis

These two lay governance bodies will be recipients of the Outstanding Board Award from the NCEA Department of Boards and Councils. The awards seek to honor and showcase examples of outstanding boards, commissions and councils of Catholic Education that serve schools, (arch)dioceses or parish education programs so that their stories may inspire others to excellence.

Ann G. Northam

The director of religious education at St. Augustine and Sacred Heart of Jesus parishes in Jeffersonville will receive the Mustard Seed Award given by the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors at their convocation.

The NPCD recognizes Northam's commitment and dedication to children's faith formation as invaluable to the work of the Church in spreading the Gospel.

Northam has been the director of religious education at St. Augustine Parish for the past 23 years. In July, she also became the director of religious education at the sister parish in Jeffersonville, Sacred Heart. The two parishes also share a pastor.

The nomination cited the many programs that Northam has sponsored for faith formation, including a family book club, the Living Rosary, Advent Fair and the Blessing of the Palms. †

On the cover

The risen Christ is portrayed in a window at St. Mary Cathedral in Killarney, Ireland. Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, is on March 23 in the Latin rite this year. (CNS photo/Crosiers)



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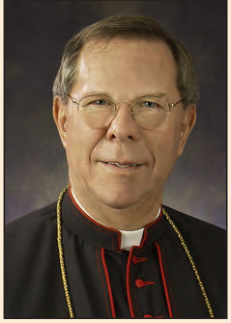
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Archbishop Buechlein says cancer treatment prognosis is positive

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I can't tell you how much I miss being out in our parishes and at the Catholic Center, especially at this holy time. I pray that you all may enjoy God's choicest blessings for the Holy Triduum and the great Easter Solemnity!



I want to provide you with an update on the status of my treatment for Hodgkin's lymphoma now that my medical treatment is well under way.

The fourth of six chemotherapy treatments was completed on March 14. The side effects of the chemo have resulted in the curtailing of my public pastoral ministry. This is largely due to the fact that my white blood cell count is extremely low and my immune system has been weakened. The oncology staff urges me to avoid public interaction for the time being because of the danger of serious infection. I was told that infection would mean hospitalization.

After two more chemotherapy treatments, concluding in April or early May, there will

follow a month of daily radiation treatments. In summary, according to my oncologist and staff, my prognosis is completely positive. If there are no unforeseen developments, I should be back "full force" in August or September. I plan to celebrate the priesthood ordination on June 7 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, and I hope to attend the upcoming Priest Convocation at Saint Meinrad.

I would be remiss if I did not thank all of you for your understanding and for carrying on our mission for Christ so well that pastoral life seems to go on as usual. The cancer and accompanying consequences have, in fact, given me a wholesome spiritual pause and a time of special grace in this Lenten season. Your response and that of so many others has been overwhelming and humbling. Thank you so much for your prayerful support and encouragement.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Buechlein, D.

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis
March 15, 2008

Archdiocese to purchase Carmelite monastery property for college seminary

By Sean Gallagher

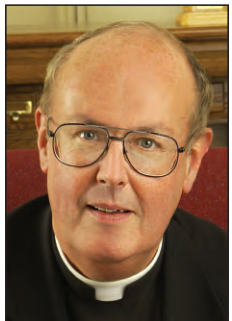
For the past three and a half years, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary has been based on the campus of Marian College in Indianapolis.

But at the start of the next academic year in August, the archdiocesan college seminary and its seminarians will have a new home just a mile away.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has agreed to purchase the facilities and the 17 acres belonging to the Carmel of the Resurrection, a community of Carmelite nuns who have lived in their monastery at 2500 Cold Spring Road in Indianapolis since 1932.

In recent years, the community, currently numbering 10 nuns, has found it increasingly difficult to manage the upkeep of their monastery and decided to move to the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg, where they will have their own building.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, sees the upcoming transition in the use of



Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel

the facilities as fitting into its long history.

"Those sisters have been a powerhouse of prayer for the local Church in the archdiocese," he said. "Every day, they have been praying for the archdiocese. And I know good and well every day they pray for priests."

"And so this kind of fits right in that this space will continue to be part of the life of the archdiocese. It will continue to be a place of prayer and study and formation for future ministers—in this case, for priests."

In a letter sent to supporters of her community, Carmelite Sister Jean Alice McGoff, prioress of the Carmel of the



Sr. Jean Jean Alice McGoff, O.C.D.

Resurrection, said that "this use of the property fulfills our dream that the monastery be used for a religious purpose and the building kept intact."

Terms of the sale are pending, but they are expected to be finalized in the next two months.

The seminarians will continue to take classes at Marian College.

A work of Providence

Msgr. Schaedel sees the emergence of the opportunity to purchase the monastery in a providential light.

Last October, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein met with the seminary's administrators, a board of priests who help draw up

its policies, and other archdiocesan leaders to discuss the seminary's future.

All agreed that the college seminary had been successful in its first three years in forming future priests, but archdiocesan leaders felt that the seminary needs to have a facility of its own, which would be a priority in the years to come.

Currently, 18 seminarians from the archdiocese and three other dioceses reside and receive formation within a larger dormitory on Marian's campus, where other students also live.

At the same time that discussions were happening about how this separate facility could become a reality, Sister Jean Alice met with Msgr. Schaedel to talk with him about her community's desire to move.

An agreement between the archdiocese and the Carmelites regarding the sale was made in the months that followed.

"I think Providence was definitely at work in it," Msgr. Schaedel said. "It just came at the perfect time."

Msgr. Schaedel said that other options to establish a separate facility for Bishop Bruté College Seminary would have involved a greater financial investment by the archdiocese than purchasing and renovating the Carmelite monastery.

"Whatever we need to do to bring this building up to snuff for a seminary is certainly going to be less than we would have spent otherwise," he said.

A place of their own

Father Robert Robeson, rector of the Bishop Bruté College Seminary, said that having a place that is truly home will foster a greater sense of community among the seminarians.

"Community life is going to be much more vibrant within the seminary," Father Robeson said. "[The

seminarians] are going to have more responsibility for their property and their home."

"They're not going to be living in a rented space owned by somebody else. They're going to be living in their own home."

The additional space in the new facilities will also allow formation conferences to be given in a manner that is geared more for individual classes rather than for the community as a whole, which has been happening, in part, because of space constraints.

Father Robeson also said that the separate facilities for the seminary will help increase the role that it has served in the life of the archdiocese.

"The Church of central and southern Indiana will be much more instrumental in playing a part in the formation of our seminarians," he said. "And they have already. People know the seminarians."

Submitted photo



The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has agreed to purchase the Carmelite Monastery of the Resurrection, the home of a community of 10 Carmelite nuns in Indianapolis. The monastery will become the new home of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary. The seminarians will continue to take classes at Marian College, which is one mile north of the monastery.

Preserving a tradition of prayer

Father Robeson respects the tradition of prayer that has been carried on at the monastery for more than 75 years.

"We're inheriting an environment that's steeped in the Carmelite tradition," he said. "And that's something that I certainly want to honor. [I'll] do my best to make sure that we appreciate and continue to advance the Carmelite charism."

Father Robeson said that relocating the seminary from Marian's campus to a place designed to foster prayer will aid the spiritual formation and vocational discernment of the seminarians.

"When you're in the middle of a campus, there's always something going on," he said. "There will be benefits from being away from the center of activity."

"There will be times when we can

maintain an environment of contemplative prayer in the seminary that you can't really do while you're on the college campus."

Msgr. Schaedel recalled how, in past decades, hundreds of archdiocesan Catholics would gather on the grounds of the Carmelite monastery to pray a novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the days leading up to her feast day on July 16.

"We were invoking her guidance and protection on the archdiocese," he said. "And this is one more example that she is still at it."

(For more information about the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, log on to www.archindy.org/bsb. For more information about the Carmel of the Resurrection, log on to www.praythenews.org.) †

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Editorial



267. LOURDES. - Quatrième Station du Calvaire.

This historic French postcard depicts Jesus meeting his mother and is the fourth Station of the Cross at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France.

Why didn't Jesus escape?

When Jesus knew that he was about to be arrested and condemned to what Cicero called “the most cruel and disgusting penalty” of crucifixion, why didn't he escape? Wouldn't you try to get away if you were in that garden of Gethsemane?

Earlier, after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and the Sadducees decided to get the Romans to kill Jesus, he hid in a village called Ephraim, about 12 miles from Jerusalem at the edge of the Judean Desert.

Why didn't he go there again? It would have taken him only about 15 minutes to climb the Mount of Olives from Gethsemane and be on his way on a road that ran from there to the Judean Desert.

He didn't do that because he chose to be crucified. As he had told his Apostles, that was his Father's will. He explained it to his Apostles many times, even though they refused to accept it.

Of course, he could have gotten away. He said, “Do you think that I cannot pray to my Father, who would at once send me more than 12 legions of angels?” (Mt 26:53).

But he didn't do that. He was determined to follow his Father's will.

It's not that he wasn't tempted to run when the time came. Just as any human would do, he wanted to get out of it. In his agony in the garden, knowing full well what was soon to happen, he prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me.” But then he quickly added, “Still, not my will but yours be done” (Lk 22:42, Mt 26:39, Mk 14:36).

But why did Jesus have to die by crucifixion? Couldn't God have saved us in some other way?

Of course, he could, if he did it by accepting some imperfect expressions of human repentance and atonement. But God willed that our redemption be achieved in the most perfect way.

No mere human, no matter how holy, could take on the sins of all humanity and offer himself as a sacrifice for all. Jesus, and only Jesus, could do so because only he was both

God and man.

That was why God the Father sent his eternally begotten Son to earth, to restore the harmony with God that had existed before sin disrupted it. In that way, he showed his love for us.

As St. Paul wrote, “God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8).

And St. John's Gospel tells us that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life” (Jn 3:16).

Jesus sacrificed himself for us. “I lay down my life of my own accord,” he said (Jn 10:17). He is called “the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (Jn 1:29) because he was sacrificed, not just killed, like the lambs the Jews offered to God in their temple in expiation for their sins. And the Letter to the Hebrews says that Jesus was also the priest who surrenders himself (Heb 2:14).

The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* says, “His sacrifice was an act of atonement, that is, it makes us one again with God by the power of divine mercy extending to us the Father's forgiveness of our sins. His sacrifice is also called an act of satisfaction or reparation because he lives out fully the Father's call to human beings to be faithful to his plan for them, thus overcoming the power of sin.

“It is also an expiation for our sins, which in the understanding of Scripture means that God takes the initiative in bringing about reconciliation to himself. In the words of Christian tradition, Jesus' sacrifice merits salvation for us because it retains forever the power to draw us to him and to the Father” (p. 92).

By dying by crucifixion, Jesus obeyed the will of God, demonstrated his love for us, and accomplished our redemption.

While hanging on the cross, he said, “It is finished” (Jn 19:30).

God's plan was carried out.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Do embryos have souls?

(Editor's note: This week, we begin a new monthly column, “Making Sense of Bioethics,” by Father Tad Pacholczyk.)

People are sometimes surprised to hear that the wrongness of destroying a human embryo does *not* ultimately depend on when that embryo might become a person, or when he or she might receive a soul from God.

They often suppose that the Catholic Church teaches that destroying human embryos is unacceptable because such embryos are persons (or are “ensouled”).

While it is true that the Church teaches that the intentional and direct destruction of human embryos is always immoral, it would be incorrect to conclude that the Church teaches that zygotes (a single-cell embryo) or other early-stage embryos are persons, or that they already have immortal, rational souls.

The magisterium of the Church has never definitively stated when the ensoulment of the human embryo takes place. It remains an open question.

The *Declaration on Procured Abortion* from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1974 phrases the matter with considerable precision:

“This declaration expressly leaves aside the question of the moment when the spiritual soul is infused. There is not a unanimous tradition on this point and authors are as yet in disagreement. For some it dates from the first instant; for others it could not at least precede nidation [implantation in the uterus]. It is not within the competence of science to decide between these views, because the existence of an immortal soul is not a question in its field. It is a philosophical problem from which our moral affirmation remains independent. ...”

That being said, the moral teaching of the Church is that the human embryo must be treated *as if* it were already ensouled, even if it might not yet be so. It must be treated *as if* it were a person from the moment of conception, even if there exists the theoretical possibility that it might not yet be so.

Why this rather subtle, nuanced position, instead of simply declaring outright that zygotes are ensouled, and therefore are persons?

First, because there has never been a unanimous tradition on this point; and second, because the precise timing of ensoulment/personhood of the human embryo is irrelevant to the question of whether or not we may ever destroy such embryos for research or other purposes.

Interestingly, ensoulment has been discussed for centuries, and so-called *delayed ensoulment* was probably the norm for most of Christian history, with *immediate ensoulment* gaining some serious momentum of its own beginning in the 1600s (and representing the position most widely held today).

Augustine seemed to shift his opinion back and forth during his lifetime between immediate and delayed ensoulment.

In the 1200s, Thomas Aquinas held that human ensoulment occurred not right at the first instant, but at a time-point removed from the beginning. This, he argued, would enable the matter of the embryo to undergo development and become “apt” for the reception of an immortal soul from God (by passing through simpler initial stages involving “vegetative” and “animative” souls).

Even today in various quarters, the discussions continue, with new embryological details like twinning and chimerization impinging upon the debate, and new conceptual questions arising from the intricate biology surrounding totipotency

and pluripotency.

We must recognize that it is God's business as to precisely *when* he ensouls embryos. We do not need an answer to this fascinating and speculative theological question, like counting angels on the head of a pin, in order to grasp the fundamental truth that human embryos are inviolable and deserving of unconditional respect at every stage of their existence.

Rather, this moral affirmation follows directly on the heels of the scientific data regarding early human development, which affirms that every person on the face of the planet is, so to speak, an “overgrown embryo.”

Hence, it is not necessary to know exactly *when* God ensouls the embryo, because, as I sometimes point out in half-jest, even if it were true that an embryo did not receive her soul until she graduated from law school, that would not make it OK to kill her by forcibly extracting tissues or organs prior to graduation.

Human embryos are already beings that are human (not zebra or plant), and are, in fact, the newest and most recent additions to the human family. They are integral beings structured for maturation along their proper time line. Any destructive action against them as they move along the continuum of their development disrupts the entire future time line of that person.

In other words, the embryo exists as a whole, living member of the human species, and when destroyed, that particular individual has perished. Every human embryo, thus, is unique and sacrosanct, and should not be cannibalized for stem cell extraction.

What a human embryo actually is, even at its earliest and most undeveloped stage, already makes it the only kind of entity capable of receiving the gift of an immortal soul from the hand of God. No other animal or plant embryo can receive this gift; indeed, no other entity in the universe can receive this gift.

Hence, the early human embryo is never merely biological tissue, like a group of liver cells in a petri dish; at a minimum, such an embryo, with all its internal structure and directionality, represents the privileged sanctuary of one meant to develop as a human person.

Some scientists and philosophers will attempt to argue that if an early embryo might not yet have received its immortal soul from God, it must be OK to destroy that embryo for research since he or she would not yet be a person.

But it would actually be the reverse; that is to say, it would be *more immoral* to destroy an embryo that had not yet received an immortal soul than to destroy an ensouled embryo.

Why? Because the immortal soul is the principle by which that person could come to an eternal destiny with God in heaven, so the one who destroyed the embryo, in this scenario, would preclude that young human from ever receiving an immortal soul (or becoming a person) and making his or her way to God.

This would be the gravest of evils, as the stem cell researcher would forcibly derail the entire eternal design of God over that unique and unrepeatable person, via an action that would be, in some sense, worse than murder.

The human person, then, even in his or her most incipient form as an embryonic human being, must always be safeguarded in an absolute and unconditional way, and speculation about the timing of personhood cannot alter this fundamental truth.

(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.) †

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



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

At Easter, we experience the mystery of life conquering death

For people of faith, Holy Week is a time of very special grace.

In a certain sense, for people of faith, it is as if this special week is sort of suspended in time, just for a bit.

All we need to do is give ourselves to the special liturgical prayer which the Church presents to us, especially during the Triduum of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil.

These particular liturgical celebrations carry the noble simplicity of our most ancient celebrations.

On Holy Thursday, once more we celebrated the memorial of the Lord's Supper with special gratitude for the wonderful gift of the Eucharist and the priesthood in our lives.

And we also celebrated the great example of loving service which Jesus demonstrated in the washing of his disciples' feet. It is at this celebration that each year we are reminded that Jesus calls us "friends."

What can one say about Good Friday? "Greater love has no one than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13).

Our Good Friday liturgy is one of profound and noble simplicity. I hope you were able to gather for special prayer as we remembered what great love the Lord has for all of us. He suffered and died so that every one of us might have life forever.

Each year on Good Friday, we are privileged to walk with Jesus through his

suffering and death. It is the least we can do in return for the blessing of his love in our lives!

No liturgical celebration is more beautiful than that of the Easter Vigil. The great Easter fire and the lighting of the paschal candle are rich in their symbolism.

We are led through the story of our salvation in a wonderful series of readings. How moving are the baptism of catechumens and the confirmation of candidates! In fact, the entire Vigil and Eucharist are moving.

Easter is the great solemnity of hope. It is the victory of life over death, salvation over sin. We sing with gusto "the strife is over and the victory won."

Yet much seems the same on Easter Monday. The suffering and death which God asked of his own Son gives us the key to make sense of human tragedy all around us.

Once more, we have traced the path of Christ's Passion, the path of an innocent man who was betrayed by a friend and then forced to die the humiliating death of a criminal. And once more we emerge from the Triduum with great rejoicing because we have been saved from sin and death. Alleluia!

I like to remember why our Church clings to the tradition of displaying the cross with the image of the body of Jesus on it.

This tradition is not a denial of the victory of Jesus over death, and it is not a

displacement of the centrality of the Resurrection in Christian life.

We want to be reminded that a real human person stretched out his arms on the cross and suffered deeply because he loves us.

Our crucifixes embrace a Christian realism about life and death and resurrection, and they strike a chord in our human experience.

They remind us that "He came unto his own and his own received him not" (Jn 1:11).

Our ancestors rejected Jesus Christ and handed him the cross.

Every Holy Week and Triduum, we remember the death of Jesus, when he converted the cross into a crucifix.

We know the cross: It is the problem of pain and death in our lives. Jesus on that cross is the solution. Jesus shows us that pain can be the prelude to joy and peace; but more than that, the cross is the way to salvation. Christ fell on Good Friday, but he rose to glorious life on Easter Sunday.

Easter is a special feast for those among us who bear more than their share of human suffering. Jesus showed us that life does not end with death. We can experience solidarity with him in prayer,

together and alone.

And so Easter is the pre-eminent feast of hope! For those who face death with fear, Jesus showed once and for all that in death, life is changed and not taken away.

In one of our eucharistic prayers, we are reminded that we are called "to a Kingdom where every tear shall be wiped away." This is the true home to which all of us are journeying. And so Easter lifts our spirits along the way.

Thank God for the gift of our Easter faith! Thank God for the gift of his own Son! Thank God for his Easter victory!

God bless you and yours with the happiest Easter ever. I offer joyful prayer for all of you! †

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

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

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for March

Youth: that they may be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit so that they can truly discern their role in the Church, especially God's call to priesthood and religious life.

En la Pascua experimentamos el misterio de la conquista de la vida sobre la muerte

Para las personas de fe, la Semana Santa es una época de gracia muy especial.

En cierto sentido, para las personas de fe es como si esta semana especial estuviera ligeramente suspendida en el tiempo.

Todo lo que tenemos que hacer es entregarnos a la oración litúrgica especial que la Iglesia nos presenta, principalmente durante el triduo del Jueves y el Viernes Santo, y la Vigilia Pascual.

Estas celebraciones litúrgicas en particular llevan consigo la noble sencillez de nuestras celebraciones más antiguas.

El Jueves Santo celebramos una vez más el memorial de la Última Cena del Señor con especial agradecimiento por el maravilloso don de la Eucaristía y del sacerdocio en nuestras vidas.

Y también celebramos el excelente ejemplo de servicio amoroso que demostró Jesús al lavarles los pies a sus discípulos. Durante esta celebración recordamos cada año que Jesús nos llamó "amigos."

¿Qué podemos decir sobre el Viernes Santo? "Nadie tiene un amor mayor que éste: que uno dé su vida por sus amigos" (Jn 15:13).

Nuestra liturgia del Viernes Santo está colmada de profunda y noble sencillez. Espero que hayan podido reunirse para elevar plegarias especiales en recuerdo del inmenso amor que el Señor tiene para todos nosotros. Él sufrió y murió para que cada uno de nosotros pudiera tener vida eterna.

Cada año durante el Viernes Santo tenemos el privilegio de caminar con Jesús por su sendero de sufrimiento y muerte. ¡Es lo menos que podemos hacer para recompensar la bendición de su amor en nuestras vidas!

Ninguna celebración litúrgica es más hermosa que la Vigilia Pascual. El gran fuego pascual y el encendido del Cirio Pascual son rituales ricos en simbolismo.

Se nos hace un recorrido por la historia de nuestra salvación en una maravillosa serie de lecturas. ¡Qué conmovedor es el bautismo de catecúmenos y la confirmación de los candidatos! En efecto, toda la Vigilia y la Eucaristía son conmovedoras.

¡La Pascua es la gran celebración de la esperanza! Es la victoria de la vida sobre la muerte, de la salvación del pecado.

Cantamos con entusiasmo "la lucha ha terminado y se ha obtenido la victoria."

Sin embargo, todo parece igual el lunes después de la Pascua. El sufrimiento y muerte que Dios le pidió a su propio Hijo que pasara, nos da la clave para darle sentido a toda la tragedia humana que nos rodea.

Una vez más hemos recorrido el sendero de la Pasión de Cristo, el sendero de un hombre inocente que fue traicionado por un amigo y luego obligado a morir la muerte humillante de un criminal. Y una vez más salimos del triduo con gran alegría porque hemos sido salvados del pecado y de la muerte. ¡Aleluya!

Me gusta recordar por qué nuestra Iglesia se aferra a la tradición de exhibir el crucifijo, la cruz con la imagen del cuerpo de Jesús en ella.

Esta tradición no constituye una negación de la victoria de Jesús sobre la muerte y no es un desplazamiento de la posición central que tiene la Resurrección en la vida cristiana.

Deseamos recordar que una persona

humana extendió sus brazos sobre la cruz y sufrió profundamente debido a su amor por nosotros.

Nuestros crucifijos contienen un realismo cristiano sobre la vida y la resurrección y tocan una fibra sensible en nuestra experiencia humana.

Nos recuerdan que: "A lo suyo vino, y los suyos no le recibieron" (Jn 1:11).

Nuestros ancestros rechazaron a Jesucristo y le entregaron la cruz.

Cada Semana Santa y triduo recordamos la muerte de Jesús, cuando convirtió la cruz en un crucifijo.

Conocemos la cruz: Representa el problema del dolor y la muerte en nuestras vidas. Jesús sobre esa cruz es la solución. Jesús nos muestra que el dolor puede ser el prelude de la alegría y la paz; pero más aún, la cruz es el camino a la salvación. Cristo cayó el Viernes Santo, pero se levantó a la vida gloriosa el Domingo de Pascua.

La Pascua es una festividad especial para aquellos de nosotros que llevan más que su propia cuota de sufrimiento humano. Jesús nos demostró que la vida no termina con la muerte. Podemos experimentar la solidaridad con él en la oración, tanto solos como acompañados.

Por lo tanto, ¡la Pascua es la máxima celebración de esperanza! Para los que enfrentan la muerte con temor, Jesús

demonstró de una vez por todas que en la muerte, la vida cambia y no les es quitada.

En una de nuestras oraciones eucarísticas se nos recuerda que hemos sido llamados "al Reino en el que toda lágrima será enjugada." Ese es el verdadero hogar al que todos estamos peregrinando. Y así, la Pascua eleva nuestros espíritus en el camino.

¡Gracias a Dios por el obsequio de nuestra fe pascual! ¡Gracias a Dios por el obsequio de su propio Hijo! ¡Gracias a Dios por su victoria en la Pascua!

Que Dios lo bendiga a usted y a los suyos con la Pascua más feliz. ¡Ofrezco una oración de júbilo por todos ustedes! †

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

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

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

Las intenciones vocacionales del Arzobispo Buechlein para marzo

Los jóvenes: que ellos acepten el ánimo del Espíritu Santo, para que puedan discernir su papel en la Iglesia, especialmente la llamada de Dios a hacerse sacerdote y entrar en una vida religiosa.

Events Calendar

March 21

Calvary Cemetery, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Stations of the Cross**, Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, presider, noon. Information: 317-574-8898 or e-mail mwilliams@bucharangroup.org.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Stations of the Cross**, Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, presider, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or e-mail mwilliams@bucharangroup.org.

St. Mary Church, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Living Way of the Cross**,

sponsored by the youth ministry group of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, 1 p.m. Information: 812-346-3604.

St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany. **Via Crucis—Outdoor Way of the Cross**, Hispanic Ministry of New Albany Deanery, 7 p.m. Information: 502-494-3264.

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4050 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. **Lenten fish fry**, 4:30-8 p.m. Information: 317-546-1571.

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, 203 4th St., Aurora. **PTO fish fry**, 4-7 p.m. Information: 812-926-1558.

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis.

Rosary and Stations of the Cross, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508.

March 22

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **Easter egg hunt**, 9:30 a.m., children 10 and under invited to bring a basket. Information: 317-291-7014.

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, 523 S. Merrill St., Fortville. **Blessing of the "First Foods of Easter,"** noon. Information: 317-485-5102 or e-mail stthomas@iquest.net.

Bookmamas bookstore, 9 S. Johnson Ave., Indianapolis. **Book signing, "A Belief in Providence: A Life of Saint Theodora Guérin,"** Julie Young, author, 1:30 p.m. Information: 317-375-3715 or e-mail info@bookmamas.com.

March 23

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. **Confession, 1 p.m., Mass, 2 p.m.**, on third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in, groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

March 26

Knights of Columbus Hall, 225 E. Market St., Jeffersonville. **Daughters of Isabella Circle #95, annual card party**, 7 p.m., \$3 per person. Information: 812-282-3659.

March 27

Riverwalk Banquet Center and Lodge, 6729 Westfield Blvd., Indianapolis. **Catholic Radio 89.1, fourth annual reception and dinner**, Dr. Ray Guarendi, guest speaker, 6 p.m., \$55 per person. Information: www.catholicradioindy.org.

Saint Meinrad School of Theology, Newman Theater, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad.

Annual Thomas Lecture on Philosophy and Theology, Dr. James J. Walter, presenter, 7 p.m. Information: 800-682-0988.

March 31

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

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, St. Joseph Room, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany. **"Catholics Returning Home,"** six sessions, 7:30-9 p.m. Information: 812-945-3112 or e-mail arhayes8246@msn.com. †

Retreats and Programs

March 28-30

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, Indianapolis. **Post-abortion healing for women and men, confidential location, all telephone calls are confidential.** Information: Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1521 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1521.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Monastic Practices: Drawing Everyday Wisdom from the Monastic Life,"** Benedictine Brother John Mark Falkenhain, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 29

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **Women at the 'Burg, "Disciplines of a Beautiful Woman,"** 9-11:30 a.m. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

March 31

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

April 3-6

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"The Ministry of Co-Ordination,"** parish administrative staff retreat, Benedictine Father Jeremy King, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 4-6

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Tobit Marriage Preparation Program"** for engaged couples. Information: 317-317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

April 6

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Tobit Weekend,"** marriage preparation program for engaged couples. Information: www.archindy.org/fatima.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Liturgical Music**

101," Charlie Gardner, presenter, 7-9 p.m., no charge, good-will offerings appreciated. Information and registration: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

April 11-13

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Reflections on St. Paul's Letter to the Romans,"** Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"What Does God Want for You?,"** Matthew Kelly, presenter, \$300 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

April 13

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Evensong,"** 4-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 17

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Third annual "Caregivers and Hospice Retreat,"** registration due April 3, \$50. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 18-20

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Married couples retreat, **"Love Springs Eternal,"** Benedictine Father Noël Mueller, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 19

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, 10655 Haverstick Road, Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). **Gabriel Project of Indiana "Day of Reflection,"** Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, presenter, Mass, 9 a.m., program concludes at 12:15 p.m. Information: 317-844-5658 or jsblanch@sbcglobal.net.

April 20

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Liturgical Seasons 101,"** Father Keith Hosey, presenter, 7-9 p.m., no charge, good-will offerings appreciated. Information: 317-545-7681 or

www.archindy.org/fatima.

April 26

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Fourth annual women's conference, "Rocking Chair Wisdom,"** Mary Malloy and Jeanne Hunt, presenters. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail

center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 27

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Pre Cana Program"** for engaged couples. Information: 317-236-1596 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596. †

Divine Mercy services are scheduled in archdiocese

Criterion staff report

Divine Mercy Sunday services are scheduled on March 30 at various parishes in the archdiocese. All the prayer services are open to the public.

Prayer services reported to *The Criterion* are as follows:

- St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis—2 p.m. eucharistic adoration; 3 p.m. Divine Mercy chaplet, sermon, eucharistic procession and Benediction, Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, presider, with Father Varghese Maliakkal, parish administrator. Information: 317-926-7359.

- Christ the King Church, 1827 Kessler Blvd., East Drive, Indianapolis—2 p.m. eucharistic adoration; 3 p.m. prayer service, Divine Mercy chaplet, Benediction and eucharistic procession, Father Tony Volz, pastor, presider. Information: 317-255-3666.

- St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis—11:30 a.m. eucharistic adoration and Divine Mercy chaplet in English; 2:30 p.m. eucharistic adoration and Divine Mercy chaplet in Spanish. Information: 317-637-3983.

- St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th Ave., Columbus—3 p.m. eucharistic adoration followed by Divine Mercy chaplet and Benediction. Information: 812-379-9353.

- St. Joseph Church, 312 E. High St., Corydon—3 p.m. Divine Mercy chaplet, eucharistic adoration, reconciliation, Benediction and bilingual Mass. Information: 812-738-2742.

- Holy Family Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond—1 p.m. Divine Mercy prayer



CNS photo/Fred LeBlanc, Catholic Observer

Friars of the Franciscans of the Primitive Observance carry an image of Jesus the Divine Mercy on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2003 at the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Mass.

service, reconciliation and eucharistic adoration. Information: 765-886-5503.

- Mary's King's Village Schoenstatt, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles—2 p.m. Mass followed by Eucharistic adoration, Divine Mercy chaplet and pitch-in, Father Elmer Burwinkel, presider. Information: 812-689-3551.

- St. Vincent de Paul Church, 4218 E. Michigan Road, Shelbyville—2-3 p.m., eucharistic adoration, benediction and Divine Mercy chaplet. Information: 317-398-4028. †



Living Stations of the Cross

Participants in the Hispanic ministry at St. Mary Parish in New Albany act out parts in a living Stations of the Cross at the parish in 2005. A bilingual living Stations of the Cross will be performed at St. Mary Parish, 415 E. Eighth St., in New Albany at 7 p.m. on March 21. For more information, call 502-494-3264.

VIPs

Jack and Mary (Sullivan) Olding, members of Holy Spirit Parish in



Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 30.

The couple was married on March 15, 1958, at Holy Cross Church in Covington, Ky.

They have six children: Beverly Gainea,

Terri Rodauck, Colleen Serletti, Jack Olding Jr., Jason Olding Sr. and the late Lisa Olding. They have 11 grandchildren. †

Christina Sauer of Corydon, a sophomore at Presentation Academy in



Louisville, recently won the Catholic Church Extension Society's 2008 Short Story Contest.

The Catholic Church Extension Society sustains and extends the Catholic faith

in poor and remote mission areas of the United States where diocesan resources are insufficient. †

Jesus' power was the power of love, pope says on Palm Sunday

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The power that Jesus demonstrated was the power of love, which heals and reconciles, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"He did not come as one who destroys; he did not come with the revolutionary's sword. He came with the gift of healing," the pope said on March 16 as he celebrated Mass on Palm Sunday in St. Peter's Square.

Along with the pope, more than 350 young people and more than 200 cardinals, bishops and priests processed through the square carrying palm and olive branches as they marked Jesus' entry into Jerusalem before his arrest, Passion and death.

The young people chosen for the procession to represent their peers around the world were a special part of the liturgy, which also marked the diocesan celebration of World Youth Day.

Pope Benedict noted how the Gospel tells of the young people of Jerusalem waving palm branches and exclaiming "Hosanna" as Jesus entered the city.

Reciting the Angelus at the end of Mass, Pope Benedict told the young people he hoped to see thousands of them in Sydney, Australia, for the July 15-20 international World Youth Day celebration, and he prayed that it would be "a time of deep and lasting spiritual renewal."

The pope's homily at the Palm Sunday Mass focused on the Gospel story of Jesus throwing the animal sellers and the money-changers out of the Temple in Jerusalem.

The animals were sold for Temple sacrifices and people needed to change money to make donations to the Temple, he said, but "all of this could have taken place elsewhere," outside the Temple, which should have been a place of prayer.

The space occupied by the sellers and money-changers, the pope said, was supposed to be the atrium where the pagans, who could not enter the Temple, could still go "to associate themselves with the prayer to the one God."

"The God of Israel, the God of all people, was waiting for their prayers as well," he said.

Pope Benedict said the story should lead Catholics today to ask: "Is our faith pure and open enough" so that people who are searching for God will ask to join Catholics?

The story also calls on Christians to ask themselves



Above, priests hold olive branches while leading a procession ahead of Pope Benedict XVI at the start of a Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 16.

Right, Pope Benedict XVI holds a woven palm frond while celebrating a Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 16. In his homily, the pope called on Catholics to examine whether worldly desires have weakened their faith.



if they are aware that "greed is idolatry" and if it is seen in their lives, the pope said.

"Do we perhaps let idols enter into our faith in various ways? Are we always open to letting the Lord purify us, allowing him to throw out of us and of the Church all that is contrary to him?" he asked.

The pope said it is important to know that in the Gospel of St. Matthew the story of Jesus

purifying the Temple is followed by stories of Jesus healing the sick.

In healing the sick, Jesus reaches out to those whose lives have been reduced by illness or infirmity and who often are pushed to the margins of society, the pope said.

"Jesus shows God as the one who loves and demonstrates his power as the power of love," he said. †

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This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.



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Statuette: Crucified Christ by Giovanni Pisano, 1285-1300, Ivory, 15.3 cm
©V&A Images/Victoria and Albert Museum

Major property tax relief plan offers mixed blessing

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

Indiana lawmakers reached a property tax relief agreement on March 14 which delivers a mixed blessing of property tax relief to homeowners, help for seniors and tax credits for lower income families, but opponents question the plan's impact on local governments and schools.



While property tax and immigration reform were among the top priorities of the Indiana Catholic Conference, the ICC followed these issues with an eye on how the proposals might hurt lower income or immigrant families and children, and how these reforms would affect the common good of all Hoosier families.

The property tax relief plan contained in the conference committee report on House Bill 1001 received bipartisan support, and passed the House 82-7 and the Senate 41-6.

Rep. Jeff Espich (R-Uniondale), one of the chief negotiators of the proposal, called the bill "a solution to one of the toughest issues we've ever dealt with in the General Assembly."

Rep. Espich said the bill gives tax relief and tools for local communities to deal with the tax caps. He called the plan "taxpayer friendly" and "community friendly."

Rep. Brian Bosma (R-Indianapolis), House minority leader, called the plan "the strongest property tax relief measure in two generations."

Rep. Russell Stillwell (D-Boonville), summed up the proposal this way: "There is pain and there is gain for Hoosiers across the state."

He then asked, "Is there more pain or more gain?"

Rep. David Orentlicher (D-Indianapolis), raised concerns about the impact to his local school district, which would be losing money due to lower enrollments.

Rep. Vernon Smith (D-Gary), praised many aspects of the proposal, but said, "It lacks equity."

And Rep. Smith said he has a "great concern" for the \$10 million cut to the Gary schools.



Rep. Dennis Avery

Rep. Dennis Avery (D-Evansville), said the plan was "not fair," and said he would be voting "no."

Rep. William Crawford (D-Indianapolis), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and also chief negotiator of the plan, outlined the many pluses of the bill.

"We don't have perfection, but we do have property tax reform,"

he said.

The three provisions that the ICC supported to help low income families included increasing the state earned income tax credit (EITC), increasing the renter's deduction, and helping the elderly on fixed incomes, which were added to the final property tax relief plan.

Rep. John Day (D-Indianapolis), a longtime advocate for raising the earned income tax credit, said, "The beauty of the EITC is it rewards working people. "President Reagan called the earned income tax credit the best anti-poverty, pro-family program he'd ever seen, and I agree," he added.

The state earned income tax credit will increase from the current 6 percent to 9 percent. The increase in the sales tax from 6 percent to 7 percent has a disproportional effect on the poor, some lawmakers said.

"Lower income families pay more in sales tax than do higher income families," Rep. Day said. "For example, a family with an income of \$20,000 will pay twice as much in sales tax as a family earning \$60,000. There is an issue of tax fairness here for lower to moderate income families.

"On the other hand, the earned income tax credit is gold. It's fair," Rep. Day said. "Talk about family values; this is the way to go."

Seniors on fixed, lower incomes also benefit. Homeowners age 65 or older with an income of \$30,000 for an individual or \$40,000 for a couple, with a home at an assessed value of \$160,000 or less, will have a more stringent property tax cap.

In addition to the 1 percent cap on their home's assessed value, their property taxes would not increase more than 2 percent per year.

Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director, who serves as official spokesman on public policy matters for Indiana's bishops, said, "In the areas of property tax relief and immigration reform, we tried to accomplish a 'do no harm' policy.

"We wanted to make sure lower income families were not forgotten in the equation of providing property tax relief to homeowners and that some of their needs would be addressed," Tebbe said. "On immigration reform, we did not want the state to enact an immigration policy which would harm those of the immigrant community—legal or illegal."

The property tax relief plan contained in the conference committee report of House Bill 1001 has been sent to Gov. Mitch Daniels, who is expected to sign the bill into law.

(Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

'Lower income families pay more in sales tax [proportionally] than do higher income families. For example, a family with an income of \$20,000 will pay twice as much in sales tax as a family earning \$60,000. There is an issue of tax fairness here for lower to moderate income families. On the other hand, the earned income tax credit is gold. It's fair. Talk about family values; this is the way to go.'

—Rep. John Day

Different fates for tax relief, immigration reform bills

The tax bill passed by Indiana lawmakers gives homeowners an average cut in property taxes of close to 30 percent this year.



Glenn Tebbe

It includes caps on property taxes at 1.5 percent of a home's assessed valuation in 2009. In 2010 and beyond, it caps property tax at 1 percent of a home's assessed valuation.

It eliminates many of the state's township assessors, calls for public referendums on capital spending projects and places controls on local government spending.

It adds \$120 million to help schools offset the property tax caps.

The plan increases the earned income tax credit from 6 percent to 9 percent for lower to moderate income families, and makes it permanent. It increases the renter's deduction from the current \$2,500 to \$3,000, and places additional caps for senior citizen homeowners on fixed incomes.

To provide property tax relief, the bill increases the state sales tax from 6 percent to 7 percent effective on April 1.

Local option income taxes are expected to be increased to make up for the shortfall caused by the property tax caps. The plan shifts the costs of child welfare, juvenile incarceration, health care for the indigent, police and fire pensions, and some school costs from local governments to the state.

Concerning immigration reform, a bill to punish employers who hire undocumented individuals failed.

A proposal to penalize employers who knowingly hire undocumented immigrants failed when a compromise between House and Senate versions of the proposal could not be reconciled.

Some of the concerns of the bill included the possibility of racial profiling, the detrimental effects on Indiana's economy, and harm to immigrant families and children—both legal and illegal.

During the 2008 session of the Indiana General Assembly, the Indiana Catholic Conference testified in opposition to the proposal.

Glenn Tebbe, ICC executive director, said, "The Catholic Church does not support illegal immigration, and respects the right of nations to control its borders."

However, Tebbe explained to lawmakers that the Church is concerned about the effects that the proposal would have on employers, immigrant families and children.

"Putting hundreds of people out of work will only add to the social concerns in the community," Tebbe said. "Presently, those working are caring for their family needs and contributing to the common good."

He noted that similar laws enacted in Arizona and Oklahoma are having "detrimental effects" on the economy and on the families of both legal and illegal immigrants.

In addition to the ICC, members of the Hispanic community, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and the Indiana Manufacturers Association opposed the bill.

The bill would have punished businesses that knowingly hire undocumented workers by suspending their business license or revoking it after three violations.

The immigration reform proposal died when two of the conferees, Sen. Thomas K. Weatherwax (R-Logansport) and Rep. Scott Pelath (D-Michigan City), failed to sign off on the final conference committee agreement. †

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The Resurrection is depicted in a painting by Marie Romero Cash at St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe, N.M. Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, is on March 23 in the Latin rite this year.

Easter Supplement

Making the newness of Easter real in our world today

By Sr. Genevieve Glen, O.S.B.

Catholic News Service

The Gospel offers us a preview of Easter in the baptism of Jesus.

That event suggests the work that lies ahead of us if we are truly to live the Easter life we have been given in Jesus, either through baptism or the renewal of our baptismal vows.

Through the resurrection of Christ, says God, "I make all things new!"

Living the new Easter life, though, is none too comfortable, as we see in the Acts of the Apostles.

We, like the first Christians, have a lot to learn about what it means to abandon our old self for the new, the unfamiliar, the untried.

Fortunately, we have the whole 50 days of the Easter season ahead of us to practice. And the Easter season is really a rehearsal for our whole life!

At baptism, Jesus came out of the water of the Jordan River. In Scripture, water is an image of the original chaos when "the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters" (Gn 1:2).

Since creation, chaos continues to eat at the edges of our world and our lives.

The psalms often use chaos as an image of that final disintegration we most fear: death.

Ancient Christian writers tell us that Jesus emerged from the baptismal water as the beginning of a new creation. The clue is the dove.

In Genesis 8, Noah sent a dove out three different times to see if the flood had subsided and land had appeared. The first time, the dove "could find no place to alight and perch." The second time, the dove returned with an

olive leaf in its bill. The third time, the dove never returned (Gn 9-12).

At the Jordan River, the Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of that dove, marking him as the new creation in whom all living things can now find a home.

The flood, an image of chaos, will no longer be able to destroy the Earth. Jesus' resurrection marked the beginning of the end of chaos in all its disguises: "There shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, [for] the old order has passed away" (Rv 21:4).

What does that mean for us, incorporated into the new creation through baptism and now living for its final completion? Does it mean that we won't have to suffer any more?

No. It means that, as members of Christ's body, we share in his work of making new all creation, including ourselves.

Look around: What could you do to drive the destructive chaos caused by selfishness, anger or greed out of your home, your workplace or your neighborhood? What could you do to establish in its place the order that is the new creation?

Remember, the heart of that new creation is Jesus himself. What could you do to make life within you and around you look like the life that Jesus himself led and now wants to lead in us?

What changes would you have to make in your own priorities, values, attitudes and behaviors in order to have an impact on your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors?

How could you make the newness of Easter real in your world?

The underlying challenge here is not



At the Jordan River, the Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove, reminiscent of the dove sent by Noah to see if land appeared following the flood. The Spirit marked Jesus as the new creation in whom all living things can now find a home.

just to our own willingness to become new people, enlivened by God's Spirit to live Christ's own life. The real challenge is to our faith: Do we believe that new life is really possible?

In other words, do we believe that Easter is real? Do we believe that our participation in Jesus' death and resurrection through baptism, penance and the Eucharist can really change us

as individuals, families and communities so we can change the world a little bit at a time?

Can "new" happen?

Yes, says our Easter Lord. It can. It has.

(Benedictine Sister Genevieve Glen is a member of the Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, Colo.) †

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The Resurrection is cornerstone of the Christian faith

By John F. Fink

This Easter, we Christians reflect on one of the basic doctrines of Christianity—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

It's such a basic belief that St. Paul told the Christians of Corinth, Greece, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain" (1 Cor 15:17).

But this is more than religious belief. We Catholics are convinced that the Resurrection is historical fact. Christianity is based on that historical fact.

It's easy to understand how people without faith can doubt the Resurrection. It just isn't within our modern sphere of experience. Well, it wasn't within the Apostles' sphere of experience either.

Our belief in the Resurrection is helped by the fact that the Apostles doubted it. They weren't gullible men who easily accepted something like a man coming back from the dead.

As often as Jesus predicted that he would rise from the dead, the Gospels make it clear that the Apostles didn't understand what he was talking about.

They didn't even believe the women who went to the tomb and returned with the news that they had seen the risen Lord. Surely, they thought, the women were delirious. It took Jesus' appearance to them, coming into a locked room and eating with them, before they believed.

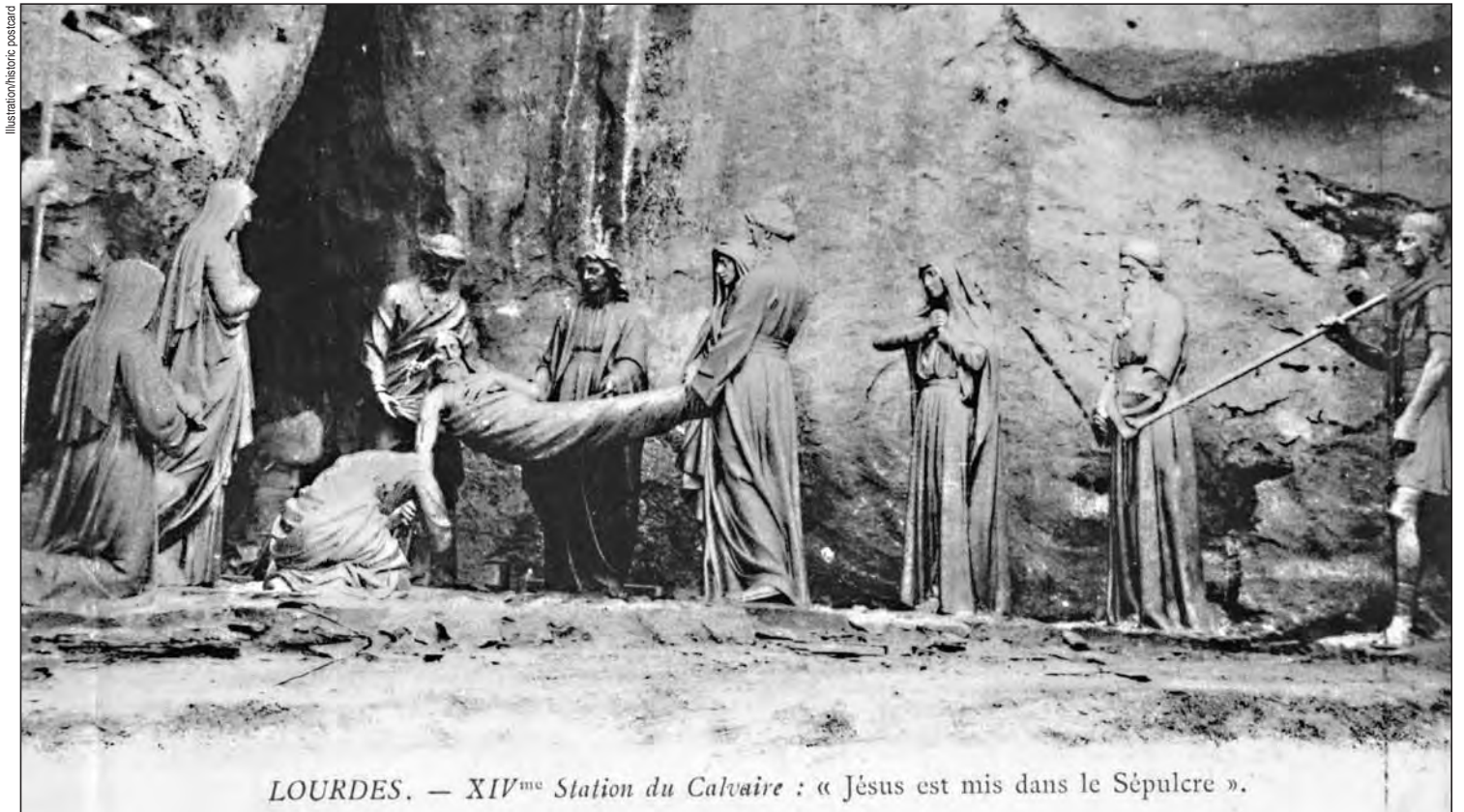
People today who don't believe that Jesus actually rose from the dead must think either that the first Christians were awfully naïve to believe such a thing or that they were extremely clever to be able to concoct such a story and then sell it, not only to their fellow Jews, but also to Gentiles all over the world.

Gospel accounts of the Apostles, though, show clearly that they were simple and uneducated men, hardly the type who could plan and successfully carry out a gigantic fraud.

The news about Jesus' resurrection from the dead spread by word of mouth for decades before it was put down on paper. It was St. Paul who first did that, in that letter he wrote in the year 56 from Ephesus, in modern Turkey, to the community he started in Corinth.

This letter was written about 26 years after Jesus' resurrection, and before any of the Gospels had been written. If there were earlier written accounts, they have not survived.

In that letter, Paul reminded his readers, "I handed on to you first of all what I myself received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures; that he appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than 500 brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he



This historic French postcard depicts Jesus being carried into the tomb and is the 14th Station of the Cross at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. Christian faith in the Resurrection has met with incomprehension and opposition from the beginning. Yet it has always been, and remains today, the cornerstone of the Christian faith.

appeared to me" (1 Cor 15:3-8).

In other words, many people saw Jesus after his resurrection and could attest to it.

Christians are generally familiar with most of the appearances that Paul enumerates, plus a few others written about in the Gospels of John and Luke—to Mary Magdalene, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and the seven Apostles who were fishing in the Sea of Galilee.

John's Gospel gives us details about his appearances to the Apostles, first when Thomas was absent and again, eight days later, when he was present.

We assume that Jesus' appearance to 500 brothers is the same account that Matthew gives at the very end of his Gospel when he says that the 11 disciples made their way to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had summoned them. Apparently about 500 people assembled there with the Apostles.

We are less familiar, though, with the appearance to James. This is not James, the brother of John. That James was among the Twelve when Jesus appeared to them. This James was the leader of the Church in Jerusalem when Paul was writing to the Corinthians. He was well known among the early Christians, which is apparently why Paul referred specifically to him.

Surprisingly, though, we are not sure of James' precise relationship to Jesus. He might have been a cousin, but Paul referred to James as "the brother of the Lord" (Gal 1:19).

According to an early Christian document, the Protoevangelium of James, James was the eldest of four sons and two daughters of Joseph by an earlier

marriage. Joseph was a widower, older than Mary, whom he married so she could help him raise his children. He considered himself Mary's protector and was willing to honor her vow of virginity. The other three sons, named by both Mark and Matthew, were Joseph, Judas and Simon. (Simon succeeded James as bishop of Jerusalem after James was martyred in the year 62.)

St. Jerome, in the fifth century, wrote about Jesus' appearance to James in his book *De Viris Illustribus*. He wrote that he had recently translated into Greek and Latin the early Christian document titled "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," which still exists today but is not included in the New Testament.

It says that James "had made an oath to eat no bread after he had drunk the cup of the Lord until he saw him risen from those who sleep." It then says that Jesus appeared to James, took some bread, spoke a blessing, and gave the bread to James with the words: "My brother, eat your bread, for the Son of Man is risen from those who are asleep."

Up to that time, James had been skeptical of his younger half-brother. John's Gospel stated, "Not even his brothers had much confidence in him" (Jn 7:5), and Mark's Gospel reports that Jesus' family at one point thought he was out of his mind (Mk 3:21) and went to take him home.

After Jesus' appearance to James, though, James devoted himself to preaching the Gospel to his fellow countrymen, the Jews, and was the

acknowledged leader of the Church in Jerusalem. He is mentioned prominently throughout the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul's letter to the Corinthians was then, and is now, the basic teaching of Christianity about Christ's resurrection. Paul was insistent about it when he wrote to the Corinthians, saying that our very salvation depends upon the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. Christians are not given a choice in deciding whether or not to believe in the Resurrection.

Some people confuse resurrection with resuscitation. Christians do not believe that Jesus was only resuscitated as he himself resuscitated Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain and the daughter of Jairus.

Jesus rose from the dead with a glorified body, one that could pass through the locked doors where the Apostles stayed, one that could appear to the disciples on the road to Emmaus and could just as quickly disappear. And yet it was Jesus' body, one that Thomas could touch when he was invited to examine Jesus' wounds.

Christian faith in the Resurrection has met with incomprehension and opposition from the beginning.

In the early fifth century, St. Augustine wrote, "On no point does the Christian faith encounter more opposition than on the resurrection of the body."

Yet it has always been, and remains today, the cornerstone of the Christian faith.

(John F. Fink is editor emeritus of The Criterion.) †

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Our Easter Vigil: A very different and dramatic night

By Fr. David K. O'Rourke, O.P.

Catholic News Service

Holy Week and Easter are my favorite time of the year.

The rites for these days are so concrete, so physically engaging. The blessing of the palms and procession into the church on Palm Sunday, the removal of the Eucharist and stripping of the altar on Holy Thursday, and the adoration of the cross on Good Friday all involve many people in the retelling of the origins of their faith.

But one rite more than others proves compelling, not just for me but also for our Church family, and that is the baptism of adult catechumens during the Holy Saturday Vigil.

I am the pastor of a tiny, small-town parish, which is home to many people on the move. The turnover in the local housing units is large.

The mobility is not just geographic, with folks following job opportunities from place to place.

For many people, the mobility is personal. They are trying to figure out where they are going in life, who they want to go with and what they want to do.

For some, these questions are also spiritual. Their search for direction helps turn wanderers into pilgrims. Some become Catholics through baptism. For adults, this normally takes place at the Easter Vigil.

Attending Mass week after week, Catholics learn what to expect during the liturgy. On Sundays, we recite the creed, the basic faith of the Church that was put together hundreds of years ago.

But at our Easter Vigil, it is all so different. The difference is very visual, very dramatic.

The adults preparing for baptism dress in white robes. After a ceremony that begins in darkness, they stand out from everyone else along with their sponsors next to the baptismal font and alongside the newly lighted Easter candle. Everyone present sees that this

CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic



Father Sean Gann baptizes Jeannine Roswell during the Easter Vigil at Christ the King Church in Commack, N.Y., on April 7, 2007.

night is far from ordinary.

The words of the creed are turned into a series of questions addressed to the white-robed adults. "We believe" becomes "Do you believe?"

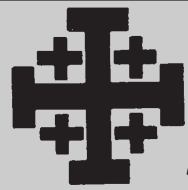
The ceremony leads up to the actual act of baptism when the celebrant pours newly blessed water from the font over the catechumens' heads as he repeats the words of baptism taken right out of Scripture.

I am told by lifelong Catholics that being there when adults are baptized is a moving experience because the

faith they have taken for granted since they were children is the object of deep, personal choice by other mature men and women.

These lifelong Catholics are there to witness the newly baptized make that choice during a dramatic and powerful public ceremony.

(Dominican Father David K. O'Rourke is pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Point Richmond, Calif., and a senior fellow at Santa Fe Institute in Berkeley, Calif.) †



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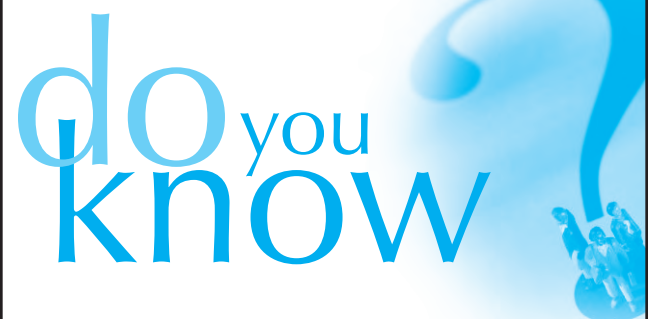
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NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

'At the Crossroads: Where Challenge Meets Opportunity'



Criterion staff report

After a year's worth of hard work and preparation, the excitement builds as the Archdiocese of Indianapolis welcomes more than 8,000 delegates to the 2008 National Catholic Educational Association Convention, Exposition and National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors Convocation on March 25-27.

It's the first time in the 105-year history of the association that the convention will be held in Indianapolis.

One of the city's nicknames—"the Crossroads of America"—serves as the heart of the theme for the convention: "At the Crossroads: Where Challenge Meets Opportunity."

"We really believe that the work of our catechists, teachers and administrators makes a difference in the lives of children, parents, our world and the Church," says Kathy Mears, an associate director of schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and a member of the convention's organizing committee.

"That work, however, can be challenging," she continued. "Our convention is going to address those challenges that are facing Catholic education because we believe that our faith-filled educational system is definitely part of the answer to issues that are facing our country and the world."

The convention is also committed to a "green" theme, recognizing the integrity of the Earth. Recycling and other "green" practices will be emphasized at the convention.

"This is one of the great challenges facing our Church and the world, and we want our teachers to understand and learn different ways to help make our students more environmentally aware," Mears says. "As Catholics, we want to make sure that we are leading the way in modeling how to be good stewards of the Earth."

More than 400 workshops and 500 educational exhibits will be available at the convention, which will be held at the Indiana Convention Center. The convention is open to anyone who works or is interested in Catholic education, including teachers, clergy, administrators, parents and students.

On March 25, Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop of Cincinnati, is scheduled to concelebrate the opening Mass with the Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, D.C., and chairman of the

Students and faculty at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis are all smiles after being recognized as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education in 2005. Read about the archdiocese's outstanding track record in education on page 2. (Submitted photo)

NCEA board of directors.

On March 26, the Most Rev. Blasé Cupich, bishop of Rapid City, South Dakota, will deliver the opening keynote address.

On March 27, a keynote address will be delivered by Daniel Pink, author of *Free Agent Nation* and *A Whole New*

Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future.

Attracting the NCEA annual convention to Indianapolis is important and exciting, said Bob Desautels, a senior manager of convention services for the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association.

"This is a very prestigious convention," Desautels said. "You can't overstate the importance of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and specifically the Office of Catholic Education, in successfully conducting this convention."

Many local events are planned for convention week co-sponsored by the archdiocese and various partners.

On March 24, up to 50 delegates may travel to St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, the home of St. Theodora Guérin, Indiana's first saint, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006. Tours of historic St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis will also be available.

On March 25, a reception will be held for 500 guests at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway sponsored by Catapult Learning, and a Sacred Sounds Concert will be held at St. John the Evangelist Church, featuring the musical talents of archdiocesan students.

Health Day will be held on March 26. Delegates will be able to "travel" through a model heart and learn how to be more heart-healthy courtesy of St. Vincent and St. Francis hospitals of Indianapolis. Free health screenings will be offered, and participants will also be invited to donate blood on site for the Indiana Blood Center.

March 26 will also feature a tour of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis for 40 delegates, and a free "Teachers' Night Out" at the Marriott Hotel Ballroom with music and dancing sponsored by QSP/Reader's Digest.

College Day is March 27 and features a special "Catechists' Track." College students and volunteer parish religious educators may attend all sessions, including special offerings for catechists for only \$25 (registered in advance). A reception for 300 will be held that evening at the

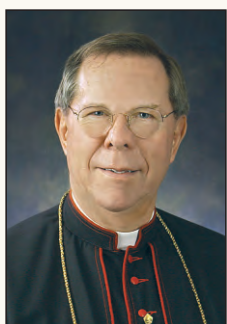
See WELCOME, page 3B

Welcome educators to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Dear Catholic Educators:

I extend to you the warmest of welcomes to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and its See City. We are excited and proud that you chose to hold the 105th Annual National Catholic Educational Association Convention here at the "Crossroads of America." I also welcome all the parish catechetical leaders who are here to take part in the National Parish Catechetical Directors Convocation.

Educators all, you are key to the future of our Church, and the future of our society. You have the privilege—and the serious responsibility—of shaping future generations.



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

Due to chemotherapy treatments I will be unable to attend the convention, but I will pray that your time in Indianapolis will be inspiring and that you will return to your local parishes energized in your commitment to be good stewards of our most precious resource: our children, youth and young adults.

I hope during your convention that you will draw inspiration from St. Theodora Guérin, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006. St. Theodora is truly a model for today's educators. St. Theodora came to the Indiana frontier in 1840 with five Sisters of Providence and almost no resources, but within a year she had established a motherhouse, a

novitiate and an academy and soon thereafter began opening Catholic schools throughout Indiana.

Let's pray that we continue to follow St. Theodora's wise counsel: "Love the children first, then teach them."

God bless all of you for all the good work you do and may God be with each of you this week!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Buechlein, A

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Archdiocese of Indianapolis schools set Blue Ribbon record

By G. Joseph Peters

When U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced the 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools in September 2005, 11 schools in Indiana received the award. Five of those were Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

An awards ceremony was held in Washington, D.C., in November. Two representatives from each school—the principal and a teacher—participated in the ceremony, and received a plaque and a flag signifying their school's Blue Ribbon status. Only 295 schools nationwide were honored for 2005, including 50 private and religious schools.

The story has been similar each fall for five years. Four schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received Blue Ribbon awards in 2003, six schools in 2004, five schools in 2005, six schools in 2006, and one in 2007 for a total of 22 awards in the past five years. Before 2003, eight schools had received Blue Ribbons under the former Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence (BRSE) program.

Since the first Blue Ribbon was awarded in 1985, 24 Catholic schools in the archdiocese have earned 31 national Blue Ribbons. There are 71 Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

Holy Family School in New Albany, Ind., received its second Blue Ribbon award in 2005. St. Jude School and St. Lawrence School, both in Indianapolis, and Cathedral High School, a private school in Indianapolis (2004), also have been honored twice. Roncalli High School in Indianapolis has earned the honor three times.

Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received more awards during the last five years than any other diocese. We believe that no other diocese in the nation has had more schools honored in the history of the national Blue Ribbon Schools program.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. The schools submit an extensive application and are selected by a panel based on one of three criteria:

- Schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance on state tests.
- Schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests.
- Private schools that achieve in the top 10 percent in the nation.

Encouragement to participate

Annette "Mickey" Lentz, executive director of Catholic education and faith formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was principal of St. Mark School in Indianapolis, the first school in the archdiocese to earn a Blue Ribbon in 1985, just after the first national program began.

As executive director since 1997, she has encouraged principals to participate in the

program as a way to have the excellence of their schools affirmed by a significant third party. She personally reviews and signs each application.

Dr. Ron Costello, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, noted that the performance requirements have changed drastically under the new NCLB Blue Ribbon Program.

In the former program, school performance was considered, but the final award was determined by evaluation of an extensive application that covered many areas and required an onsite visit to verify the application.

There is still an extensive application, but no site visit, and Costello said that "merely to apply, school performance must be improving dramatically, which is often difficult to measure, or the students' overall performance must surpass the 90th percentile in the state as measured on standardized tests."

Because all schools in the archdiocese are state-accredited and all students take the required ISTEP+ tests, the State of Indiana certifies private schools in the top 10 percent of all schools in Indiana as eligible to apply for a Blue Ribbon through the Council for American Private Education (CAPE).

Costello believes that his sharing of the eligibility information with schools has helped spur the number of applications in the past few years. There is now "... a great desire to participate and a healthy competition among the schools, which also involves a willingness to help one another through the process."

Expectation of high standards

Sister James Michael Kesterson, a Sister of Providence and principal of St. Jude Elementary School in Indianapolis, led the efforts to earn two Blue Ribbons for St. Jude School in 1996 and 2003.

In 2005-06, she gave four regional presentations in the archdiocese to potential Blue Ribbon applicants and helped two schools with their applications. She also served as a Blue Ribbon School visitor under the former Blue Ribbon program, and believes that she helps other schools by sharing what she learned on those visits.

As a longtime administrator, she said that the Blue Ribbon process has energized her, and she hopes to apply for St. Jude to receive a third Blue Ribbon.

Jerry Ernstberger is another two-time Blue Ribbon School principal at Holy Family School in New Albany.

He noted that Holy Family has earned the award under the two sets of criteria.

"The first award was recognition for high quality in several components of school life; the second is based more on our students' high achievement on standardized tests."

Ernstberger added, "I think there is an expectation of higher standards that comes with receiving the honor, especially the second time. Parents, teachers and even students realize that we have to be more accountable than ever because of the recognition we have received."

"So, we expect to work even harder and we have to be more creative and more collaborative. I think that attitude and commitment will promote continued success for our students," he said. "Parents make many sacrifices to provide the highest quality Catholic education and faith formation for our children, and the Blue Ribbon is a huge public recognition for them."

Joe Hollowell is the longtime president and former principal of Roncalli High School, and Chuck Weisenbach is the principal. They and the Roncalli team have sought and earned three Blue Ribbons, a record in Indiana.

"I believe that being selected as a Blue Ribbon School adds a level of credibility to any school's claims of excellence in academic and co-curricular programming," Hollowell said. "It is a credible third party—the U.S. Department of Education—confirming that a school has met a certain standard of excellence."

"The designation can't be purchased or won through glitzy advertising. When parents are looking at today's tuition costs, there is a new degree of scrutiny as to whether or not the investment made will pay dividends in the life of their children," Hollowell said. "The Blue Ribbon designation helps parents see past the school's public relations claims to detect the potential of a real return on investment for their children."

Hollowell added, "In 1993, the first year we received the Blue Ribbon recognition, our enrollment was 724 students. This fall, 15 years and three Blue Ribbons later, we began with an enrollment of 1,147."

Department of Education visits

For the past five years, Kristine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education regional representative, has visited each of the 22 schools in the archdiocese that earned a Blue Ribbon award.

She meets with administrators and teachers, visits classrooms and speaks to the student body at an assembly, affirming their Blue Ribbon status with a special certificate. She always stays to observe student prayers, performances and cheers.

This has been no small undertaking on her part with so many schools to visit and distances between schools that are 100 miles or more apart in the archdiocese.

The special events with Cohn allow the children to celebrate *their* achievement. It helps students to "... see themselves as part of a larger picture—a larger community," according to Lentz, who has accompanied Cohn on the many of the school visits.

Cohn told students and teachers at St. Michael School in Greenfield, Ind., that there are four things that make up a good school: "... committed community, excellent teachers, involved parents and great students. You are one of only 11 schools in the state to be honored as a Blue Ribbon school, which means that all those involved with the school have taken a leadership role to do what is right."

Former Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson proclaimed Nov. 7, 2005, as "St. Thomas Aquinas School Day" in the city in recognition of that school's Blue Ribbon.

In presenting the proclamation, the mayor said, "This means you're the best of the best. ... You have great teachers ... great involved parents ... the school is well-run, [and] each of you students works really hard every day to do your best."

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has experienced great success in having a large number of schools recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools over the years. This has not been because of a formal program, but through subtle encouragement, supplemented by healthy peer pressure and peer support in a demanding process.

Archdiocesan officials like to think that our archdiocesan curriculum improvement efforts have also contributed significantly to student performance. The new NCLB criteria for the Blue Ribbon start with a "gateway."

Archdiocese's national Blue Ribbon schools



Christine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education official, celebrates with St. Christopher students in Indianapolis after their school was named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

2007

St. Pius X, Indianapolis

2006

Christ the King, Indianapolis
St. Bartholomew, Columbus
St. Lawrence, Indianapolis
St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
St. Monica, Indianapolis
Shawe Memorial High School, Madison

2005

Holy Family, New Albany
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis
St. Michael, Greenfield
St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis
St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis

2004

St. Barnabas, Indianapolis
St. Christopher, Indianapolis
St. Luke, Indianapolis
St. Mary, New Albany
St. Mary, North Vernon
Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

2003

St. Jude, Indianapolis
St. Louis, Batesville
St. Paul, Sellersburg
Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

2001

Holy Family, New Albany

2000

St. Charles, Bloomington

1999

Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School, Clarksville

1997

St. Jude, Indianapolis
Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

1994

St. Lawrence School, Indianapolis

1993

Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

1988

Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

1985

St. Mark School, Indianapolis

Schools must pass through the gate—with high standardized test scores before any other criteria are considered. Schools need to know when they are eligible through good management and sharing of test data.

The Blue Ribbon brings public recognition, but also accountability and even higher expectations for performance. It places the school's achievements in a larger context—on a bigger stage. It is a great public "thank you" to parents who pay the bills, and it affirms their investment in Catholic education.

(G. Joseph Peters is associate executive director of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. E-mail him at jpeters@archindy.org. This story is adapted from an article in *Momentum*, the official journal of the National Catholic Educational Association, April/May 2006. Used with permission. Contact: Barbara Keebler, NCEA, at 202-378-5762.) †

Congratulations!

Annette "Mickey" Lentz

The 2008 Recipient of the F. Sadlier Dinger Award



This award recognizes Mickey's outstanding leadership and dedication to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for nearly five decades as classroom teacher, principal, archdiocesan administrator and, since 1998, serving as the Executive Director, Secretariat for Catholic Education and Faith Formation.

Named for the former Chairman of the Board of William H. Sadlier, Inc. in 1980 to honor his lifelong dedication to the Catholic Church and to catechetical ministry, the F. Sadlier Dinger Award recognizes a person whose work in catechetical ministry has had a significant and long-lasting impact.

Congratulations, Mickey, and thank you for your dedication to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Office of Catholic Education!



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

Archbishop of Indianapolis guides nation at crossroads

By Ken Ogorek

Catholic education, in particular religious education, is at a crossroads of sorts.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis continues to help guide the authentic renewal of faith formation in schools, parish catechetical programs and various other settings for education in religion nationwide.



Ken Ogorek

A national leader

When the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* became available in the mid-1990s, our American bishops sprang in to action establishing their “Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.”

Simply put, this committee’s work has greatly improved the doctrinal content of textbooks and other resources used to teach religion in various settings.

Archbishop Buechlein was instrumental in this effort and continues to fill a major role in spearheading efforts to provide reliable materials for truly excellent religious education.

Our own Catechism

Archbishop Buechlein was deeply involved with the process that gives us our own *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*.

Why do we need an official American catechism?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* suggests that groups of bishops throughout the world produce local catechisms—articulations of the Catholic faith that accurately express the doctrines in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, yet communicate them

in ways that speak directly to people of specific regions, cultures and nations.

With Archbishop Buechlein’s involvement, our U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has blessed us with a great resource for adult religious education—a very important area of faith formation.

The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, then, will guide teacher training, catechetical certification and overall adult religious education for decades to come.

Local leadership, national impact

In southern and central Indiana, Archbishop Buechlein has overseen the implementation of strategies for religious education that are in turn used by several dioceses throughout the U.S.

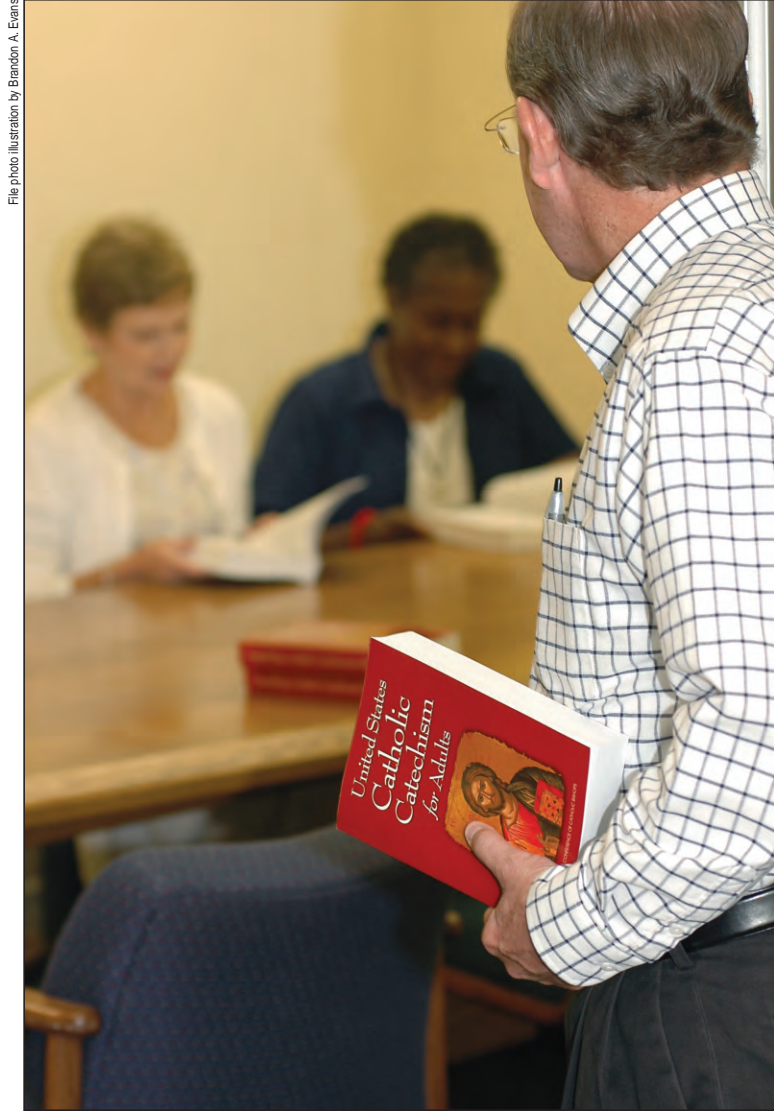
For example:

- Our Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guidelines, used both in schools and parish catechetical programs, answer the important question of “What am I supposed to teach?” in our archdiocese and several other dioceses.

- The Faith 2000 assessment instrument for religious education, developed by our Office of Catholic Education, provides helpful feedback in the area of faith formation—for school and parish programs—throughout southern and central Indiana as well as in dioceses other than our own.

Information on these and other resources is available on our Office of Catholic Education Web site, www.archindy.org/occe under Our Curriculum.

The *National Directory for Catechesis*—another document that Archbishop Buechlein helped to bring about—guides all of our Catholic education efforts from curriculum and assessment through approval of textbooks to teacher and catechist formation and



File photo illustration by Brandon A. Egan

The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* (USCCA) expresses the doctrines contained in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in a way that speaks directly to American society and culture. Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis has been a leader in faith formation in the United States by helping guide the crafting of the USCCA and earlier leading the Bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.

certification.

Decisions at a crossroads

From the late 1960s through the early 1990s, some methodological gains were made in religious education even if its doctrinal content wasn’t as clear as it could have been.

Without losing those gains, we have an exciting opportunity to bring greater clarity to Catholic education in light of documents

like the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. Efforts like Archbishop Buechlein’s are meeting the challenges that can arise when courageous decisions must be made for authentic renewal to spur genuine progress.

(Ken Ogorek is director of catechesis in the Office of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. E-mail him at kogorek@archindy.org.) †

Youth ministry in action: ‘Ding Dong, Ditch and Run’ builds community

By Rose Lehman



Several years ago, our youth team at Holy Family Parish in New Albany, Ind., was looking for a way to show our appreciation to some elderly parishioners who had been very involved in the life and growth of our parish.

Thus was born the “Nativity Set Delivery” program or what is now referred to as “Ding Dong, Ditch and Run”—3DR for short.

For 10 days in the middle of December, one figure from a Nativity set and part of the Nativity story are delivered to parishioners’ homes one at a time. With each delivery, the Nativity story grows.

Each day, a group of youth and family members stop at the houses of the

parishioners. They ring the doorbell and run back to the car—“ding-dong, ditch and run.”

“It’s been such a joy when the doorbell rings to see what unfolds in the little packages,” said 3DR recipients Betty Jo and Gene Murphy.

“Initially, I heard people wondering what was going on,” commented Father Sonny Day, pastor of Holy Family. “People like the mystery of it.”

The youths have fun trying not to get caught, and the recipients have fun trying to catch them.

“It was really funny to see how all the senior citizens tried to catch us each night,” said youth participant Katherine Finn. “I think they enjoyed it as much as we did.”

On the last day, the youths and families deliver the stable and the Baby Jesus, along with cookies, and sing Christmas carols to those they have served.

The first year, Holy Family delivered Nativity sets to the

homes of two parishioners. Last Christmas, the program’s sixth year of existence, six sets were delivered.

Recipients say it brings both joy and meaning to the Christmas season.

(Rose Lehman is youth minister at Holy Family Parish in New Albany, Ind. For more information on youth ministry in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, contact Father Jonathan Meyer, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, at jmeyer@archindy.org.) †



WELCOME

continued from page 1

Indianapolis Museum of Art sponsored by 11 colleges and universities in the region.

On March 28, a special symposium on urban education models will be held at the Convention Center. Details for all local events can be found at www.archindy.org/ncea or at the local hospitality booth at the convention.

The NCEA is the largest private, professional education association in the world, representing more than 200,000 educators serving 7.6 million students at

all levels of Catholic education—pre-school through college.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis reflects the NCEA’s commitment to faith-filled education. The archdiocese has 151 parishes serving more than 230,000 Catholics. Its 60 elementary and 11 high schools educate more than 23,000 students. Another 17,000 students are in parish religious education programs in 39 counties of southern and central Indiana.

Catholic schools in the archdiocese have also earned 31 national Blue Ribbon awards from the U.S. Department of Education, including 22 in the past five years, more than any other diocese. †

RCL Benziger

Touching Hearts with the Gospel Message
Stories of God's Love
for Ages 3–4 & 4–5

Including
Silver Burdett Ginn Religion

Visit us at the NCEA 105th Annual Convention & NPCD Convocation booths 617–624!

Mother Theodore Catholic Academies vital to center-city education

"We carry out the mission of educating center-city school children not because they are Catholic, but because we are Catholic."

—Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

Special to *The Criterion*

As Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein's words resonate, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has long realized the vital importance of the ministry of Catholic education in the center-city.

In 2004, Archbishop Buechlein formed a consortium of center-city schools that were not economically viable to remain operating on their own. The result is the now-named Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA).

This consortium approach assists the schools in operating more efficiently by consolidating and coordinating such areas as finance, maintenance, school improvement, Catholic identity and marketing.

"It's not just [a sharing of] financial resources, but human resources," said Tony Watt, MTCA chairman of the board.

One of the goals of the MTCA is to extract the principal from non-academic tasks. There is now a team of three principals for the six schools with campus directors at each site. This change in governance has brought about great efficiencies, good stewardship of resources and the empowerment of educators to do what they do best.

The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, named for Indiana's first saint, St. Theodora Guérin, are Holy Angels Catholic School, Holy Cross Central School, Central Catholic School, St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy, St. Anthony Catholic School and St. Philip Neri School, all in Indianapolis.

St. Theodora was known for her dedication and selflessness in administering to the needs of others. Mother Theodore Catholic Academies are open to children of all religions, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. Our schools remain anchors to the neighborhoods they serve.

The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies are committed to closing the achievement gap for low-income and minority students. Our focus is to provide rigorous academic programs that will lead students to secondary and post-secondary education.

Our programs provide the foundation for ongoing academic achievement to students of diverse backgrounds:

- One-third of our families have annual household incomes below \$13,000.
- 75 percent of our students are of minority culture.
- 72 percent of our students are low-income and qualify for the school lunch program.
- 47 percent of our students are non-



**MOTHER THEODORE
CATHOLIC ACADEMIES**
Shaping Spirits, Minds, and Futures

Catholic.

Although our center-city schools have widened the gap in long-term performance growth compared to their public school counterparts, the archdiocese is committed to value-added assessment to bring even higher levels of accountability and performance into the academies. This method measures both achievement and the child's growth from one year to the next.

Several programs have been added to the MTCA's educational model to ensure the best education for our students.

• **The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)** provides our schools with a systematic approach to professional staff restructuring and evaluates the impact of

instruction on student achievement. (See the story on Teacher Impact on Student Proficiency and Growth on page 4B.)

• **WIC-R Strategies** (grades 3–8) enables students to become competitive academically through learning activities that build mastery in writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading.

• **Reading Mastery** teaches literacy skills to students in pre-school through grade 2.

• **Crecer** class addresses non-English speaking students, grades 3–8, who are new to the U.S.

• **Latino Support Services** are available at three of our schools.

• **21st Century Community Learning Grant** (Project RELATES) with focus on reading, enrichment in after-school and summer programs for the MTCA Schools.

• **GATTE** (Gaining Access to Tomorrow's Education).



Ruth Tinsley, principal of St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy and Central Catholic School in Indianapolis, helps pre-kindergarten student Chya Jennings with her classroom work in this 2006 file photo. Both schools are part of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies.

Symposium on Catholic Urban Elementary Education set for March 28

If you are interested in learning more about the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies and other urban elementary school models from around the United States, please join us for the "Symposium on Catholic Urban Elementary Education" from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 28.

The symposium will be held at the Indiana Convention Center, following the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) Convention, which runs from March 24 through March 27.

The symposium fee is \$125 which includes the conference, continental breakfast and lunch.

(For registration information, call Sarah Ley at 317-236-1513 or 800-382-9836 ext. 1513 or e-mail her at sley@archindy.org. You can also go to our Web site at www.archindy.org/ncea/symposium.html.) †

- Provides tutoring and development of organizational skills.
- Helps middle school families and students transition to high school.
- Offers high school and post-secondary education site tours.
- Provides information regarding post-secondary education and career opportunities.

"Our approach is about providing a high-quality education with a strong moral base, which will lead students of all faiths and economic levels to secondary and post-secondary education," explained Connie Zittnan, director of MTCA.

"We want our students to be leaders in the community and role models for those who come after them."

Financial support for the MTCA schools has come from the archdiocese through the generous contributions of corporations, foundations and individuals.

(For more information about Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, please call Heidi Nightingale at 317-592-4067 or 800-382-9836, ext. 4067. E-mail her at hnightingale@archindy.org.) †

St. Theodora Guérin: A saint for Indiana and a role model for educators

Anne-Thérèse Guérin was born on Oct. 2, 1798, in France.

She was 24 when she entered the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir, France, a community that served as teachers and cared for the sick and poor.

The young sister was asked to lead a small missionary band of sisters to America to establish a motherhouse in the frontier Diocese of Vincennes in western Indiana.

Mother Theodore and five sisters arrived at their mission, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, on Oct. 22, 1840.

Mother Theodore would establish a motherhouse, an academy (now Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College), Catholic

schools and a legacy of love, mercy and justice that continues to this day.

She urged her Sisters of Providence to: "Put yourself gently into the hands of Providence."

By the time of her death on May 14, 1856, Mother Theodore had opened schools in towns throughout Indiana and Illinois, and the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence was strong, viable and respected.

She was beatified in 1998 and was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006, in a Vatican ceremony witnessed by hundreds of Hoosier Catholics.

St. Theodora is interred in the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods near Terre Haute, Ind. †



**Indiana's
first saint**



A marble statue of St. Theodora Guérin, the foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, stands outside of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The statue was sculpted by Teresa Clark of Terre Haute and carved by Nicholas Fairplay of Oberlin, Ohio. The statue will be dedicated on May 10.

Hispanic outreach program serves needs of families

By Mary Ann Wyand

Educating Hispanic children also means helping their Spanish-speaking parents and other family members with English as a New Language (ENL) instruction.

Margarita Solis Deal, program coordinator of Hispanic outreach for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, has created a series of bilingual classes to help Latino adults acclimate themselves to a new language and culture.

These evening classes held at Catholic schools with a large number of Hispanic students involve the parents in their children's learning environment and help build community among Latino adults who are newcomers in the parish.

"They want to learn English," Solis Deal said. "Although there are other [English language] courses available throughout the city, they feel much more comfortable coming to the school to get that resource."

This family support is especially important for student performance. Many Spanish-speaking parents express concern about not being able to help their children with homework assignments.

Terri Rodriquez, the principal at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis, said the school's ISTEP (Indiana Standard Testing for Educational Progress) test results last year indicated that students who did not achieve Level Four or Level Five in English proficiency on the Woodcock-Muñoz language scale also did not pass the ISTEP test.

Elizabeth Berkshire, the Catholic Charities Indianapolis social worker assigned to St. Philip Neri School, also works with Latino parents to help them understand the benefits of computers and dangers of the Internet as well as other cultural issues of concern.

Solis Deal began her bilingual ministry five years ago at center city grade schools in Indianapolis—which are now called the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies—with initial program funding through Project EXCEED.

At the time, she coordinated English as a

New Language instruction for Latino students in the schools.

Now that many archdiocesan schools with a significant number of Hispanic students have added an ENL teacher to their staff as well as bilingual teachers, Solis Deal has been able to network more with school staff members throughout the archdiocese as an administrative resource.

"That was the time in which we were getting more and more Hispanic families into the Catholic schools," she explained, "so the archdiocese started this position to look at how we respond to the needs of the families. That essentially was my task."

Five years ago, she said, St. Philip Neri School's enrollment was about 25 percent Hispanic and St. Anthony School's enrollment was about 17 percent Hispanic.

"Currently, those school enrollments have exploded in terms of the percentage of Hispanic families," Solis Deal said.

"St. Philip Neri School is now 93 percent Hispanic, and St. Anthony School is now about 70 percent Hispanic."

Recently, Solis Deal worked with staff members at Holy Name School in Beech Grove, St. Ambrose School in Seymour and St. Louis School in Batesville to help them with educational services for Hispanic students. She also talked with the principal at St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis about specific needs there.

Solis Deal presents a teacher orientation session titled "Welcoming the Latino Student into Your School: Things to Consider."

"I will go out and do workshops and training sessions," she said, "or work with the principals to see how they are getting their schools ready to support the Latino families."

"We're finding that the size of religious education programs increases tremendously in terms of working with the Hispanic population," Solis Deal said, "but many of the schools are still very limited [in resources]. The center city schools [in Indianapolis] receive financial support, but many schools in other areas [of the archdiocese] are challenged by the needs of



St. Philip Neri School students pose for an informal class picture on their way to lunch on Jan. 10 at the Indianapolis East Deanery grade school. Campus minister Mary McCoy stands in the hallway behind them. This year, 93 percent of St. Philip Neri's students are Hispanic. Five years ago, that figure was about 25 percent. English as a New Language programs and bilingual teachers are helping Latino students and their families acclimate to a new language and culture. (Photo by Mary Ann Wyand)

Hispanic families."

The former English as a Second Language program was renamed a few years ago, she said, to reflect the fact that many newcomers who immigrate to the U.S. already speak two or more languages.

"Someone from Guatemala speaks Spanish and may also know their Mayan dialect, their native language," she said. "Now they are learning a third language here."

It's also important to recognize cultural differences among Latinos who are English language learners, Solis Deal said. "We have people moving here from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. All these different people bring their own cultural traditions, and we need to be cognizant of that. We also work with the teachers on cultural awareness."

Last year, she developed six workshops for administrators and educators about teaching strategies for English language learners that also address cultural issues experienced by Latino families.

She said Hispanic parents who know very little English struggle with the

language barrier when raising their bilingual children and that creates stress in the home. Many parents also are working two jobs and have very little time to participate in English classes.

"That's a struggle that many [Latino] families face, especially when families come into the country with older students," Solis Deal said. "Sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students come here and fit into their new culture quickly. They pick up the language and other new ways, and their parents don't understand how they do that."

Families who immigrate to the U.S. do so to seek better opportunities, she said. "They're coming here to make a living and support their kids to give them a better life. They want to put food on the table."

Because Latino cultures are very family-oriented, Solis Deal said, "when you accept an Hispanic student you also accept their family. It's really important to connect with the parents so they feel included in their children's education."

(For more information contact Margarita Solis Deal at msolis@archindy.org.) †

St. Mary's Child Care Center helps children reach their potential

Special to The Criterion

For more than 45 years, St. Mary's Child Center in Indianapolis has been a leader in providing a full range of services for children who are desperately in need.

St. Mary's Child Center believes that every child deserves a childhood that allows the child to be successful in early years, in school and as adults.

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The Diagnostic Clinic at St. Mary's

provides evaluation and diagnosis of learning problems for more than 110 children ages 6-18 annually. A plan for school success is developed with the children's families based on the results of the evaluation.

St. Mary's Early Childhood Program provides direct services daily to 208 children age 3 to 5 who are impacted by poverty, abuse and violence. Transportation, nutrition services, social work services, play therapy and home-based family support is provided.

The program is of the highest quality. It is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and inspired by the pre-primary programs of Reggio Emilia of Italy, heralded to be the best early childhood program in the world by *Newsweek* magazine.

In addition, St. Mary's Child Center offers professional development opportunities to our community and beyond.

The Seminar Series introducing the Reggio approach is offered each semester, and one-to-one mentoring is offered to other programs serving poor children.

St. Mary's Child Center provides financial support for educators working with children in poverty.

St. Mary's is a member of the Indianapolis Reggio Collaborative (Butler University, Warren Township Early Childhood Program, Lawrence Township Early Learning Centers and St. Mary's Child Center) and participates in the Butler

Summer Institute, drawing educators from all over the Midwest.

Significant, positive, lifelong outcomes are experienced by children who participate in a high quality early childhood program, particularly children who face extreme barriers to development.

Research studies show compelling evidence that children involved in these programs have higher IQs, achievement scores and graduation rates. They are less likely to be retained, enrolled in special education or incarcerated later in life.

No child has ever been denied services at St. Mary's Child Center because a family is unable to pay. The clearly defined mission has the support of the entire community. Individual donors, foundations and the

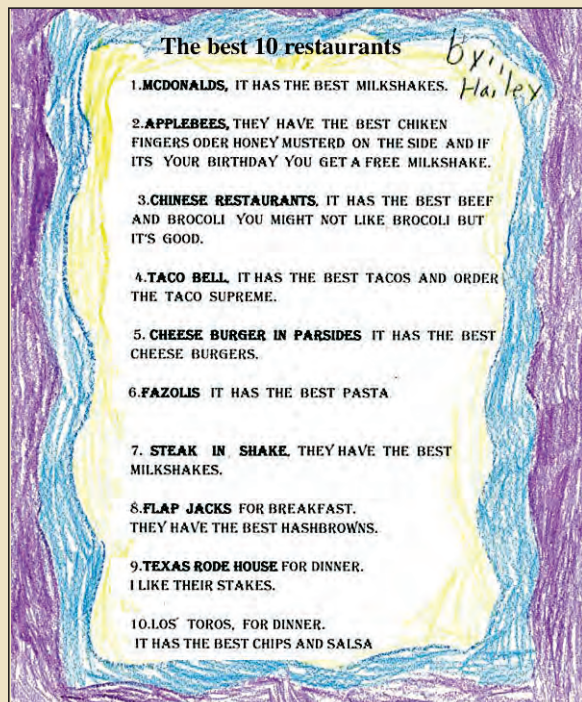
corporate community fund the programs.

Many of the largest companies in Indianapolis support St. Mary's Child Center and its approach to educating the whole child. Through the collaboration of these businesses, the leadership of the center and the archdiocese, St. Mary's is able to serve the neediest of children in the city.

These same businesses have extended their support to the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in the center city that also work to provide educational opportunities to the economically disadvantaged children of Indianapolis.

(For more information contact Connie Sherman, St. Mary's Child Center director, at csherman@stmaryschildcenter.org.) †

Children's restaurant review



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RCL Benziger is owned by CFM Religion Publishing Group, LLC. CFM also owns Standard Publishing in Cincinnati which is a non-denominational Christian publisher. However, the companies are independent and RCL Benziger continues to serve the Catholic market with Catholic materials. All our catechetical programs are submitted to the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the use of the Catechism for conformity review.

Why is Silver Burdett Ginn Religion not in the new company name?

We regret that we must phase out the use of the name Silver Burdett Ginn. Pearson Education publishes other academic products under the Silver Burdett Ginn imprint.

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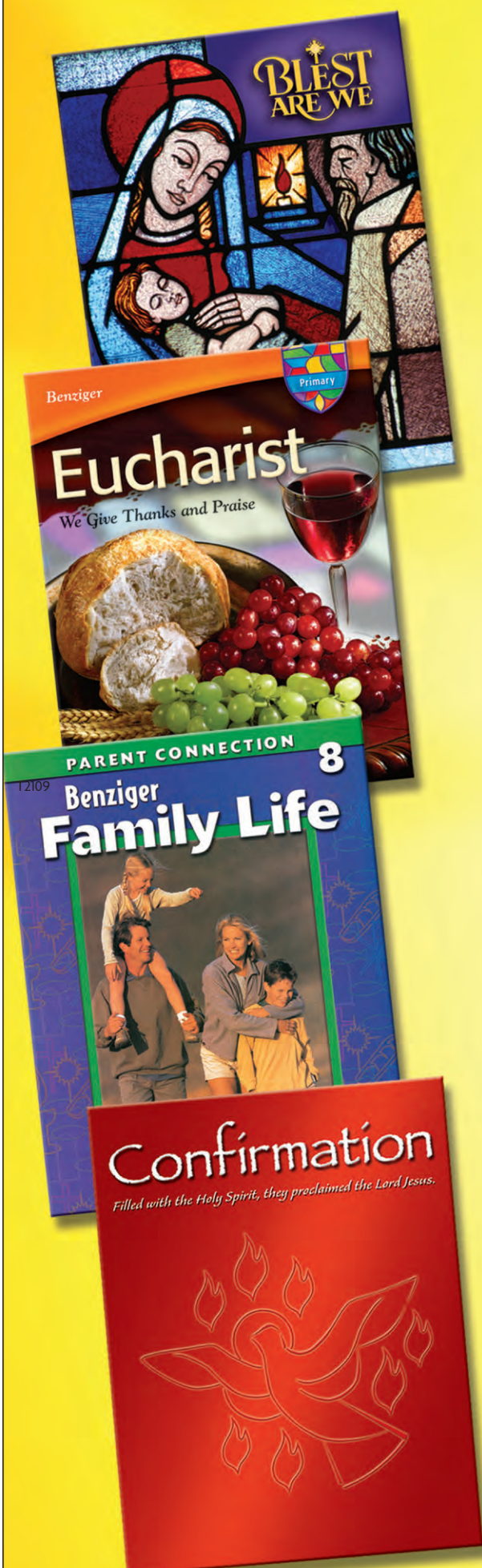
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What can you do when you don't feel the new life of Easter?

By Fr. John W. Crossin, O.S.F.S.

Catholic News Service

Sometimes we do not feel the new life of Easter. We can feel quite the opposite—distant and distracted.

How might we deal with the ups and downs and the lethargy that is an inevitable part of the spiritual life?

One response is to complain. We might tell others that Easter is much too early this year. Or we could say that the parish Lenten preparation was not as good as it normally is.

All this may be true even if it is not the underlying cause of our distance.

We do better to complain to a spiritual friend. Such friends listen intently and can give wise advice.

An obvious cause of distracted prayer may be purely physical. We may not realize how tired we really are. The late winter cold can sap our energy. A little rest or a visit to the doctor may be in order.

Our prayer may be lethargic because our whole life is going slowly.

But a more frequent cause of spiritual distraction is repetition or "sameness." We have prayers memorized, and they no longer speak to us as intimately as they once did.

This spiritual boredom presents an opportunity.

The opportunity may be to practice the virtue of perseverance. Life is full of repetition. Boredom may indicate that we need to pay greater attention.

We need to focus outward rather than withdraw into a self-centered world. Deeper understanding and energy may

come with renewed attention.

Spiritual boredom may call us to examine our practices of personal prayer. Maybe it is time to move on to new forms of prayer.

There are many forms of prayer in the Church. Our spiritual friends or our parish priest may have some good suggestions about forms of prayer.

Our lethargy may indicate our need for a good example from others. Sometimes we need to be on the receiving end of charity. The virtues of others can raise us up when we are down.

Yes, we are called to do for others, but an appreciation of the efforts of others can break the downward cycle. This example can be the infusion of the Spirit's grace that we need.

To receive a friendly phone call may help relieve our lethargy. Engaging deeply with others pulls us out of ourselves. Engaging deeply in prayer does the same.

At the Eucharist, we hear the inspired word of God. Though it may be familiar, it is deep and mysterious. We can begin to study the biblical word and listen for its deeper meaning.

We all encounter the inevitable hills and valleys of the spiritual journey of life. Perseverance, charity, and a renewed life of personal and communal prayer can make for a new beginning.

Ultimately, we must ask the Spirit for new life—and be ready to go deeper into the mystery of the risen Christ.

(Oblate Father John W. Crossin is executive director of the Washington Theological Consortium in Washington, D.C.) †

Ultimately, we must ask the Spirit for new life—and be ready to go deeper into the mystery of the risen Christ.



The risen Christ is portrayed in artwork by Robert Falcucci at St. Pius X Basilica in Lourdes, France. Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, is on March 23 in the Latin rite this year.

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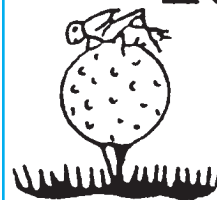
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Meet Jesus Christ in the Stations of the Cross

By Jacob Allstott
Special to *The Criterion*

Some 2,000 years ago, Jesus died on the cross.

As followers of Christ, we pray through the Stations of the Cross in an attempt to remember what Christ endured for our salvation, but it can be rather hard to meet Christ in his sufferings.

Over the last 2,000 years, our society and lifestyles have changed dramatically so we forget what happened during the Passion of our Lord and the Crucifixion takes on more mythical proportions.

As a young man, this is how I viewed the Stations of the Cross and the Passion of Christ. I could not relate to biblical times or the spiritual significance, but on Dec. 26, 2004, all that changed.

That is the day when I took on my own cross, and it was JESUS CHRIST who came and met me in my sufferings, giving me a different perspective on what Christ did for me during the Passion.

It was a normal winter day. My three brothers, Michael, Luke and Ezekiel, and I decided to go snow sledding on an inner tube. We were having a great time.

There had been 30 inches of snowfall that Christmas week, and we were making full use of it. Then it happened.

I was sledding down the hillside face-first and the inner tube got kicked out of the chute and into the side of a tree. (Station I—Jesus is Condemned to Die)



The Allstott brothers stand in front of the crucifix at Our Lady of the Springs Church in French Lick, the parish where they grew up. Pictured in this 2003 photo are, from left, front row, Michael and Jacob, and, back row, Ezekiel and Luke.

In a split second, everything in my life changed. My thoughts went from what movie should I watch that afternoon to am I going to die today?

Time seemed to stand still as I wrapped around the tree with my right side. I just waited to hear the pop of breaking bones, while thinking that this is going to hurt.

To my surprise, I bounced back off the tree and was back on my feet trying to walk up the hill. (Station II—Jesus Carries His Cross)

I realized that all the air was trapped in my lungs. I forced it out with an excruciating cry of pain then I sunk to my knees and passed out face-first in the snow. (Station III—Jesus Falls the First Time)

My brothers must have thought that I had just died. Michael, quick to action, had Luke and Zeke go back to the house to get the car ready and call our Mom and Dad.

Michael then went down the hill on the four-wheeler to try to revive me. (Station V—Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross)

He nudged me a few times and called my name, but I did not respond. I was too heavy for him to pick me up and pack on the four-wheeler.

He was just about to ride up the hill for help when he heard me stir and say, "I'm OK, I'm OK!"

We rode up the hill and drove to the hospital. We walked straight into the emergency room, and I was so exhausted that I collapsed into a wheelchair. (Station VII—Jesus Falls the Second Time)

Michael and I were praying the whole time, but hope seemed to have left us. What we did not know was that I had ruptured my kidney on impact and pulled it away from the aorta and vena cava. (I should have bled to death in six minutes.)

I laid back on the gurney while all the doctors and nurses ran circles around me, and I prayed for God's will to be done in my life. I knew that I could die, but I put my life in God's hands. (Station IX—Jesus Falls the Third Time)

Then a sense of peace came over me that I had never known before. Jesus took over. It was as if I was a guest in my own body, just watching what was going on around me.

It was very sad to think about the family and loved ones I would leave behind.

I had just met the girl I had waited my whole life for, but I was OK to go meet Jesus. I just laid there and rested in the peace of Christ. I even had a nurse ask me twice why I wasn't scared to die. I could not answer her. I simply looked back at her and said, "I don't know." (Station VI—Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face)

Then I realized that my Mom had made it to the hospital. I looked up at her and saw tears in her eyes, and it broke my heart because she knew. I could tell that she knew, but there was nothing that I could do to console her. (Station IV—Jesus Meets His Mother)

They soon flew me to the University of Louisville Hospital's Trauma Center, where I

was prepared for surgery. They had to run a CAT scan to see what they were dealing with before they opened me up. The pain was unbearable as they stretched my arms over my head to send me through the machine. (Station XI—Jesus is Nailed to the Cross)

Then they were ready to operate. I remember being so exposed as I got on the operating table. I was completely naked, but did not care. (Station X—Jesus is Stripped)

I went through two life-or-death surgeries while my family and loved ones sat out in the waiting room, crying and praying. (Station VIII—Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem)

I nearly died several times that night as many doctors and nurses fought to save my life. (Station XII—Jesus Dies on the Cross)

After 10 hours of surgery, I was taken to the intensive care unit. (Station VIII—Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross)

After spending the last 15 hours in torturous conversations with doctors and the agony of not knowing if they would ever see me again, my family was finally able to come in my room. It was not pretty, though.

They had given me 18 pints of blood, 20 units of platelets and 20 units of plasma to keep me alive, but it caused my entire body to swell up like a balloon.

I hardly even looked like the son that they once knew. The doctors put me under sedation, and I spent the next few days in darkness. (Station XIV—Jesus is Laid in the Tomb)

I have few memories of meeting my family and loved ones as they poured into the hospital.

I died many spiritual deaths during my recovery and the Lenten season that followed.

Every time I prayed the Stations of the Cross, I could see that Christ really took on all of our sins and sufferings, and he carried them with the cross to the top of Calvary.

ONS photo courtesy Vatican Museums



An oil painting of Christ's crucifixion by Italian futurist Gerardo Dottori is among the modern works of art on display in a special exhibit at the Vatican Museums. Dottori painted "The Crucifixion" in 1927.

It is a truth that has redefined my relationship with Jesus. It is the defining moment of my life and my miracle.

Every doctor I have spoken to about my accident has said that there is no medical explanation for why I am alive. The human body is not supposed to endure that kind of extreme stress, but I know that "Our sorrows He [Christ] carried ... And by His scourging we are healed" (Is 53:4-5).

Therefore, during this Good Friday and Holy Week, I invite you to let Christ meet you in your own sufferings of loneliness, humiliation, illness and death.

Think about what pain and sufferings you have known in this life then remember the Good News of the Gospel and that JESUS CHRIST has already carried that to the cross.

So give it to Jesus: cry for those sufferings, cry for what he endured for us, pray to be healed, and may God bless you in your journey as he has blessed me and my family!

(Jacob Allstott is a teacher at St. Jude School in Indianapolis. He is a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, and grew up in Our Lady of the Springs Parish in French Lick.) †

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Easter stories around the fire remind us who we are

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

Catholic News Service

In the course of my life, I've spent many pleasant evenings sitting around a campfire.

My earliest experiences of that pleasure were in my years in the Boy Scouts, and the campfire was often the occasion for telling stories passed on from older Scouts to younger ones through the years.

Telling stories around the fire is really an ancient practice, probably going back before recorded history.

Something very similar happens when we celebrate the Easter Vigil. We gather around the Easter fire then go inside the church and tell stories that remind us of who we are.

The ancient texts we read on this most holy night recount the history of God's dealings with humanity. Thus, they set the stage for our own experience of God's actions in our midst today.

The Liturgy of the Word on that night begins with the Genesis account of creation. As we prepare to celebrate the new creation accomplished through the death and resurrection of the Lord, we recall the first creation where it all began.

The second reading, also from Genesis, recounts the story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only son to fulfill God's will. That was not God's will, but the story serves as a symbol of God's love revealed in sending his only Son to save us.

The third reading is the central account in the Jewish tradition of God's saving power, the story of the Exodus from Egypt. This night, we celebrate Christ's "exodus" through death to

new life, and we see the water of the sea as a symbol of the water of baptism through which we are saved.

The next four readings come from three of the prophets:

- Isaiah speaks of the restoration of the people of God, a promise fulfilled in our salvation through Christ Jesus. A second passage from Isaiah speaks of the banquet that God has prepared for us. It is a fitting anticipation of the Eucharist that we celebrate on this holy night.

- A passage from the prophet Baruch offers a poem in praise of divine wisdom. The Christian tradition has long seen Jesus as the incarnate wisdom of God, showing us the way to live and the way to the Father.

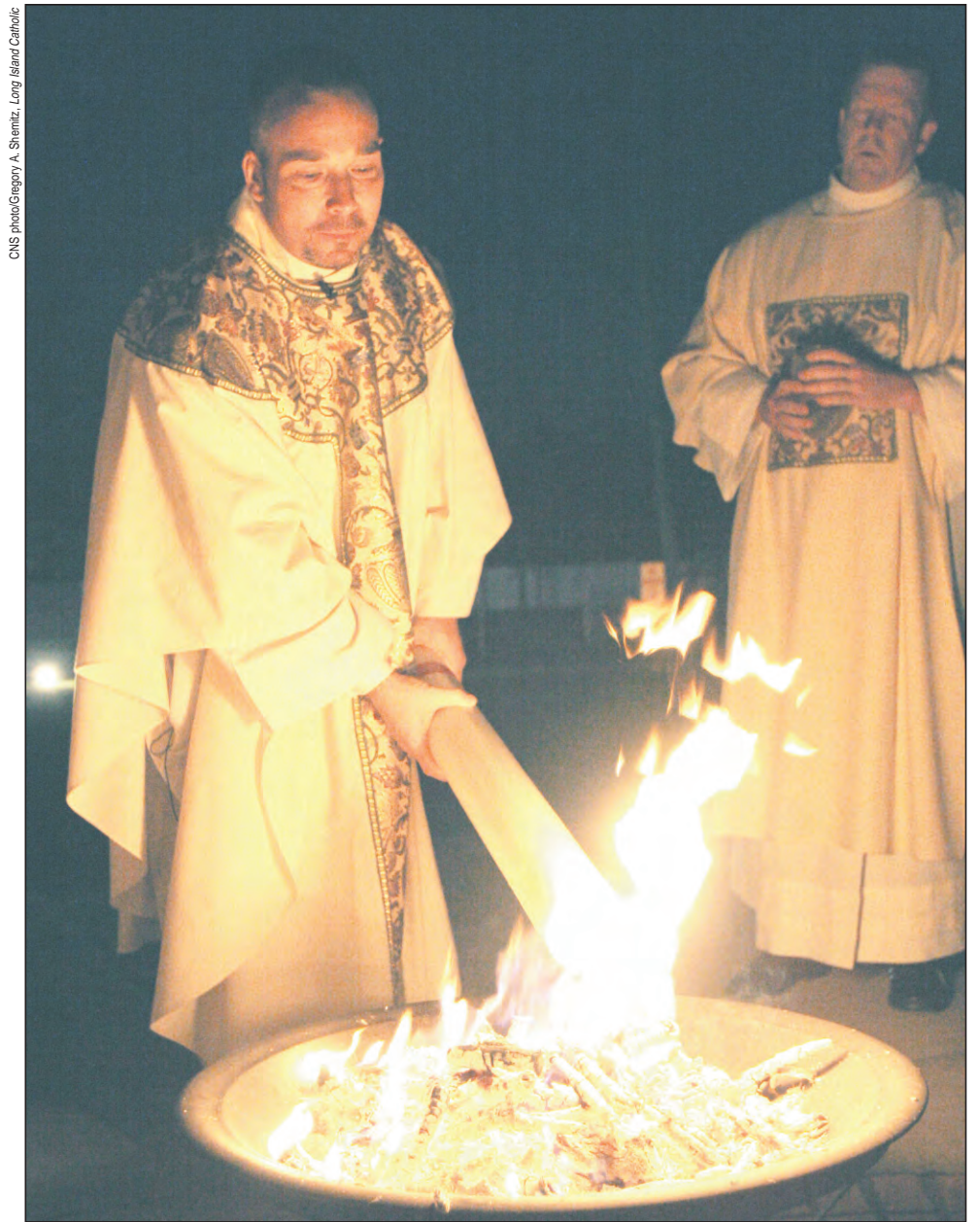
- The final prophetic passage comes from Ezekiel. It is another reading that promises the restoration of God's people, but Ezekiel stresses the need for purification through water, an apt image of baptism's power to set us free from sin.

After hearing several of these readings from the Jewish Scriptures, we turn to the New Testament and hear St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, which describes baptism as a sharing in Christ's death and resurrection.

The Gospel reading varies over a three-year cycle, but all three passages recount the discovery of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

This proclamation of the central truth of our faith brings our storytelling to its climax and leads us into the celebration of baptism, where new members of our community will experience in their own lives God's power to save us and bring us to new life.

(Father Lawrence Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.) †



Father Sean Gann lights the paschal candle at the beginning of the Easter Vigil in 2007 at Christ the King Church in Commack, N.Y.

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Ethnic customs for Easter are celebrated around the world

By Louise McNulty

Catholic News Service

When the members of some Cleveland parishes participate in "The Walk" on Good Friday, they are continuing a custom long practiced in Puerto Rico, Mexico and parts of South America.

But it is more than a Lenten practice essential for appreciating the full magnitude of Easter, said Deacon Miguel Figueroa, who serves at St. Michael the Archangel and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes on Cleveland's lower west side.

It is part of the Easter celebration of the primarily Hispanic parishes.

He explained that the walk "is important to people because it connects them to the suffering of Jesus just as it later connects them to the liberation of his resurrection."

For the past 12 years, one walk has started at noon and covered the seven miles between St. Michael and *La Sagrada Familia* parishes. One man represents Christ and carries a cross. Other parishioners portray Mary, the mother of Jesus, as well as Veronica, the soldiers and others who figured prominently during Christ's Passion.

Members of the two parishes take turns deciding where the walk will start and finish, stopping at a halfway point at a third parish, where they will take part in a service at St. Patrick Church on Bridge Avenue.

Deacon Figueroa estimates that around 300 people participate annually, including "people who join us on the way, some [of whom] aren't even Catholic."

"The Walk" at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was started two years ago and doesn't include role playing.

St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Parish is another community that sponsors a Good Friday walk on Cleveland's near-east side.

Capuchin Franciscan Father Bob Marva, pastor of the predominantly African-American parish, said their walk doesn't contain any special cultural features.

"We walk around the neighborhood and plant a cross for each station, giving witness to our faith in a neighborhood that has lots of crime, violence and drug problems," he said, adding that their Palm Sunday procession and other church services incorporate African dance, drums and rhythmic traditions.

The parish also has a "Wisdom Council" comprised of members 65 or older who are recognized for wisdom and leadership in the community. They serve in an advisory capacity to the pastor, parish and parish council much like a council of elders advises the tribal leader in most African villages.

Their particular role in the Easter Vigil is one that they carry out for all parish baptisms.

"We baptize by full immersion," Father Marva explained, "and after the newly baptized are led out to change into their Easter clothes, the council members carrying African leadership staffs lead them back into church."

St. Stanislaus Parish in Cleveland also has strong cultural ties. It isn't far from St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Parish.



Cardinal Francis E. George blesses Easter baskets at St. Ferdinand Parish in Chicago on April 6, 2007. The blessing of baskets of food to be prepared for Easter dinner is a Polish custom.

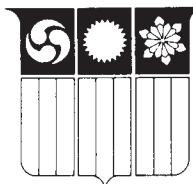
St. Stanislaus administrator Bojdan Pieniak said 75 percent to 80 percent of the parish's 1,200 registered families are of Polish descent. The parish draws from all parts of Cleveland because of its emphasis on Polish traditions.

On Easter and throughout the rest of the year, the parish's 10 a.m. Mass is said in Polish. During Lent, weekly Stations of the Cross are said on Fridays at 5:30 p.m. in Polish and at 7 p.m. in English. The parish also offers the

Polish Lamentations, a devotion based on the psalms.

"On Holy Saturday, we have the blessing of food on the hour from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.," Pieniak said. "People bring anything that they would be using on Easter. Being Polish, that usually includes foods like kielbasa, ham, bread, eggs and butter."

(Louise McNulty is a freelance writer in Akron, Ohio.) †



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Vicar general says charity can overcome culture of death

By Mary Ann Wyand

Faith, hope and charity are the foundations of the pro-life movement, Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, explained in his keynote address during the fourth annual Catholic Pro-Life Dinner on March 8 in downtown Indianapolis.



Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel

To combat the culture of death in a troubled world, he said, pro-life supporters must act lovingly and charitably, offer hope and help to those who need it, and pray for God's intervention in the eternal battle of good against evil.

The dinner was sponsored by the Catholic Life Network and Catholics United for the Faith to raise funds for the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry and Gabriel Project of Indiana.

Catholic Life Network *Pro Vita* Awards for distinguished service were presented to St. Anthony parishioner Kathleen Naghdi of Indianapolis, a longtime Birthline volunteer; Our Lady of the Greenwood parishioner Pam Leffler of Greenwood, a Rachel's Vineyard Retreats volunteer; and SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi parishioner Kim Stecher of Greenwood, a volunteer pro-life youth event coordinator.

Also honored with *Pro Vita* Awards for distinguished volunteer service to the Gabriel Project were St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) parishioner Anita Moody of Indianapolis; Robert Rust of Greensburg, who is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg; and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner Jane Blanchard of Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

"Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical is about charity," Msgr. Schaedel told the gathering. "In '*Deus Caritas Est*'—'God Is Love'—the Holy Father points out that there are various kinds of love. He also points out in that very same encyclical that our society has many problems that need to be remedied."

To do that, the vicar general said, "we have to look at some of the challenges in our society to suggest remedies. We have to know what we are up against, and we have to do it in charity for the sake of others."

Last December, he said, Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick was sentenced to 23 months in prison for organizing and promoting the cruel and illegal practice of dog-fighting.

Yet in 1973, Msgr. Schaedel said, the

U.S. Supreme Court justices legalized abortion during all nine months of pregnancy in their *Roe v. Wade* decision, which has resulted in the deaths of more than 51 million unborn babies.

"One of four babies dies by choice," he said. "It's legal to obtain an abortion during all nine months of pregnancy for elective reasons in all 50 states in this country."

Planned Parenthood, the largest abortion provider in the U.S., recently completed a \$7 million fundraising campaign in Indianapolis, Msgr. Schaedel said, to upgrade their existing centers and pay for a new abortion facility constructed at West 86th Street and Georgetown Road.

"Some very fine civic leaders in our [Indianapolis] community have given to Planned Parenthood," he said. "They've made significant gifts to that campaign."

"Planned Parenthood is not interested in either planning or parenthood," the vicar general said. "Human life has become cheap. It's disposable."

Planned Parenthood also aggressively promotes the use of artificial birth control methods to young people, Msgr. Schaedel noted, while encouraging them to become sexually active.

"Planned Parenthood isn't interested in births," he said, "and they're not interested in control either."

The abortion provider is using the guise of health education about human sexuality to market their abortion services, he said, despite the serious moral and medical problems associated with sexual promiscuity.

"We know that in our culture, the role of parents, the family, is undermined in very subtle ways," Msgr. Schaedel said. "Recently, the Alaska Supreme Court ruled that underage girls can seek abortions without their parents' consent. ... But if one of those same girls is injured at school on the playground, the school nurse or even the hospital cannot treat her without her parents' consent. ... School officials in Portland, Maine, have decided to allow children as young as 11 years old to obtain contraceptives without their parents' knowledge."

Children are seen as consumers, he said, and companies spend millions of dollars a year for advertising targeted at influencing



Gabriel Project of Indiana director Eileen Hartman of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus presents a Catholic Life Network *Pro Vita* Award to Robert Rust of Greensburg, who is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg, during the fourth annual Catholic Pro-Life Dinner on March 8 in Indianapolis. Five other pro-life volunteers also were honored during the program.

young people.

As Christians, he said, "we have to know what we are up against because charity always seeks solutions to problems and we have plenty [of problems] in the U.S. In all honesty and charity, we have to say—with our Lord on the cross—'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing.'"

Fortunately, he said, there are signs of hope in American culture.

"The number of abortions and abortion providers in the United States and in the state of Indiana has been decreasing for about the last 20 years," the vicar general said. "The Alan Guttmacher Institute reports statistics for Planned Parenthood. Their report from last January says that the abortion rate for women ages 15 to 44 is the lowest it's been since ... the [U.S.] Supreme Court made abortion on demand legal in all 50 states. Then they report, with a tear in their eye, that 86 counties out of 92 in Indiana have no abortion providers. ... That's a sign of hope."

Another sign of hope is the archdiocesan "A Promise to Keep: God's Gift of Human Sexuality" peer mentor abstinence program, he said, which honored 350 teenage volunteers on March 6 and featured a speech by Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, who emphasized the value of waiting for marriage. (See related story on page 18.)

The National March for Life held each January in the nation's capital is yet another sign of hope, he said. "This is the 35th year for that march. Tens of thousands of young people from all over the country marched in Washington, D.C., to protest the *Roe v. Wade* decision by the Supreme Court."

The Catholic Church "has been right all along" regarding respect for the sanctity of life, Msgr. Schaedel said. " '*Humanae Vitae*'

in 1968 reaffirmed the Church's teaching that artificial contraception is wrong. ... Pope Paul VI made four general prophecies or predictions about what would happen if the Church's teachings on contraception were ignored."

Pope Paul warned that artificial birth control would result in increases in immoral behavior, conjugal infidelity, divorce, out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, the vicar general said. The pope also warned that men would lose respect for women, people would treat each other as objects for pleasure, artificial contraception would become a dangerous weapon in the hands of public authorities and people would think they have unlimited dominion over their bodies.

"Forty years ago this year, Paul VI was right," Msgr. Schaedel said. "The Church's moral teaching is right. ... In all charity, we realize that the world is a mess when it comes to respect for life issues. ... There are a lot of people that need our prayers because in terms of the natural law—and that's God's law—they're wrong."

Pro-Life Action League founder and national director Joseph Scheidler of Chicago, who attended the fundraiser, said he appreciated Msgr. Schaedel's remarks.

"The crisis of our time is that we as a society have lost respect for life," Scheidler said. "... To take life so lightly that you can kill children, you can practice euthanasia, you can treat people like things, like sick animals, is just appalling. ... But we are seeing a rebirth of respect for life. ... There's great hope in the pro-life movement. I see it everywhere among the young people. We have the truth. ... Prayer is the most powerful tool we have." †

Sustaining the Spirit

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Lt. Gov. Skillman encourages teens to make wise, healthy choices

By Mary Ann Wyand

It's critically important to make wise and healthy choices in daily life, Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman told 350 Catholic high school students from central and southern Indiana on March 6, and it's equally important to wait until the time is right to make major life choices.



Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman

"Don't steal from your future," she emphasized in her

keynote address during the 14th annual awards luncheon for the archdiocesan A Promise to Keep: God's Gift of Human Sexuality peer mentor chastity program at the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

The lieutenant governor arrived at the Catholic Center in an ethanol-powered SUV and made time for several media interviews before the program.

Indiana has lots of bright and talented young people who are making a difference in the Hoosier state now, she said in an interview, and who will continue to improve the quality of life here for many years.

"One of my favorite quotes comes from [President] John Quincy Adams, who said, 'If your actions encourage others to dream more, to learn more and to become more, then you are a leader.'" Skillman said. "Doesn't that [quotation] so perfectly apply to these youth mentors we have in this program because their actions speak volumes, and encourage others to learn more, dream more and become more."

She noted that teenagers carry their personal histories with them throughout their adult lives.

After the teenage peer mentors greeted Skillman with enthusiastic applause, she told them that the good things in life evolve one day at a time as a result of hard work and dedication, and should be savored and enjoyed as important accomplishments.

"The governor [Mitch Daniels] and I want to build a very strong future for you right here in Indiana," she said. "We want to keep our bright, talented young individuals here within the state. I know you're all looking for opportunities that will lead you to the right school, to the right career. The governor and I are doing all we can to open the right doors for you."

A native of Bedford, Skillman said she has been married to her high school sweetheart, Steve, for 38 years and they have one son, Aaron. She served 12 years in the Indiana Senate before Daniels asked her in 2004 to serve as his running mate and lieutenant governor if he was elected to the state's highest office.

"You have some waiting to do," she reminded the teenagers. "You have a number of choices to make, and those choices will

determine how many opportunities you have in the future and also what those opportunities will be. I want to assure you that it is possible to have everything you want, but it's not possible to have everything you want at the same time."

Skillman said every change in her life brought exciting new challenges that were worth waiting for years.

"Don't wish away even one season of your life," she said. "I've always been content to really live what I've been given. I chose to be content and enjoy what was before me, not quick to wish away even one season of my life to get on with another. I think one of the most precious secrets to life is to enjoy the passage of time, no matter what it holds for you."

Everyone has dreams and goals for the future, Skillman explained, but it's important to remember to stay "fully invested" in the present.

"Waiting for the next thing doesn't have to be a completely frustrating undertaking," she said. "The waiting can make you even happier when the things you finally acquire come your way."

Skillman said her husband is four years older so they waited several years to begin dating. After their marriage, they had to wait 10 years until their only child was born.

"Our son, Aaron, was born one day before our 10th anniversary and he was one celebrated little baby," she said. "He was the first grandchild and also the first great-grandchild on my side of the family. The satisfaction of just holding him in our arms was greater than we had ever anticipated. I know all parents love their children, but with so many years of waiting for ours I was just overwhelmed with joy for our son. He was worth all those years of waiting."

Skillman said her grandfather was a special role model in her life, and she recognizes the importance of good mentors for young people.

"Your present is such a rich, wonderful time," she said. "It has a lot to offer if you just slow down and enjoy it. ... In a world that is screaming at us to have everything we want and to have it right now, I think we all know that it's usually the hardest things in life that are the most worth doing. Savor this time and don't get ahead of yourself. Choose wisely. I think you'll be very happy with the results."

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, represented Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein at the awards program.

"You can always choose to do the right thing," Msgr. Schaedel said. "A Promise to Keep is really about many, many things, but most of all it is about what kind of choices that you make, and what kind of choices you encourage or teach others to make. ... You are leaders right now so the choices you make, and the choices that you make others think about, can make a tremendous difference."

He said one choice—one 30-second decision—can change the course of a person's life forever.

"There's no going back once we make certain choices," Msgr. Schaedel said. "I want

Peer mentors discuss value of A Promise to Keep program

"I chose to be a mentor because A Promise to Keep promotes great morals and lifestyles that I can relate to. I enjoy and appreciate the program so much. ... My [public grade] school did not have A Promise to Keep. Now that I am a mentor, I can make



sure that kids will have this program to guide them. A Promise to Keep has prepared me for the future challenges in college. It has also strengthened my values so that I am a better person and will make the right decisions."

Johnny Harkey
Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School junior
Indianapolis

"Through the A Promise to Keep program, students have an equal opportunity to



learn about God's message of chastity from dedicated high school students who live this calling throughout their daily lives. ... Programs such as A Promise to Keep are always there for a

sort of 'refuge' from secular pressures. While the world may change, God's message does not."
Frank Therber
Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School senior
Indianapolis

"I joined Cathedral's A Promise to Keep program as a junior because I believe that by saving myself for my husband I am giving him the best gift I can offer. ... I have discovered that chastity is not just about saving sex for

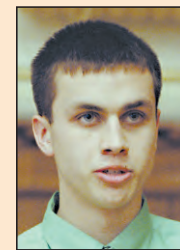
marriage. Chastity is about how I live my life on a daily basis, even when no one is watching. ... Talking with the younger students about real love is always an adventure. ... I have come to see myself and other members of



A Promise to Keep as true leaders and role models to both the middle schoolers we teach and friends within our peer group. ... I believe I am ready and well prepared to face whatever challenges [that] college brings me through what I have learned in the A Promise to Keep program.

Amy Dickman
Cathedral High School senior
Indianapolis

"I chose to be a mentor for A Promise to Keep because I was encouraged by my older sister, and I also wanted to help inform others about the consequences of premarital sex. I have really enjoyed working with the students, and encouraging them to



practice self-control and make the correct choices. A Promise to Keep has greatly strengthened my conviction to stay abstinent. It has given me the tools I need to achieve God's plan of saving myself for marriage. I believe this program does a great job in establishing a solid foundation for the students to remain chaste, and I am honored to be a part of A Promise to Keep.

Michael Zimmerman
Bishop Chatard High School senior
Indianapolis

to thank you, as the lieutenant governor already alluded to, for taking choices seriously. Never forget, in terms of A Promise to Keep or any other decisions that you will make from now on, ... [that] our choices make us who we are and what we want to be."

Margaret Hendricks, program coordinator of the A Promise to Keep peer mentor program, said more than 350 Catholic high school students in Marion County alone have been mentors to more than 5,000 middle school students during the 2007-08 school year.

Their distinguished volunteer service was

also recognized by Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard, who sent a proclamation honoring the peer mentors from Bishop Chatard High School, Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, Roncalli High School, Cardinal Ritter High School, Cathedral High School and Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis.

Chastity peer mentors from Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg and St. Agnes Parish in Nashville also were honored for their volunteer service in the abstinence education program. †

Pope steps up appeals for end to bloodbath, hatred tearing apart Iraq

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI stepped up appeals for an end to the bloodbath and hatred tearing apart Iraq.

Mentioning the recent tragic death of an Iraqi archbishop and the upcoming fifth anniversary of the start of the U.S.-led campaign against Iraq, the pope issued "a loud and concerned outcry."

"Enough with the bloodshed, enough with the violence, enough with the hatred in Iraq," he said immediately before reciting his noonday Angelus prayer in St. Peter's Square on March 16.

He launched an appeal to all Iraqis, "who for the past five years have borne the consequences of a war that has caused the upheaval of civil and social life."

"Beloved Iraqi people: Lift up your heads and let it be you yourselves who, in the first place, rebuild" the life of the nation, he said.

"May reconciliation, forgiveness, justice and respect for the civil coexistence among tribes, ethnicities and religious groups" be the harmonious path the people take so as to achieve peace in God's name, the pope said.

In his address, the pope recalled the

"tragic loss" of Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho of Mosul, 65, who was kidnapped on Feb. 29 in an attack that left his driver and two bodyguards dead.



Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho

The archbishop had paid "beautiful witness of faithfulness to Christ, the Church and his people, whom he did not want to abandon despite numerous threats," the pope said.

The archbishop's body was recovered on March 13 after the kidnappers told Catholic leaders in Iraq where he had been buried.

Police were unclear whether Archbishop Rahho had been killed. He suffered from a heart condition and needed medication, Church officials said.

An autopsy was inconclusive about the cause of death due to the advanced state of

the body's decomposition. The archbishop had no bullet wounds, and he appeared to have been dead a week, reported the British news agency Reuters.

Pope Benedict celebrated a memorial Mass on March 17 for Archbishop Rahho in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.

He praised the archbishop for being "a man of peace and dialogue" who dedicated himself to helping the poor and handicapped.

He asked that Archbishop Rahho's example inspire "all Iraqis of good will, Christians and Muslims, to build a peaceful coexistence founded on brotherhood and mutual respect."

He also encouraged the nation's Christians to persevere and know that they can find the strength in their faith in God and Christ "to not lose heart in the difficult situation they are living through."

The pope denounced the "inhumane way" the archbishop died as well as his "indecent burial" by his kidnappers.

The archbishop had followed in Christ's

footsteps, carrying a heavy cross, remaining faithful "to the law of love" and paying witness to the truth, not only for his "martyred country" but also for the whole world, said the pope.

Again he urged the country's Christians to continue dedicating themselves to building a peaceful, harmonious society.

Archbishop Rahho's funeral and burial were on March 14 outside Mosul, a northern Iraqi city considered to be a stronghold of al-Qaida. Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki blamed al-Qaida for the archbishop's death.

Thousands of people turned out for the archbishop's funeral, at which the Chaldean patriarch, Cardinal Emmanuel-Karim Delly of Baghdad, presided.

"There is no doubt that [Archbishop] Rahho is a martyr," the apostolic nuncio to Iraq, Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, told the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*.

"And I hope this sacrifice can serve to draw the whole world's attention to the Iraqi crisis," he said in the paper's March 16 edition. †

New life for Christians takes a eucharistic form

By Fr. Gerald O'Collins, S.J.

At Easter, many parishes around the world are revitalized when newly baptized adults make their first holy Communion.

Some communities may have grown lethargic, but they receive an injection of fresh life when a line of men and women step forward to receive the Eucharist for the first time and enjoy an intimate communion with their risen Lord.

New life for Christians, Pope Benedict XVI said, takes a eucharistic form.

We can see that happening year by passing year when we greet people at the Easter Vigil or on Easter Sunday.

We can feel how, raised from the dead and charged with the infinite vitality of his glorious life, the risen Jesus shares his love and spiritual energy through the Eucharist with all the faithful—the newly baptized, cradle Catholics, young and old.

"Life" is a magic word. We all want to live and live fully.

Innumerable advertisements promise customers a richer, more satisfying life. Buy this cell phone and "live beyond frontiers." Pay for this sports channel and "live the legend." Color supplements present us with the glittering lifestyles of glamorous celebrities and try to make us desperate to follow them.

Advertisers know that we all hunger for a full and utterly worthwhile life. But what we buy, own and consume will never provide us with the true fullness of life and may leave us as dissatisfied as ever.

In his book *Jesus of Nazareth*, Pope Benedict commented on the rich glutton in the parable of Dives and Lazarus: "His carousing was only an attempt to smother the interior emptiness" of his existence. Where is real life to be found? What will deliver us from our emptiness and truly satisfy us?

Disciples' faith in Jesus enabled them to believe in Resurrection

By Carole Norris Green

The Gospels, which give many details about Jesus' suffering and death, are strangely silent about Christ's resurrection, said Bishop Edward Braxton of Belleville, Ill., in his 2007 pastoral letter on Lent and Easter.

Jesus' resurrection "was not a grand illusion like a David Copperfield feat that 'proved' to the disciples that he was the Son of God," he said. "It was their faith in Jesus as the Messiah that enabled them to believe the Resurrection."

Christ's resurrection "is not a separate event that follows after his Passion and death," Bishop Braxton explained. "Since Jesus is the designated victim, lamb and appointed priest in this total sacrifice, the giving over of himself is immediately acceptable to God.

"For this reason, Good Friday and Easter Sunday [death and resurrection] must be seen as two aspects of a single and united reality," he said. "Thus, there is no need ever to wonder if Good Friday would retain its saving force even if Easter had not followed. Because Jesus is the Christ, Easter was inevitable."

(Carole Norris Greene is associate editor of Faith Alive!) †

St. John identifies Jesus as the bread of life, even "Life" itself. That theme runs right through his Gospel.

Just in case any reader may have missed the point, the Gospel clearly states its intentions at the end of the chapter in which the risen Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and the other disciples then conferred on them the vigorous power of the Holy Spirit: "But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name" (Jn 20:31).

When Jesus showed himself gloriously alive to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Thomas and the rest, he transformed their existence. He changed their attitudes from despair to radiant hope, and enlisted them in his mission of love and service to the whole world.

For us to experience the risen Jesus now in the Eucharist is to experience one who offers us dynamic life in abundance. He is the fullness of life—"Life" itself.

The promises made by commercials cannot be fulfilled. What we buy and own is not going to fill the emptiness of our hearts. Yet the commercials have the merit of reminding us vividly that we all yearn for life and the fullness of life.

Real life comes through experiencing Jesus in the Eucharist, receiving from him some of the vitality of his risen life, and sharing that with others.

Years ago, Franco Zeffirelli directed the classic film *Jesus of Nazareth*. One of its masterly features was the way that Zeffirelli brought together for dramatic effect separate episodes from the life of Christ. He combined, for instance, the feeding of the 5,000 with Mary Magdalene finding Christ.

A memorable camera shot picked her out in the crowd as she bit on a hunk of bread before bursting into tears of joy.

With her hands tightly grasping the bread and her moist eyes fixed on Jesus, she knew that she had found the one who is life itself. Her hungry heart had found the one who promises, "Whoever comes to me will never hunger. I am the bread of life" (Jn 6:35).

That scene from Zeffirelli's film matched perfectly a line from a prize-winning hymn: "You satisfy the hungry heart."

Yes, Jesus does satisfy our hearts fully and forever. When we come to him, we will never hunger.

At every Eucharist and, above all, in our Easter liturgies, the risen Jesus shows himself to be utterly satisfying and totally fulfilling. He is charged with infinite vitality and a spiritual energy that can sweep away our lethargy.

This is what Jesus promises us: eternal life. It is his to give because he is Life itself. With him and through him, we can truly "live beyond frontiers" and live forever!

(Jesuit Father Gerald O'Collins has published nearly 50 books, most recently *Jesus Our Redeemer and Salvation for All*, published by Oxford University Press, and *Jesus: A Portrait*, published by Orbis Books in 2008.) †



When Jesus showed himself gloriously alive to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Thomas and the rest, he transformed their existence. He changed their attitudes from despair to radiant hope, and enlisted them in his mission of love and service to the whole world.

Discussion Point

Families enjoy Easter customs

This Week's Question

Describe a special Easter custom observed in your family.

"Of course, we always start with Mass, which is what [Easter is] all about. But we [also] have a family get-together ... about 40 people. Something would be missing without getting together for this holiday after the observance of Lent when we follow Jesus by abstaining." (Jackie Snyder, Minot, N.D.)

"When I was young, every year we got new Easter outfits—head to toe. The new clothes signified rebirth and the beginning of our new life with the resurrected Christ." (Barb Trenor, Fairlawn, Ohio)

"Going to church, especially during the holy days just before Easter. Then we [would] go to Mass [on Easter]

as a family and dress for the occasion because it is such a special feast." (Carolina Ramos, Presidio, Texas)

"We make a small Easter tree that we set up in the house. We take a tree branch, paint it white, and place religious ornaments and symbols of life on it. It symbolizes the Resurrection and celebrates new life." (Andrew Gill, Irving, Texas)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What are some ways that other people can help a family when an aging parent is living with his or her adult child?

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



From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Biblical women: The woman at the well

Thirty-second in a series)

The fourth chapter of John's Gospel tells us about Jesus' meeting with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in Samaria.



John calls the town Sychar, but St. Jerome identified it as Schechem, the capital of the Kingdom of Israel and, later, Samaria. It is modern Nablus, and Jacob's well is still there.

I visited it before pilgrims stopped going there because of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Jesus was traveling from Judea back to Galilee. Normally, Jews would take a route across the Jordan River to avoid walking through Samaria, but Jesus decided to take the more direct route. His disciples went into town to buy food while Jesus sat by the well.

At noon, a Samaritan woman came to get water and Jesus asked her for a drink of water. This was surprising, to say the least, since Jews never used anything in common

with Samaritans, especially Samaritan women, whom they regarded as ritually impure.

The animosity between Jews and Samaritans went all the way back to the years after Assyria conquered the Kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. Thousands of Jews were deported to Assyria and people from 10 other nations were allowed to fill the void in Israel. The Jews who remained in Israel, now called Samaria, intermarried with the newcomers, resulting in a mixed race with a mixed religion. After the Jews—who later were exiled to Babylon after the fall of the Kingdom of Judah—returned to their homeland, they refused to accept the Samaritans.

The woman at the well wasn't the most savory of women because she had had five husbands and was then living with another man. Nevertheless, she engaged Jesus in a conversation about the differences in belief between the Jews and Samaritans. She said that her ancestors worshiped on Mount Gerizim in Samaria (in a temple they built in the fourth century B.C.) while the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem.

Jesus replied that, although salvation is from the Jews, it is not only for the Jews, but for all who adore God.

The most startling part of the conversation happened when the woman said that she knew that the Messiah was coming.

Jesus replied, "I am he," which could also be translated "I am," God's name in the Old Testament. This was the first time he had acknowledged to anyone that he was the Messiah.

When Jesus' disciples returned with food, they were shocked to find him talking with a Samaritan woman. While Jesus talked with them, the woman quickly ran into the city and told her neighbors, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done [a bit of an exaggeration]. Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

A footnote in John's Gospel says the woman is thus presented as a missionary.

Some of the people returned to the well with the woman and asked Jesus to remain with them, which he did for two days. This did Jesus make his first non-Jewish converts as a result of his meeting with the woman at the well. †

Go and Make Disciples/John Valenti

Are we happy yet?

It's a part of our American culture to pursue happiness. The pursuit of happiness is one of those inalienable rights secured in our Declaration of Independence. But short of being hedonistic, it is interesting to run across some statistics about what exactly makes people happy.



According to a Pew Research Center survey published in 2006, which can be accessed at <http://pewresearch.org>, just one-third (34 percent) of adults in our country say they are very happy. Another half say they are pretty happy and 15 percent consider themselves not too happy.

In this survey, several statistics stand out. People who attend religious services weekly or more are happier (43 percent are very happy) than those who attend monthly or less (31 percent) or seldom or never (26 percent).

This correlation between happiness and frequency of church attendance has been a consistent finding in the General Social Surveys taken over the years. The same pattern applies within all major religious denominations.

For example, 38 percent of all Catholics who attend church weekly or more report being very happy, while just 28 percent of Catholics who attend church less often say they are very happy.

One reason is that religious people tend to have lots of social support and connection, one of the chief ingredients for happiness. They also live with the sense of purpose and grand design that religious faith provides in daily life. This helps people live meaningfully and make sense of life's difficulties.

Married people (43 percent are very happy) are a good bit happier than unmarried adults (24 percent), and this too has been a consistent finding over many years and in many surveys. It holds up for men as well as women and also for the old as well as the young.

Interestingly, people who have children are no happier than those who don't, after accounting for marital status. That is, married people with children are about as happy as married people without children. And unmarried people with children are about as happy as unmarried people without children. Also, retirees are no happier than workers and pet owners are no happier than those without pets.

There is virtually no difference in happiness by gender and only a bit of variance in happiness by age. But the age data runs counter to the prevailing ethos of the popular culture, which is forever extolling the blessings of youth. It turns out that the young are less happy than the middle-aged or old.

There are many things in this world that can bring us temporary happiness—sufficient money, business success, good health, a loving family, loyal friends. But no worldly thing can bring enduring joy and happiness. We might become poor, fail at business or lose our health, even our spouse or our friends. Even if we gain all these things and manage to keep them, sooner or later we must leave them all behind.

God wants us to be happy. The good news is that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, assures us, "In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33).

(John Valenti is the associate director of Evangelization and Faith Formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. E-mail him at jvalenti@archindy.org.) †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Easter is our only hope—Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sometimes we become jaded about events like Easter. We know it's the greatest feast of the Church year, but over time we may forget its real meaning and its astonishing importance for us.



Just imagine a world that is a place where children are routinely abused by adults with more authority, power

or physical strength than they have.

Imagine a world where men and women couple promiscuously, sometimes carelessly producing many of the children who are abused later on.

People use each other sexually, materially and emotionally. If they express feelings of disappointment or anger at these situations, they're ignored or sent to expensive therapy or left to continue the cycle of despair in which they operate. Many become sentimental "victims" of their own bad choices.

Victimhood, in fact, becomes a popular cause for anyone disaffected by anything. Spurious "experts" offer advice, workshops, pills or whatever other lucrative methods they can dream up to solve such imaginary problems. Real problems tend to be handled

by real parents, teachers and doctors.

Young men are sent to war by old men who think they've earned the right to omniscience. Politicians cynically create tensions and foster divisions, sometimes between countries, just to keep their lucrative offices. Bosses lie and workers cheat on time and performance, trying to increase their financial profits or just "stick it" to someone they resent.

Immigrants, legal or illegal, work harder and longer for less pay than most Americans. Some are trying to become part of the American Dream, but others merely want to profit from quick financial gain without bothering to follow our laws. Either way, they're often preyed upon by unprincipled employers and politicians who choose to forget that we were all immigrants once, and that immigrants are entitled to respect and criminals are not.

Entertainments, such as television, movies and popular music, present false, tawdry examples of current life, which the young and gullible believe are true, acceptable and even necessary to being a modern person. If such people don't follow the media examples, they're considered to be either ignorant or pathetically out of sync with their peers. Immature teenagers especially feel a need to be in sync with others.

Old folks think the world is going to hell

in a hand-basket, as old folks always do.

And as always, they are correct in some of their judgments and way off base in others. The world lurches on, back and forth, up and down in its crazy human fashion, dragging all our imperfect selves along with it. Grief, pain, meanness and sin in general continue as they inevitably will, with goodness appearing periodically, seemingly to point up the irony of our existence.

To be truthful, the foregoing paragraphs seem to describe our world fairly correctly. We do indeed suffer from all these problems, faults and sins. That's why God, who loves us beyond measure, sent Christ to save us from ourselves. Easter is thus a celebration of love, not just a festival of Spring's natural renewal illustrated with baby chicks and flowers.

Easter is the greatest feast because it declares that hope in a better life and a better world is not only possible, but imminent. We just need to believe in that promise to live in hope. Hope is the one essential we must carry on through an imperfect life in an imperfect world on our way to the perfect God. And it's hope that will bring us joy.

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

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

An 'Easterly' understanding of 'WWJD?'

Last week, I suggested that it's prudent to ask ourselves "What would Jesus do?" in difficult or uncomfortable situations. I even called it a "cliché."



Right after writing that column, I read a daily Lenten message to my husband that changed my spiritual perception of the once very popular "WWJD?"

My husband and I have been faithfully following *The Little Black Book* of inspiring Lenten messages. It stresses the Passion of Christ according to John's Gospel. We have done this every Lent since our parish began providing the booklet that comes from the Diocese of Saginaw, Mich. It is based on the writings of Bishop Kenneth Untener, who died in 2004.

In a February reading, based on the second denial that Simon Peter made after the arrest of Jesus, an excellent point is made: The question "What would Jesus

do?" could be misleading because of the "would." It could seem as though Jesus were not part of here-and-now situations. There's a big difference between "What would Jesus think I should do?" and "What does Jesus think I should do?"

Recently, in a column about a basketball injury to a spectator who is a friend, I suggested that—in such a situation and any other times of indecision when reacting to something bad that is happening to someone near us—we should immediately think about "What would Jesus do?"

However, since Jesus should be a part of the present moment in everything that Christians do, we should put our question in the now-moment, i.e., "What do you want me to do, Lord?" After all, we claim he is with us no matter what or when.

The little book's message continued: "Asking ourselves what Jesus thinks about a given situation can change our perspective. Pick any issue—killing the unborn, using/storing weapons of mass destruction, retaliation. ... What does

Jesus think right now? Waffling on those kinds of issues is the way we might be more likely to deny that we are a disciple of Jesus."

After each reading in *The Little Black Book* is this note: "Spend some quiet time with the Lord."

I like to do that all year long, not just during Lent.

This makes me think of a wise Protestant friend whom I considered to be a cross between a mother and older sister to me. Janie and I often held hands and spent quiet times with the Lord. She always prayed in the present tense, knowing that Jesus was, indeed, present. Whatever she prayed was simple, direct and offered with the assurance that Christ made our twosome a threesome.

The Little Black Book is published by Little Books of the Diocese of Saginaw. For more information, call 989-797-6653 or log on to www.saginaw.org.

(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Easter Sunday/Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord

Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 23, 2008

- Acts of the Apostles 10:34a, 37-43
- Colossians 3:1-4
- John 20:1-9

Rejoicing and exclaiming its great faith and hope for humanity, the Church today celebrates Easter, the feast of the Resurrection of the Lord.

The Church's first celebration of the Lord's victory over earthly death occurs in the marvelous liturgy of Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil, when most parishes receive new members into the Church. In this vigil liturgy, the symbols of fire, light and water magnificently reveal the mystery and the promise of the Resurrection.

The readings cited above are read in the Mass on Easter Sunday.

The first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles.

Scripture readings from Acts will occur again and again during the Easter Season. Acts is very interesting, giving us insight into the life of the first Christians.

Gathered in Jerusalem, around the Apostles, with Mary among them, they lived in charity, prayer and faith. Their lives are examples to us. Their reverence for the Apostles, and obvious submission to the Apostles, teach us even as we live in the structure of the Church today.

Readings from Acts also tell us that we are not separated from the miracle of Jesus in the world. The Apostles link us with the Lord. Led by Peter, they preached in the name of Christ. They cured the sick in the Lord's name. They guided the people toward God, just as Jesus had guided people toward God.

Today's reading recalls Peter's preaching. Notice that Peter speaks for all the Apostles. Scholars call this sermon "kerygmatic," from the Greek word for "message," which is "kerygma."

This reading and the other readings for Easter Sunday are crisp but profound in giving the fundamental points of the Gospel. Jesus, God's messenger, also was the Savior,

crucified on Calvary. He is the source of eternal life.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians provides the second reading.

This reading emphasizes that Christians, by baptism and by their faith, possess new life. They live because they are bonded with the living Christ. As Christ is in heaven, so the thoughts of Christians must be on heaven.

For its last reading, for its excited proclamation of the Resurrection, the Church presents to us a passage from John's Gospel.

It is an account of the first Easter morning. Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, but found it empty so she rushed to inform Peter. Again, in this book of the New Testament quite separate from Acts, the importance of Peter is revealed. Reaching Peter, she anxiously said that the Lord's body had been taken away.

"The disciple whom Jesus loved," traditionally thought to have been the Apostle John even though the Gospel never identifies him as such, and Peter hurried to the tomb. The disciple arrived first, but he waited for Peter, another indication of Peter's status.

Peter entered the tomb, saw that it was empty, but evidently did not realize that Jesus had risen. The disciple, however, realized what had occurred. Implied is this disciple's absolute love. It gives him perception.

Reflection

These readings have critical lessons for all people. The first is that Jesus is Lord. He triumphed over death, the most universal of human experiences aside from birth itself, and for all living things the end of earthly life.

However, his earthly life has not ended. It endures. He lives! He lives in and through the Church.

Easter wonderfully reassures us. Because of the Church, the Lord touches us. We hear Jesus. We meet Jesus. We share in the Lord's everlasting life.

All this is because the Apostles formed the Church, first given the strength and life of the Holy Spirit by Jesus. They guided it in their times on earth, and they provided for their successors to guide it and nourish it after they died. †



Daily Readings

Monday, March 24

Acts 2:14, 22-33
Psalm 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11
Matthew 28:8-15

Tuesday, March 25

Acts 2:36-41
Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
John 20:11-18

Wednesday, March 26

Acts 3:1-10
Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9
Luke 24:13-35

Thursday, March 27

Acts 3:11-26
Psalm 8:2ab, 5-9
Luke 24:35-48

Friday, March 28

Acts 4:1-12
Psalm 118:1-2, 4, 22-27a
John 21:1-14

Saturday, March 29

Acts 4:13-21
Psalm 118:1, 14-15b, 16-21
Mark 16:9-15

Sunday, March 30

Divine Mercy Sunday
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Stations of the Cross devotion dates back to late Middle Ages

Questions have arisen in our parish this Lent concerning the Stations of the Cross. Obviously, some stations have no basis in the Bible.



How did they originate? Is there a connection between them and the route our Lord took to Calvary on the way to be crucified? (Missouri)

For those who are not familiar with this Catholic devotion, the Stations of the Cross is a series—today usually 14—of images depicting scenes from the Good Friday journey of Jesus from Pontius Pilate's headquarters to the Crucifixion on Calvary. The person or group "making" the stations prays and reflects briefly on each incident.

The practice originated with early pilgrims to the Holy Land, who desired to follow the way our Lord walked on the day he died. The devotion as we know it, however, developed only during the very late Middle Ages, generally the 1200s and the 1300s.

These were tumultuous and painful times when most Christians found practicing and passing on their faith extremely difficult. Into this picture came religious figures that helped popularize a variety of expressions of prayer and faith, such as the rosary (the Dominicans) and the Christmas crèche (St. Francis of Assisi).

The Stations of the Cross was one of these devotions, serving as both a prayer and a sort of catechism about the sufferings of Christ.

Franciscan communities, who had already been given charge of the holy places in Jerusalem for Latin-rite Catholics, helped popularize the Stations of the Cross devotion, which evolved into many forms over the years.

At one time, they numbered as many as 43 stations, including seven falls under the cross. The 14 stations as we know them became fairly stabilized by Pope Clement XII in 1731.

In recent decades, some publications of prayers for the Stations of the Cross have included a 15th station or meditation calling to mind the victory of Jesus over death in the resurrection.

The city of Jerusalem was leveled by the Roman armies about 40 years after Jesus' death, making the precise locations of his falls, for example, on the way to his crucifixion impossible to determine. The markings along the

Via Dolorosa (Sorrowful Way) in Jerusalem today are comparatively recent.

As you note, some of these events are not found in Scripture. The fourth station, for example, commemorates a meeting of Jesus and his mother.

Luke notes that Jesus stopped along the way to speak to "many women who mourned and lamented him," but he doesn't say Mary was among them. John places Mary at the foot of the cross, but not on the road.

The eighth station where Veronica wipes the face of Jesus is also not described in the Gospels.

Thus, more than half of the stations are based more on ancient tradition than on Gospel accounts.

Interestingly, beginning in 1991, Pope John Paul II was the first pope to employ a Bible-based format for the traditional papal commemoration of the Stations of the Cross in Rome's Colosseum on Good Friday.

Pope Benedict XVI used the same form in 2007.

The biblical format used by Pope John Paul and Pope Benedict may be found on the Internet by typing in "biblical stations of the cross" on www.google.com.

In any of these formats, the Stations of the Cross remain one of the rich treasures in Catholic tradition for reflection on our Lord's suffering and death.

(A free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions that Catholics ask about baptism practices and sponsors, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jjdietzen@aol.com.) †

My Journey to God

A Lenten Reflection

As I sat in the quiet at the St. Francis Hospital Chapel in Indianapolis, I looked up and saw that I was sitting by two very familiar Stations of the Cross.

The first station depicts Christ carrying the cross and the Roman soldier telling Simon to help Jesus with His burden.

The other station portrays Jesus stopping for a moment on His journey and receiving water from a woman.

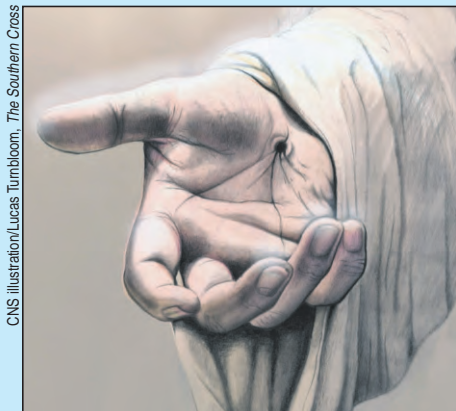
We often perceive Lent as a time of sadness, being gloomy and having to continually throw ashes on ourselves. We are focused on our sins and ourselves.

As I sat in the quiet of the chapel, I saw that ever familiar story a little differently.

No matter how difficult our journey, how weary we are and how heavy our cross, God sent His Son to help carry our burdens.

And anytime while we are on our journey, we can always stop, rest and receive the living water that God provides through our prayers and the Scriptures.

(Martha Ardis resides in New Palestine and is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. The hand of Christ is depicted by artist Lucas Turnbloom.)



We were given water for our journey. We do not carry our cross by ourselves. We are never alone on our journey.

Our Father has provided us with everything we need for our journey.

By Martha Ardis

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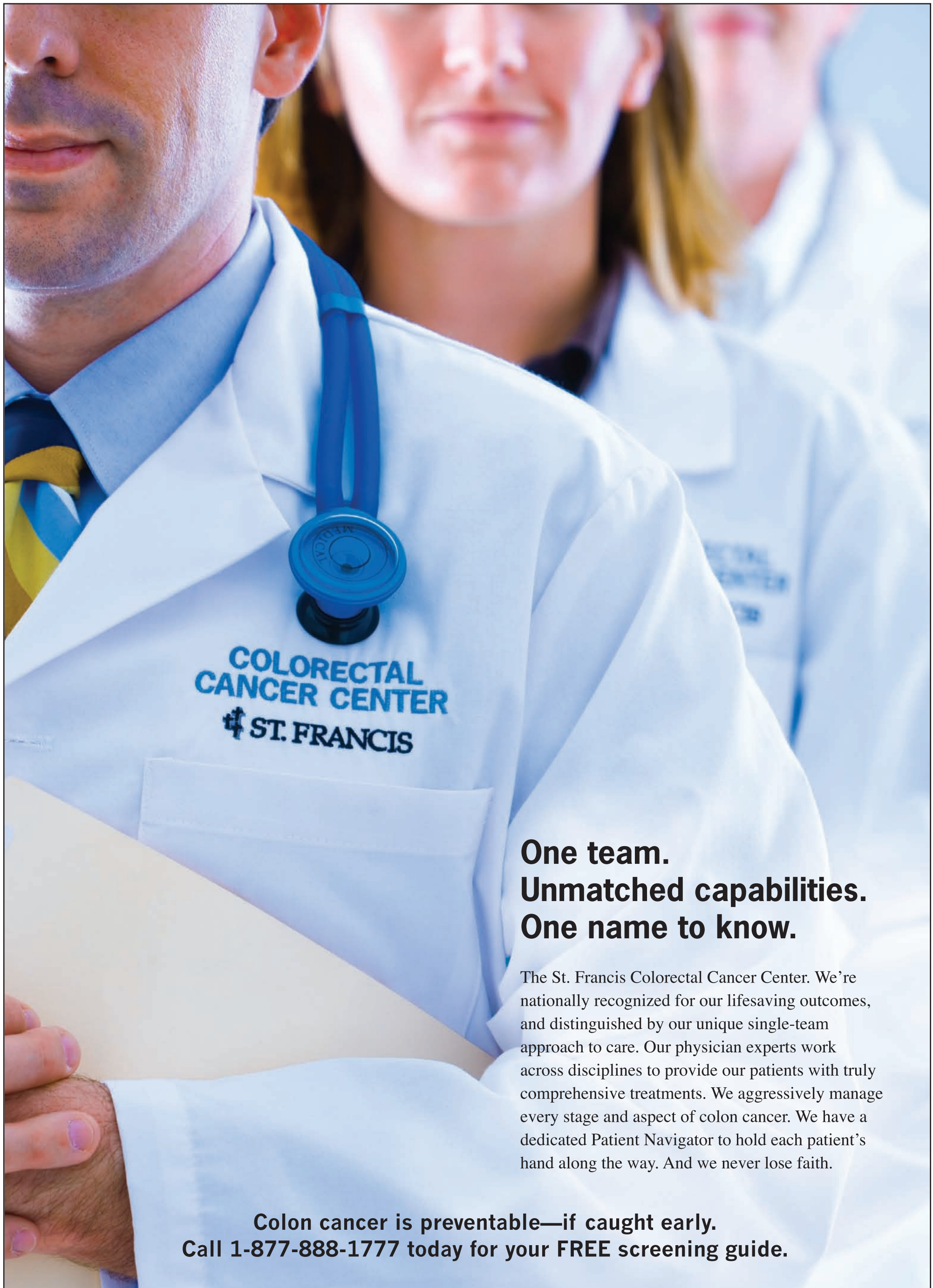
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