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'What am I supposed to do with my life?'

New director of youth ministry tells teens to lean on God, page 7.

CriterionOnline.com

October 13, 2023

Vol. LXIV, No. 2 75¢



Father Christopher Wadelton, pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, baptizes Charlie Bode as his smiling parents, Katie and Tom Bode, savor the celebration of the sacrament. Katie Bode and Father Wadelton are cousins who shared some time together in Portland, Ore., one of the places the priest visited this summer. (Submitted photo)

Israeli ambassador says Hamas attack a catastrophe of 'biblical dimensions;' pope prays for peace

ROME (OSV News)—The shock of the surprise attack by Hamas militants on Israel, in which hundreds were killed, wounded or kidnapped, has left a traumatic mark on Israeli citizens, said the country's ambassador to the Vatican.



Pope Francis

"I would say this is a catastrophe that I would describe in biblical dimensions," Raphael Schutz, Israeli ambassador to the Holy See, told

OSV News on Oct. 9.

"Total families were murdered—grandparents, parents and children, in villages, in *kibbutzim*, in the towns around Gaza. There is a feeling of a national trauma," Schutz said.

The number of men, women and children who have died, he added, is on "a scale that we have not known, I would say, since the beginning of the establishment of Israel."

The surprise attack drew widespread condemnation from the international community, with many world leaders calling for restraint and an end to further escalation of violence.

During his Sunday *Angelus* address on Oct. 8, Pope Francis led pilgrims in praying for the victims of the attack and "for all who are living hours of terror and anguish."

A day earlier, militants in Gaza launched a massive attack on southern Israel, firing rockets and breaching the border.

"The violence has exploded even more ferociously, causing hundreds of deaths and casualties," the pope told people gathered for the midday Sunday prayer. Israeli officials on Oct. 10 said more than 1,000 had been killed, and officials in Gaza said the death toll among

See ISRAEL, page 9

Priest donates part of his liver to save a stranger's life—after changing a family's world by donating a kidney

By John Shaughnessy

The inspiration for Father Christopher Wadelton to donate part of his liver on Sept. 18 to help save a stranger's life came at a celebration a year ago.

It happened during a reception at a downtown Indianapolis hotel in which the pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus was honored with other living organ donors—as Father Wadelton had donated one of his kidneys in 2020 to

improve the quality of life of a friend.

As he listened to the tributes for the other donors, Father Wadelton was surprised to learn that some of them had donated both a kidney *and* part of their liver to make a difference in people's lives.

The now 57-year-old priest didn't realize that such a combination was even possible, but the more he thought about it, the more it intrigued him—especially when he considered

See WADELTON, page 10

'Laudate Deum' a 'timely call' to 'choose life or death,' say Catholic ecological advocates

(OSV News)—Pope Francis' latest plea to urgently address global warming and climate change is being hailed by Catholic ecological advocates as "a great call to action."

On Oct. 4, the pope released his apostolic exhortation "*Laudate Deum*" ("Praise God"), warning that the clock is ticking on the dangers of climate change—and that a paradigm shift and practical strategies are critically needed

See LAUDATE, page 8

Plastic bottles float on the heavily polluted San Juan River, a tributary of the Pasig River in Mandaluyong City, Philippines, on June 21, 2021. (OSV News photo/Eloisa Lopez, Reuters)



Synodal silence: Pope says Church must pause, 'fast' from public words

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—“The Church is taking a break,” Pope Francis said.

“It is a break for the whole Church, as we engage in listening,” he told members



Pope Francis

of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops—and journalists.

Addressing the opening working session of the assembly, the pope may have exaggerated a bit, yet for participants his words certainly rang true.

For the duration of the assembly on Oct. 4-29, all the heads of Vatican dicasteries and hundreds of cardinals, archbishops, bishops, religious superiors, professors, students and parents were scheduled to be away from their homes and their desks.

For Paolo Ruffini, prefect of the Dicastery for Communication, that is the “news” of the synod.

“An institution as large as the Church is giving itself a moment for common discernment in silence, listening, faith and prayer,” he told reporters on Oct. 5.

The theme of the synod—“For a synodal Church: communion, participation, mission”—covers a vast gamut of topics dealing with the very life of the Church, its identity, its membership, its leadership, its outreach and its role in the world.

Journalists and others hoping to follow the synod assembly’s work may be frustrated not knowing what is going on inside the Vatican’s Paul VI Audience Hall where the pope, the 364 other synod members and 85 experts, facilitators and ecumenical representatives are meeting morning and afternoon Monday through Friday and Saturday mornings as well.

But Ruffini suggested the public silence is a big part of the story.

Pope Francis had told synod members at the beginning that participation required “a certain fasting from speaking in public” to “safeguard” the synod’s discernment process.

In societies filled with noise and

people trying to shout over each other, Ruffini said, maybe the world should draw a lesson from what the Church is trying to do.

Making space for silence and for listening to others could help end wars or prompt real action to stem the climate crisis, he said, suggesting the synod’s process deserved to be understood and appreciated far beyond the Church.

The rules for synod members distributed to participants said, “In order to guarantee the freedom of expression of each and all regarding their thoughts and to ensure the serenity of the discernment in common, which is the main task entrusted to the assembly, each of the participants is bound to confidentiality and discretion regarding both their own interventions and the interventions of other participants. This duty remains in force once the Synodal Assembly has ended.”

The balance between “confidentiality” and “discretion” was not spelled out.

After the rules were distributed, some synod members canceled appointments for interviews they had made with reporters. Those most active on X, formerly Twitter, went mute or began sharing only prayers and photos of how the assembly space was laid out.

However, Cardinal Gerhard Müller, former prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, went on EWTN on Oct. 5 to talk about the synod. One question in his small group, he said, was “what is the nature and substance of this synod” given that “laypeople have the same vote” as bishops, unlike at previous synods.

Although the cardinal was critical of the process before the assembly began, he told EWTN that his experience in his small group “was very good, and I have, therefore, a certain form of optimism.”

Other participants were less specific, but offered their own takes on synod proceedings.

Austrian Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna tweeted on Oct. 5: “The beauty of such a synod is the experience of the universal Church widely sharing our challenges and our hopes.”

Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

October 13–23, 2023



October 13 – 1:30 p.m.
Virtual Eucharistic Revival Executive Team meeting

October 15 – 10:30 a.m.
200th Anniversary Mass and blessing at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church, Floyd County

October 17 – 1:30 p.m.
Visit to Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Oldenburg

October 17 – 5 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of Oratory of SS. Philomena and Cecilia, Oak Forest

October 18 – 10 a.m.
Catholic Center Connection at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 18 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

October 19 – noon
Department Gathering at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 19 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

October 22 – 1:30 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Anthony Parish, Clarksville; St. Joseph Parish, Corydon; Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine parishes, Jeffersonville; Holy Family and Our Lady of Perpetual Help parishes, New Albany; St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyd County; and St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg, at St. John Paul II Church

October 22 – 5 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Mary Parish, New Albany, at St. Mary Church

October 23 – 6 p.m.
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House Annual Dinner at The Marott, Indianapolis

After the small groups began making their reports to the general assembly on Oct. 6, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin

of Newark, N.J., tweeted: “The vision of Vatican II is the shared point of reference for the Synod starting from the catholicity of the people of God. Each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole

Church. Please pray for the Synod’s success.”

Ambushed as he left the synod for lunch the same day, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said the work

was going well and, “the Spirit is blowing.”

As the synod moved from small group discussions to listening to reports

and speeches on Oct. 6, Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle said he was grateful for the pauses for silence and reflection that punctuated the morning session. But there were still a lot of speeches in many languages.

“It is a fascinating experience, I can tell you that,” he said, adding that he would encourage people “to keep praying for us, to invoke the Holy Spirit upon us because that’s the voice we’re listening for.” †

Synod call to communion can help a fractured world, theologian says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Catholic Church is called to be an instrument of communion with God and unity among all people, but it requires



Anna Rowlands

grace and “learning to ‘bear with’ reality, gently, generously, lovingly and courageously for the peace and salvation of the whole world,” a theologian told the assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

“Communion is the beauty of diversity in unity. In a modern world that tends toward both homogenizing and fracturing, communion is a

language of beauty, a harmony of unity and plurality,” said Anna Rowlands, a professor of Catholic social thought and practice at Durham University in England.

As synod participants began work on the second section or module of the assembly’s working document on Oct. 9, their discussions about promoting communion with God and with others were preceded by reflections offered by Rowlands and by Dominican Father Timothy Radcliffe, a theologian and former master of the Dominican order.

While still seated at round tables according to language, many of the 364 synod members were at different tables than the week before. The new groupings

were organized by the themes members indicated they wanted to work on; the topics including promoting unity through works of charity and justice; ecumenism; being more welcoming to people who feel excluded from the Church, like members of the LGBTQ community; and valuing the cultural, linguistic and racial diversity of the Church.

Pope Francis had been expected to attend the morning session, but “unforeseen commitments” arose, said Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office. While not saying what those commitments were, Bruni said Pope Francis was not one of the four synod members who

See SYNOD, page 15



Phone Numbers:
Main office..... 317-236-1570
Advertising..... 317-236-1585
Circulation / Subscriptions ... 317-236-1425

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster:
Send address changes to *The Criterion*,
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June to August (*summer schedule*). Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June-Aug.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-236-1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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Children's Rosary group fosters love of Mary in young people and families

By Sean Gallagher

Maria Tappel is an 11-year-old sixth grader at St. Matthew the Apostle School in Indianapolis. In her short life, she's already developed an important relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary. "She's a protector," says Maria. "She's someone who will take care of me when I'm struggling. She's someone that I can talk to."

That relationship has been fostered by Maria and her family praying the rosary with other children and families who gather at St. Matthew the Apostle Parish on the first Saturday of the month.

The monthly gathering is part of a worldwide Children's Rosary movement (childrensrosary.org) in which young children ages 4 to 14 lead each other and their parents in praying the rosary. This was the age range of the children to whom Mary appeared at Lourdes, France, and Fatima, Portugal, where she invited them to pray the rosary frequently.

The Children's Rosary group at St. Matthew drew about 30 children

and their parents on Oct. 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. October is traditionally dedicated in the Church to Mary and the rosary.

The group gathered in the parish's daily Mass chapel before a statue of Mary. Children took turns leading decades. And after each decade, children placed roses for Mary in a vase in front of the statue while singing to her.

After praying the rosary, the families shared donuts together and played on the parish's playground.

"It's fun to come here to hang out,



Children and their parents gather before a statue of Mary on Oct. 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, to pray the rosary in the daily Mass chapel of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

pray the rosary and interact with Mary in the fun way that we do it," Maria said.

She and her family have been part of Children's Rosary groups for seven years in other places before they moved to Indianapolis. Through the years, Maria has been glad to see the group grow.

"It's cool," she said. "I've been doing it for so many years. So, I'm happy to see more kids being involved and having fun."

Maria's parents, Kara and Tim Tappel, are happy to see their daughter

and their son Dominic, 13, embrace the rosary at this important point in their young lives.

"We have always wanted to have this devotion within our family," said Tim. "So, to see them carry this on makes us extremely happy. We're so thankful to Mary for the inspiration to do this."

The Tappels encourage a devotion to Mary and the rosary in their children, including their youngest child Thomas, 4, because they know they are growing up

See ROSARY, page 16

How has God made his presence known in your life? Share it with our readers

The Criterion is inviting you, our readers, to share your thoughts and stories about this question, "How has God made his presence known in your life?"

Maybe you routinely feel his presence in an everyday situation. Maybe you have known his presence in a life-changing moment. Maybe it's happened in your relationship with a family member, a friend or even a stranger. Maybe it was in a

dark time of your life or an especially joyful one.

Whatever the case may be, we would like to hear your thoughts and your stories. Send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.) †

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- Project Hope mental health ministry member*

*identity concealed to protect member's privacy



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Editorial



A woman holds up a sign that says "PACE," peace in Italian, as Pope Francis appeals for an end to the fighting between Israel and Palestine after reciting the *Angelus* prayer on Oct. 8 with visitors in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

A prayer for peace in a world that too often embraces war

*The dead, Father, welcome them.
The injured, Father, heal them.
The relief workers, Father, protect
and strengthen them.
The survivors, Father, be with us.
The country's leaders, Father, guide
them.
The terrorists, Father, forgive them.*

The above prayer with the headline "Oremus" ("Let us pray") appeared in the Sept. 21, 2001, issue of *The Criterion*, days after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States took nearly 3,000 lives at the World Trade Center in New York, at the Pentagon outside Washington, and in a rural field in Shanksville, Pa.

The unsigned editorial that week poignantly spoke to the heartbreak that left our country reeling and searching for answers. But it also implored God to be with our nation and those who were responding to one of the greatest tragedies in American history. And it also included in prayer those who committed those heinous acts.

As people of faith, we have prayed for the past 22 years that nothing of that magnitude would ever happen again in the United States—or anywhere else in the world.

And yet, we awoke to the news on Oct. 7—the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary—that Hamas (a militant movement and one of the Palestinian territories' two major political parties in the Gaza Strip) had launched a brutal attack on Israel that left hundreds dead and thousands injured, and taken numerous others as hostages. Media outlets and others have referred to the tragedy as "Israel's 911." As *The Criterion* went to press, more than 1,000 were reported dead and 3,400 injured in Israel. And we expect the death toll to increase.

The attack prompted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to declare war against Hamas, which is best known for its armed resistance to Israel. As a result, casualties—including scores of innocent people—have begun to mount in the Gaza Strip as well. As of the morning of Oct. 10, 700 people were reported dead and 2,900 injured there. The perils of war are again leading to the fact that innocent people are among the casualties.

How ironic is it that on the day the Church commemorates the rosary's role in the defeat by the far outnumbered Holy League of the Ottoman Empire in the 1571 naval Battle of Lepanto, people around the world will now also remember

the unprovoked attack on Israel by Hamas terrorists who felt no remorse about killing the innocent, including women, children and the elderly? A miraculous victory at sea thanks to our Blessed Mother's intercession will be remembered on a calendar with a heinous crime in 2023 against humanity.

Americans are among the casualties in Israel. To date, 11 U.S. citizens have died at the hands of Hamas.

But some, including Sen. Corey Booker of New Jersey, who was in Jerusalem that day ahead of the Abraham Accords summit in Tel Aviv—where he was scheduled to speak on Oct. 10—were fortunate.

According to *USA Today*, Booker was out jogging when the attacks began. He was advised by a staff member to return to his hotel, where he took cover in a bomb shelter with others.

In a video, Booker said, "Frightened faces, there were children and elderly, families, many Americans [in the shelter]. There was a sense of fear and worry, and a knowledge to many of us that there were horrific things going on around the country at that time." The senator planned to leave the country as soon as possible.

The surprise attack drew condemnation from many countries, with many leaders calling for restraint and an end to further escalation of violence.

During his Sunday *Angelus* address on Oct. 8, Pope Francis led pilgrims in praying for the victims of the attack and "for all who are living hours of terror and anguish.

"Let it be understood that terrorism and war do not lead to any resolutions, but only to the death and suffering of so many innocent people. War is a defeat! Every war is a defeat! Let us pray that there be peace in Israel and in Palestine," he said.

We have learned too many times, that—while there can be moral justification for waging war—pain, suffering and loss of life always accompany it.

As we mark Respect Life Month, let us pray for peace and the conversion of hearts and minds of those that promote terror and violence, especially in the name of faith.

And during this month of the rosary, let us ask our Blessed Mother, the Queen of Peace, to again intercede for her suffering sons and daughters.

—Mike Krokos

Making Sense of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Rapid onset gender dysphoria and the tragic seduction of our daughters

In recent years, the number of young people with gender dysphoria, or extreme discomfort in one's biological sex, has skyrocketed in the U.S. and western Europe.



Professor Lisa Littman, a researcher at Brown University, was the first to publish a report that indicated that many transgender-identified children experience "rapid onset gender dysphoria,"

a clustering phenomenon in which one, several or even all the friends in a group become transgender-identified within a similar timeframe. Other researchers have since published similar findings.

Littman proposed the hypothesis that this transgender identification could involve a novel form of peer or social contagion that contrasts with our classical understanding of gender dysphoria dating back about 100 years. Some of the novel aspects of the phenomenon include:

—The initial age of onset has markedly shifted, from pre-school aged kids to the teenage years, typically around the age of 16;

—The sex ratio has flipped from mostly young boys prior to 2010, to now more than 75% adolescent girls; and

—The prevalence of the phenomenon has risen dramatically in recent years, both absolutely and relatively, leading some to suggest we are facing an "epidemic" in rapid onset gender dysphoria.

In other words, teenage girls with no prior history of gender dysphoria are now the predominant demographic identifying as transgender.

Discussing the phenomenon in *Psychology Today*, Christopher J. Ferguson, who holds a doctorate in clinical psychology, notes that the "sudden surge in the number of teen girls identifying as trans boys is due not to gender dysphoria or transgenderism, but rather to girls with other mental conditions who are mistakenly self-identifying as trans because there is social capital built into marginalized identities."

When surveyed by Littman, more than 60% of parents reported that the announcement of their child's coming out had resulted in a popularity improvement at school and in other settings.

These young people appear to be escaping into a victim group into which they don't actually fit, in part because within the broader culture, gender dysphoria has become one of the few victim identities one can choose.

Many of these youths reportedly had one or more psychiatric diagnoses, and almost half were engaging in self-harm prior to the onset of gender dysphoria.

There is evidence that transitioning can worsen mental health and correlate with suicidal thoughts. Claims that gender transitioning reduces the risk of suicide remain highly controversial and unsupported by well-designed and properly-controlled scientific studies.

The surge in transgender-identifying adolescents may also be partly explained as a maladaptive coping mechanism for teens struggling with the challenges and stresses arising from their adolescent journey through puberty and their explorations of sexuality in a hypersexualized society. Prior trauma, whether sexual, peer or family, may also play a role.

The steep spike in the phenomenon of

rapid onset gender dysphoria appears to be connected to other social factors as well.

For example, YouTube influencers and Internet advocates of gender transitioning often have charismatic personalities and offer compelling personal testimonies and confessional stories that draw the attention of youthful audiences. These entertaining and well-produced videos strongly encourage young people to transition, promising happiness and a new lease on life. Prior to announcing their new transgender identity, more than 65% of the teens were reported by their parents to have spent extended time, sometimes even several weeks of total immersion, watching YouTube transition videos and other transgendered social media.

A second relevant factor is that various authority figures in the lives of teens, including teachers, therapists and doctors, have started encouraging and affirming the idea of gender transitioning. These respected individuals may energetically advocate for a young person to transition, claiming they know best what the young person needs, and it is virtually always "transition."

When parents are hesitant to go along, these authority figures may adopt a savior posture by bringing up a coercive suicide narrative, asking them whether they prefer to have a live son or a dead daughter, while actively seeking to re-educate the allegedly naïve and transphobic parents.

Gender-affirmative advocacy applies powerful pressure on impressionable youths and vulnerable parents. These approaches can tragically seduce our adolescent daughters, resulting in permanent and irreversible damage through hormonal treatments, mastectomies and mutilative genital surgeries.

Thankfully, medical professionals in several European countries are beginning to change course. Treatments for youths with gender dysphoria have become decidedly more cautious. The paramount importance of psychological care is being recognized, with transitioning becoming restricted to research protocols.

We need to begin promoting a more wholesome and balanced perspective to girls, namely, that being a woman is good and beautiful. Therapists need to counsel patience in the face of adolescent claims of discomfort with their biological sex, recognizing that some may be seeking gender transition as an escape from other emotional difficulties. Many who have transitioned are now regretting their choice, with "detransitioning" occurring at an accelerated rate among the same females who presented during adolescence with gender dysphoria.

Young people facing rapid onset gender dysphoria need authentic support and encouragement rather than surgeries and hormones, especially in the face of data revealing that most of them, if not offered "affirmation therapies," will outgrow their dysphoria and come to accept their birth sex once their turbulent adolescent years have passed.

(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 senior ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org and www.fathertad.com.) †

Letters Policy

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

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

God pours his grace upon us in good times, tough times

Life can be hard sometimes, filled with challenges to meet and obstacles to overcome. Our Catholic faith recognizes this, and it does not offer us false hopes or empty promises. After all, our guidepost is the cross of Jesus Christ, who was rejected, humiliated, tortured and killed by the very people he came to serve. If Christ is our model, how can we possibly overlook the reality of pain and suffering?

In the second reading for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, St. Paul shares with us his experience living his faith in good times and in hard times:

I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance. In every circumstance and in all things, I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need. I can do all things in him who strengthens me (Phil 4:12-13).

St. Paul goes on to say that God supplies whatever he needs to remain faithful to the way of life that the Lord has called him to follow. We know that the road that this great missionary

traveled would end in a martyr's death. But we believe, with Paul, that this was not really the end of his journey but the beginning of his eternal life in Christ.

This belief makes all the difference in our understanding of human suffering. Because we believe that Christ's passion and death were vindicated by his glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven, we have good reason to hope that if we follow him faithfully, we can join him. In fact, the Lord told his disciples (us) that he was going to heaven to prepare a place for them (us).

Heaven is not a geographical site somewhere in the material universe. It is a spiritual reality, the state of being in love with God in communion with all his angels and saints. Our faith assures us that eternal happiness awaits us if we follow in Christ's footsteps and live as he did—a life of self-sacrificing love. This is the certain hope that allows us to endure every kind of physical, mental and evil suffering for the sake of the kingdom that is to come.

In this Sunday's Gospel (Mt 22:1-14), Jesus tells the chief

priests and elders of the people a parable that can be seen as both an affirmation of the joy that awaits us after death and a warning that if we reject the Lord's invitation to share in his life, we may find ourselves cast out into the darkness "where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth" (Mt 22:13). Jesus is *not* saying that his Father is vengeful or vindictive, but he is warning us that, as free people, our own actions can determine what happens to us—both during our lifetime and after death.

Just as heaven is not a physical location, hell is also not a coordinate on some subterranean map. Hell is also a spiritual state of being. It is radical loneliness and unhappiness. If we reject God in favor of ourselves, we get exactly what we have bargained for. We get isolation and hopelessness. In scriptural terms, we trade the joy of the heavenly banquet for the misery of everlasting "wailing and grinding of teeth."

The first reading for this Sunday (Is 25:6-10) offers reassurance:

The Lord God will wipe away the tears from every face; the reproach of his people he will remove from the

whole Earth; for the Lord has spoken. On that day it will be said: "Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the Lord for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!" (Is 25:8-9)

Our God wants us to be free from every evil, including the self-imposed suffering and isolation that results from our sinful behavior and our refusal to follow Jesus on the Way of the Cross.

Salvation in Christ Jesus is cause for rejoicing, not guilt or fear. Yes, we are warned not to reject our Lord's invitation, or the result will be the intense suffering and loneliness symbolized by "wailing and grinding of teeth." But the choice is ours, and as St. Paul tells us, God's grace is sufficient to help us overcome every difficulty we face in our efforts to live as Jesus commands.

Let us rejoice in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Far from being instruments of torture and death, the crosses we bear out of love for God and our neighbor are blessings that can sustain us as we continue our pilgrim journey to our heavenly homeland. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Dios derrama su gracia sobre nosotros en los buenos tiempos y en los difíciles

A veces, la vida se torna difícil, llena de retos que afrontar y obstáculos que superar. Nuestra fe católica lo reconoce y no nos ofrece falsas esperanzas ni promesas vacías ya que, en definitiva, nuestro referente es la cruz de Cristo, que fue rechazado, humillado, torturado y asesinado por las mismas personas a las que vino a servir. Así pues, si Cristo es nuestro modelo, ¿cómo podemos pasar por alto la realidad del dolor y el sufrimiento?

En la segunda lectura del vigésimo octavo domingo del tiempo ordinario, san Pablo nos comparte su experiencia de vivir su fe en los tiempos buenos y en los difíciles:

Sé vivir con limitaciones, y también sé tener abundancia; en todo y por todo estoy enseñado, tanto para estar satisfecho como para tener hambre, lo mismo para tener abundancia que para sufrir necesidad; ¡todo lo puedo en Cristo que me fortalece! (Fil 4:12-13).

San Pablo continúa diciendo que Dios le suministra todo lo que necesita para permanecer fiel a la forma de vida que el Señor le ha llamado a seguir. Sabemos que el camino que recorrió este gran misionero acabaría en su muerte como mártir pero, al igual que él, creemos que ese no fue realmente el

final de su viaje, sino el comienzo de su vida eterna en Cristo.

Esta creencia marca la diferencia en nuestra percepción del sufrimiento humano. Puesto que creemos que la pasión y muerte de Cristo fueron reivindicadas por su gloriosa resurrección y ascensión al cielo, tenemos buenas razones para esperar que si le seguimos fielmente, podremos unirnos a él. De hecho, el Señor dijo a sus discípulos (a nosotros) que se iba al cielo a preparar un lugar para todos.

El cielo no es un punto geográfico en algún lugar del universo material, sino una realidad espiritual, el estado de estar enamorado de Dios en comunión con todos sus ángeles y santos. Nuestra fe nos asegura que nos espera la felicidad eterna si seguimos los pasos de Cristo y vivimos como él vivió: una vida de amor abnegado. Esta es la esperanza cierta que nos permite soportar todo tipo de sufrimiento físico, mental y maléfico por el bien del reino que ha de venir.

En el Evangelio de este domingo (Mt 22:1-14), Jesús cuenta a los sumos sacerdotes y a los ancianos del pueblo una parábola que puede verse tanto como una afirmación de la alegría que nos espera después de la muerte como

una advertencia de que si rechazamos la invitación del Señor a compartir su vida, es posible que terminemos en las tinieblas donde "habrá llanto y rechinar de dientes" (Mt 22:13). Jesús *no* está diciendo que su Padre sea vengativo sino que nos advierte que, como personas libres, nuestras propias determinan lo que nos ocurre, tanto durante la vida como después de la muerte.

Al igual que el cielo no es un lugar físico, el infierno tampoco es una coordenada en algún mapa subterráneo, sino que es también un estado espiritual: es la soledad radical y la infelicidad. Si rechazamos a Dios en favor de nosotros mismos, obtendremos exactamente lo que nos buscamos: aislamiento y desesperanza. En términos bíblicos, cambiamos la alegría del banquete celestial por la miseria del eterno «llanto y rechinar de dientes».

La primera lectura de este domingo (Is 25:6-10) nos tranquiliza:

Dios el Señor destruirá a la muerte para siempre, enjugará de todos los rostros toda lágrima, y borrará de toda la tierra la afrenta de su pueblo. El Señor lo ha dicho. En aquel día se dirá: "¡Éste es nuestro Dios! ¡Éste es el Señor, a quien hemos esperado! ¡Él

nos salvará! ¡Nos regocijaremos y nos alegraremos en su salvación!" (Is 25:8-9).

Nuestro Dios quiere que seamos libres de todo mal, incluido el sufrimiento y el aislamiento autoimpuestos que resultan de nuestro comportamiento pecaminoso y de nuestra negativa a seguir a Jesús en el Camino de la Cruz.

La salvación en Cristo Jesús es motivo de regocijo, no de culpa ni de miedo. Sí, se nos advierte que no rechacemos la invitación de nuestro Señor, o el resultado será el intenso sufrimiento y la soledad simbolizados por "el llanto y el rechinar de dientes." Pero la elección es nuestra y, como nos dice san Pablo, la gracia de Dios es suficiente para ayudarnos a superar todas las dificultades a las que nos enfrentemos en nuestros esfuerzos por vivir como Jesús manda.

Alegremonos en la cruz de nuestro Señor Jesucristo. Lejos de ser instrumentos de tortura y muerte, las cruces que llevamos por amor a Dios y al prójimo son bendiciones que pueden sostenernos mientras continuamos nuestro viaje peregrino hacia nuestra patria celestial. †

Events Calendar

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

October 13-Nov. 5

Planned Parenthood, 8590 Georgetown Road, Indianapolis. **40 Days for Life**, sign up for prayer times. Information: 40daysindy.org, 317-213-4778, linda@40daysindy.org.

Planned Parenthood, 421 S. College Ave., Bloomington. **40 Days for Life**, sign up for prayer times. Information: www.40daysforlife.com/en/bloomington, 812-988-6995, rbwoodard@ameritech.net.

October 16, 23, 20, Nov. 6

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Jesus and the Eucharist Bible Study**, 6:30-8 p.m., second to fifth of seven Monday evening stand-alone sessions (Nov. 13, 27), content also available through formed.org, free, registration preferred. Information, registration: 317-501-0060, cacdiehr@gmail.com.

October 18

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

October 19

Our Lady of Peace

Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

St. Louis School Cafeteria, 13 St. Louis Pl., Batesville. **Evangelization informational gathering**, 7-8:30 p.m., information on forming parish evangelization teams, sponsored by archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, free. Information, registration: abardo@archindy.org, tinyurl.com/EvangStLouis23.

October 19, 26, Nov. 2

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Jesus and the Eucharist Bible Study**, 1-2:30 p.m., second-fourth of seven Thursday afternoon stand-alone sessions (Nov. 9, 16, 30), content also available through formed.org, free, registration preferred. Information, registration: 317-501-0060, cacdiehr@gmail.com.

October 20

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Alexander Mingus, Indiana Catholic Conference associate director, presenting "ICC:

Your Public Policy Voice for All Things Catholic," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Oct. 17. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

October 21

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Polidor 5K Run/Walk**, 8:30-10 a.m., benefitting ALFA literacy program in Northern Haiti, \$15-\$25. Registration, information: 812-350-5250, cutt.ly/Polidor5K2023.

October 22

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Foundation Day Mass for Sisters of Providence**, 11 a.m. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

October 25

Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Volunteer Open House**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2-6 p.m., learn about volunteer opportunities with Sisters

of Providence. Information, registration: 812-535-2878, Events.SistersofProvidence.org, volunteer@spsmw.org.

October 28

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

October 29

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam.

October 30

Christ the King Parish, 5884 N. Crittenden Ave., Indianapolis. **Fall Parish Mission**, 7-8 p.m., holy hour and talk by national Eucharistic preacher and Dominican priest Father Patrick Hyde, free. Information: 317-255-3666, qjeffries@ctk-indy.org.

November 1

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and

social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

Calvary Cemetery, Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Miscarriage Memorial and Burial of Ashes**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439.

November 2

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **All Souls Day Mass**, noon. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

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

November 3

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, womenscarecenter.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of**

the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

November 4

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confessions 8:10-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

November 7

Holy Trinity Cemetery, 2473 Green Valley Road, New Albany. **Burial Service for Miscarried Babies**, 4 p.m., quarterly service led by Conventual Franciscan Father Mark Weaver, blessing and burial of babies recently miscarried at local hospital. Information: Teri Popp, 812-944-0417, teri.ccna@gmail.com. †

Parish Evangelization Enrichment Day is set for Nov. 4 in Edinburgh

A Parish Evangelization Enrichment Day will take place at Holy Trinity Parish, 100 Keely St., in Edinburgh, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Nov. 4.

The day will consist of sharing simple practices for existing, new and developing parish evangelization teams and discussing modest and achievable goals with three audiences in mind: the "unchurched," the "alienated" and the "practicing," and how to carry out Christ's great commission with our fellow

parishioners.

This enrichment day is offered by the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis.

The \$20 cost, which includes lunch, will be assessed to parishes.

To register, go to tinyurl.com/EvangHolyTrinity23. Registration is required by Oct. 31.

For more information, contact Anita Bardo, archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship, at abardo@archindy.org or 317-236-1466. †

Christmas gift-shopping opportunities are scheduled in upcoming months

It's the time of year when parish Christmas bazaars and craft fairs offer the opportunity for gift-shopping, food and fun. Below are the events reported to *The Criterion* as of Oct. 10.

Oct. 28

Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, 1005 W. Main St., Danville. Holi-day Craft Fair, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., more than 30 local vendors and artisans, autumn and Christmas décor, baskets, handmade crafts, all occasion gifts, home-canned items, homemade baked goods, raffle, special appearance by Mrs. Claus, lunch available for purchase, free admission. Information: 317-745-4284, Oldblue-chair9102627@gmail.com.

Nov. 3-4

St. Agnes Parish, 1008 McLary Road, Nashville. Christmas and Craft Bazaar, Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., crafts, Christmas décor and gifts, silent auction of gift baskets and trees, home-baked goods, youth group boutique, quilt raffle, free admission. Information: 812-988-2778, StAgnesNashville@gmail.com, StAgnesCatholicNashville.org.

Nov. 4

St. Malachy School, 7510 N. County Road 1000 E., Brownsburg. Christmas Bazaar, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., gifts of all kinds available for purchase, homemade chicken salad or chicken and noodle lunches available, free admission. Information: 317-852-3195, altarsociety@stmalachy.org.

St. Martin of Tours Parish, 1720 E. Harrison St., Martinsville.

Christmas Bazaar, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., variety of items for sale, crafts, Christmas cookies and caramels by the pound, homemade baked goods, cash raffle, door prize for handmade quilt wall hanging and hourly door prizes, food and drinks, carry-out available, free admission. Information: 765-342-6379, parishoffice@stmtours.org.

Dec. 2-22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Shop INN-Spired Christmas Sale, Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Dec. 2, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Dec. 9, 16 and 23, 9 a.m.-noon; many items 25-75% off. Information: 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Ann Lewis, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

Wedding Anniversaries

ROY AND SHIRLEY (DEKAN) WINTERHEIMER, members of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on Oct. 17.

The couple was married in Christ the King Church in Evansville, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville), on Oct. 17, 1953.

They have two children: Cheryl Robers and Mark Winterheimer.

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



MARK AND DEBORAH (MEACHAM) BRUGGEMAN, members of St. Mark Parish in Perry County, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 20.

The couple was married in St. Charles Church in Otterbein, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette), on Oct. 20, 1973.

They have four children: Chad, Daryl, Jesse and Lance Bruggeman.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren.



DON AND SHARON (GARBER) HAGGENJOS, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 20.

The couple was married in St. John the Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, Ind. (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend), on Oct. 20, 1973.

They have four children: Regina Brown, Chris, Nick and Tony Haggjenjos.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren.



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

New archdiocesan director of youth ministry tells teens to let go of pressures and lean on God

By John Shaughnessy

From working with teenagers for more than seven years, Rachel Gilman knows the challenges and pressures they face today have intensified since she graduated from high school in 2010.

Still, the archdiocese's new director of youth ministry also knows there are certain questions about life that haven't changed through the years for youths.

"I remember in high school I was so at a loss of what I wanted to do with my life," Gilman says. "I would pray and pray and pray, and it just felt like God was so distant in those questions of mine—'Where are you calling me, God? What am I supposed to do with my life?'"

Gilman heard those same questions being asked by teenagers as she previously served as the director of youth ministry at Holy Spirit at Geist Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

"Our young people have big questions that they're looking for answers for. And I think, especially in this day and age, the amount of pressure that's put on high school students to have their entire life figured out by their freshman year of high school is just so much. I had those questions and felt that pressure, and I know now it's tenfold. Having conversations with freshmen and sophomores, they have no idea about their futures. They're figuring out who they are.

"A huge priority of mine in youth ministry is to tell them, 'You can trust God to guide you, but you also can let go a little bit of all the other things that everybody is telling you. You don't have to have all the answers.' I always wanted to give them a little freedom to pray and think about their lives spiritually and not just the practical aspects of life. From my own experience, it takes time to understand where God leads you."

The story of where God has led the now-31-year-old Gilman is not only insightful about her. It's also revealing about her main hope for all the youths in the archdiocese—to have a close relationship with Jesus.

The golden thread of God's presence

"I look back at all my experiences, and I just see now it's obvious that there's this golden thread of God preparing me for being called into ministry," she says.

That thread began in her childhood in South Bend, Ind., where her parents always encouraged her to be involved in her faith, including having her join her mother in singing in the church choir when she was 12. The thread also weaved through her four years at Marian High School in nearby Mishawaka, where she helped with retreats and used the gift of her voice in the school's liturgical choir.

The strongest stitch came during her four years at Valparaiso University in northern Indiana, where she became involved in campus ministry.

"When I was at Valpo, I decided to have a double major in math and music. That opened doors for me to express my faith and connect with God in a deeper way through music. I joined a praise and worship band and a group called Sweet Wine that did music ministry. We

would travel around to churches and organizations, sing and just visit with whoever we were with.

"There were people from so many different faith denominations in it. I learned so much about ecumenism and being friends with people from other faiths. And it taught me so much about how to pray. It also allowed me to learn more about my own faith when they asked me about Catholicism, and I didn't know the answers."

She also still struggled with the questions, "Where are you calling me, God? What am I supposed to do with my life?"

"One thing I knew, I had to work with people. I was already involved in the Newman Center. I started thinking about my campus minister, 'What if you were a campus minister? He gets paid for it.' Then I just got excited. I changed my math major to theology. I started volunteering at the Newman Center in youth ministry. Every time I did, the joy just kept growing. I loved the relationships I was making with people. It just made sense. I felt it was clearly a call from God."

'God, what do you want me to get from this?'

After graduating from college in 2014, Gilman entered the two-year Echo program at the University of Notre Dame, earning a master's degree in theology while gaining experience in faith formation leadership at a parish in Tampa, Fla.

The thread in her faith-life tapestry then weaved back to Indiana and her seven years at Holy Spirit at Geist Parish.

"I just thrived there. It was incredible, being able to work every day with people who were passionate about their faith. Just watching the way God would walk within the high school students' lives and my volunteers' lives, I feel very grateful for that experience."

Finding joy in working with other youth ministers, she joined the archdiocese in June—a time when two major events in youth ministry loomed on the horizon.

The first one involved being a leader for the archdiocese's 188 pilgrims who traveled to Portugal for World Youth Day on Aug. 1-6—a pilgrimage when another crisis of confidence for her came to a head.

"One of the things I had been praying for on that pilgrimage was to find the confidence I needed to be in this new role," Gilman says. "It's so different from what I was doing. Different work. Different people. I just found myself struggling to believe in myself.

"I had this one moment where I went to a church in Lisbon, and it was mostly empty. I was by myself for the first time in a long time. I just sat down and said, 'God, what do you want me to get from this?' I'd been so busy and so focused on our group that I didn't have much reflective time. The first thing that came into my head was 'how confident you've become from this, having to make all these decisions, having to support all these people, so many different personalities and parishes.'



In her previous role as the director of youth ministry at Holy Spirit at Geist Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, Rachel Gilman leads a game of Name That Tune, using kazoos, with Lucas Hamilton, left, and Brian Belford, Jr. Gilman is now the new director of youth ministry for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

"I was in awe. I didn't realize I was capable of all this. I felt that was God speaking to me in that moment, 'If you can handle this, you can handle anything.' Coming back now, I feel I have a better sense of knowing people and belonging to the archdiocese."

'I want them to know God loves them'

Her focus has now turned to her role in the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis on Nov. 16-18, during which 12,000 teenagers from across the country—including about 1,050 youths from the archdiocese—will celebrate their faith together.

"I went three times as a youth minister at Holy Spirit," she says. "I love NCYC for our youth. A huge part of that reason is because it's so hard to help our young people to have experiences of the larger Church. I just felt it opened their eyes to the reality that they're not alone, that there are other high school students around the country who love their Catholic faith.

"If you take a kid who goes to a public high school and is afraid to express their faith because of being made fun of or put down in any way, and then you take them to NCYC, oh my gosh, it's just so lifegiving to see the magnitude of our Church and how many people are really practicing it in our country."

She has also seen the impact the conference has in creating stronger bonds between youth ministers and the youths of their parish.

"You come back, and you have these memories together. Those kids came back on fire and wanted to be more involved and wanted to be leaders. That was so exciting to see."

Confident that God has called her to this present place in her faith journey, Gilman strives to help youths across the archdiocese embrace the presence of God in their lives.

"I just want them to know God loves them, that he desires a relationship with them," she says. "When they have that experience that 'God wants to be my Father' or 'Jesus wants to be my brother or friend,' that changes everything about someone's faith. So, my desire would be that every young person would have that experience and know and love God in that way.

"I also hope they would be formed as disciples for the rest of their lives. I think a huge success of youth ministry is when we can look back and say, 'Look, these people are in college and still going to Mass. They're talking about their faith and coming back to the parish excited to help. They're getting married in the Church.'

"I want them to know God loves them, and that changes them forever." †



'I just want them to know God loves them, that he desires a relationship with them. When they have that experience that 'God wants to be my Father' or 'Jesus wants to be my brother or friend,' that changes everything about someone's faith.'

—Rachel Gilman, archdiocesan director of youth ministry

Panel discusses mysteries of the holy rosary as a mighty tool for evangelization

(OSV News)—"Unleash the Power of the Rosary," a Sept. 27 online panel discussion hosted by Paradisus Dei and the New York-based Dominican Friars of the Province of St. Joseph, offered a lively discussion about the rosary as a powerful tool for evangelization that connects people to Jesus through Mary and guides them on a journey to the center of Jesus' Sacred Heart.

"Every time we pray the rosary with the heart of Our Lady, we are contemplating the face of Christ," said panelist Sister Alexia Maria, a member of the Servants of the Pierced of Hearts of Jesus and Mary. "As we pray the rosary we are really living [the] life of Christ and we are entering deeply into each mystery."

The virtual panel discussion was offered by the Dominican friars, who sponsored a Sept. 30 Dominican Rosary Pilgrimage,

and Paradisus Dei, a Houston-based Catholic apostolate that supports marriage and family life, which is about to release the second season of a video series about the rosary.

Michael Gormley, a mission evangelist for Paradisus Dei and successful podcaster, led the hourlong conversation between Sister Alexia Maria and Dominican Father John Paul Kern and Dominican Father Aquinas Guilbeau.

During the discussion, Sister Alexia Maria, who shared her moving testimony about the rosary in the newest installment of Paradisus Dei's "Mysteries of the Rosary: The Joyful Mysteries," spoke of her community's Marian charism and daily devotion to the rosary.

"We are called to be the living presence of Our Lady in the heart of the

Church," Sister Alexia Maria explained. "It's a joy to be a part of the 'Mysteries of the Rosary,' especially "'The Joyful Mysteries,' as in a sense, like Our Lady, I can sing my own *Magnificat* and share what the Lord has done in my own life."

She noted that she and the members of her religious community wear a rosary as part of their religious habits. At their home in Miami, they pray a daily rosary together and daily contemplate an image of Our Lady for 15 minutes. Additionally, each sister is given one specific mystery of the rosary to contemplate daily for the rest of their lives.

Sister Alexia Maria received the fifth glorious mystery, the crowning of Mary, which she said was "a joy."

"All I truly want to be is a star in the crown of Our Lady, and I have always

understood that, and so when I received that mystery it was a great gift and also a great task," Sister Alexia Maria said.

The Church dedicates the month of October to the rosary. The feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is on Oct. 7, commemorating the rosary's role in the Holy League's defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the 1571 Battle of Lepanto, a pivotal naval engagement off the coast of southwestern Greece.

According to tradition, Mary gave the rosary to St. Dominic (1170-1221), the founder of the Order of Preachers, commonly known as the Dominicans, to help him fight a heresy prevalent in southern France that viewed the world as a cosmic battle between good spiritual forces and evil material forces, and understood the human person to be a spirit trapped in a material body. †

LAUDATE

continued from page 1

to avert looming disasters in nature and human society.

In the exhortation, which follows his 2015 encyclical *“Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home,”* Pope Francis said “the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point” due to climate change, “one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community.”

With the global average temperature rapidly rising due to greenhouse gas emissions, extreme weather and dramatic climate shifts have impacted millions, particularly the impoverished, said the pope, who also lamented an international inertia in reigning in emissions.

The new exhortation is “timely,” said Tomás Insua, co-founder and executive director of the nonprofit Laudato Si’ Movement, which works through nearly 900 member organizations in 115 countries to foster a Catholic approach to the care of the environment.

Insua, who is based in Rome, told OSV News that the pope’s message underscores how “it’s a deeply Christian thing to be concerned for God’s beloved creation [and] ... deeply rooted in this very biblical love of creation.”

“Laudate Deum” relies on “stark language” to convey the grave impact of global warming on weather and climate, said Dan Misleh, founder of the Catholic Climate Covenant, a Washington-based nonprofit that works with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops on ecological awareness and advocacy.

“My thoughts are that Pope Francis is heartbroken,” Misleh told OSV News. “He wrote *‘Laudato Si’* eight years ago. And here we are in 2023 ... and he’s saying, ‘We just need to do more. We have no more excuses for inaction.’”

The direct tone of *“Laudate Deum”* speaks to people—among them, Catholics—who reject scientific evidence supporting global warming, said both Insua and Misleh.

“The pope is reminding us that what the scientists are telling us is really a crisis,” said Insua. “One of the misleading things about [the term] ‘climate change’ is that ‘change’ is a word that is neutral. It could be positive or negative. ... By using the word ‘crisis’ instead of just mere ‘change,’ [Pope Francis] is reminding us that this change is actually very harmful. It’s our most vulnerable, the poorest of our brothers and sisters, and our children and grandchildren, who pay the costs [of the crisis] most [of all]. So we have to take it seriously.”

Bishop Joseph J. Tyson of Yakima,



Workers dump waste into a landfill located just beside the Dhaleshwari River in Savar, Bangladesh, on March 7. (OSV News photo/Mohammad Ponir Hossain, Reuters)

Wash., episcopal moderator for Catholic Climate Covenant, told OSV News he knows firsthand the impact of climate change.

During a pastoral visit two years ago to a parish in that state, he witnessed “the entire town ... encircled by flames” from field fires sparked due to lack of rainfall. The blazes displaced some 15 parish families, even as “waves of smoke” drifted from Canada from other fires, creating hazardous working conditions for nearby fieldworkers harvesting fruits.

Like Pope Francis, Bishop Tyson decried “the lack of progress by our society, including our Church, in addressing this crisis.

“Our excuse can’t be a lack of knowledge, since so many in the scientific community have been warning us of an impending ‘climate crisis,’” he said. “Nor should our response be apathy—current and future generations have little patience for inaction. Financial costs and inconvenience are also off the table—practical energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts often save money and make our buildings healthier and better performing.”

In an Oct. 4 reflection published by the *Trenton Monitor*, Bishop David M. O’Connell of Trenton, N.J., predicted that some faithful would balk at *“Laudate Deum”* and stressed that “the Holy Father’s call for all people, especially people of faith, to be stewards of our ‘common home’ is not a negligible part of our faith and morality.

“If the believer ignores responsibility for the world in which we live, the resources it provides and the people with whom we share them, what can we possibly expect from those who do not believe?” said Bishop O’Connell. “If we show no regard or respect for the divine plan for creation, what can we say of human plans, human possibilities, human hopes for a sustainable future?”

He noted that as an apostolic exhortation, *“Laudate Deum”* is “a magisterial document that ranks third in importance of papal teachings after apostolic constitutions and encyclicals.”

Pope Francis’ insights align with previous papal calls from St. John Paul II and St. Paul VI for “the importance of our dialogue between faith and science,” which is “a longstanding Catholic tradition,” and for environmental stewardship, said Insua.

“I pray that the Holy Father’s vigilant attention to the threats to our ‘common home’—which fundamentally includes every human life—falls upon fertile ground, converting our hearts and inspiring us all to do whatever we can to make a positive difference,” said Bishop O’Connell.

That transformation will require increased pastoral formation on care for creation, said Misleh.

“I think part of [the problem] is that it’s not being preached in churches,” he said. “There’s not a lot of good catechesis for the Catholic faithful on these issues. They see this as a distraction or a secondary part of ... how to act in

their faith. They’re more concerned about other issues.”

Misleh and Insua both highlighted the new exhortation’s emphasis on the need to understand humanity’s rightful role in creation.

“It’s a little bit paradoxical that [the pope’s] message here is addressed to all people of goodwill, and the very title of the document is ‘Praise God’ [in Latin],” said Insua. “Pope Francis is engaging with all people of goodwill, but he’s doing it from a Christian perspective. And in the choice of the title, [he is] putting God squarely in the middle as the point of reference for all of our environmental concerns. All these questions are to be firmly grounded in God and reminding ourselves that we are his creatures.”

Misleh agreed, saying that, as in *“Laudato Si’,”* Pope Francis pointed to “three relationships that we need to pay attention to: our relationship with God, our relationship with each other and our relationship with creation. And what Pope Francis is saying is that when any of those three relationships is not tended to, the other two suffer.”

Misleh said the new exhortation’s call was prophetic, evoking the words of the Lord, spoken through Moses, to the ancient Israelites as recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy: “I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live” (Dt 30:19). †

Archdiocese is one of 10 in the U.S. to submit Laudato Si’ Action Platform plan

By Natalie Hoefler

This year’s archdiocesan Green Mass on Sept. 26 did more than honor the Church’s Season of Care for Creation.

At the end of the Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, he announced the archdiocese’s submission of its plan to the Vatican’s Laudato Si’ Action Platform (LSAP)—one of only 10 dioceses in the U.S. to do so thus far.

“The need to recover a right relationship with God, especially in terms of humanity’s negligence and abuse of creation, necessarily involves healing and reconciliation,” he said in his homily during the Mass, which was celebrated at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Indianapolis.

“The Laudato Si’ Action Platform, [for] which our own John Mundell serves as director, provides opportunity for such healing and reconciliation by enabling institutions, communities, families and individuals to develop action plans for achieving concrete goals toward a more holistic relationship with creation.”

Seven goal areas

Mundell, who is a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, serves as the global director of the LSAP—an effort of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Mundell, president and senior environmental consultant for Mundell & Associates, Inc., in Indianapolis, is also a member of the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry.

“Our archdiocese is one of only 10 out of 196 dioceses in the U.S. to publish [on the LSAP site] our plan to become more sustainable,” Mundell said. “Our Creation Care Ministry [team] worked hard to make that happen. It’s available to all dioceses in the world.”

The LSAP allows seven categories of groups—including individuals, entities and dioceses—around the world to publish personal or institutional actions to care for creation by living more sustainably.

The archdiocese’s plan revolves around seven goal areas: an increased response to the cry of the Earth; an increased response to the cry of the poor; development of ecological economics; adoption of sustainable lifestyles; enhancement of ecological education; encouragement of ecological spirituality; and growth in community engagement and participatory action.

‘Ambitious first yearly plan’

The submission to the LSAP “was our ambitious first yearly plan that combined some actions we had

already completed last year, some this year, and some are future-looking actions still to work on,” said John’s daughter Sarah Mundell, director of communications and community engagement for Mundell & Associates. She is also a member of the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry, and LSAP communications lead.

Part of the plan involves more parish and Catholic school participation in an energy audit pilot program.

“We had already done sustainability site visits for four parishes and a Catholic high school before this summer,” said Sarah, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. “This summer, we engaged with 11 parishes that expressed interest in sustainability site visits. Of those, eight followed up with visits.”

Much of the plan includes the Creation Care Ministry team’s efforts in serving as a resource and source of education for parishes, Catholic schools and archdiocesan offices in their efforts to function more sustainably.

A major part of that effort is done through “maintaining and improving” the ministry’s website, ourcommonhome.org, said Sarah, “which we’ve already been doing for the last five years.”

Sarah said other completed, ongoing and future actions include establishing an independent archdiocesan Creation Care fund and grant process for sustainability projects; encouraging the establishment of parish/school “shared resources programs” as an approach to wants and needs versus purchasing of new items; and working with the Indiana Catholic Conference in lobbying for legislation “that reflects Catholic values in the state of Indiana” and monitoring statewide environmental issues.

“We will update this plan in January 2024 for the



Members of the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry pose with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis on Sept. 26, the day the archbishop celebrated the archdiocese’s annual Green Mass there. Posing in the front row are Rosemary Spalding, left, Sharon Horvath, Benedictine Sister Sheila Fitzpatrick, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, Joe Shierling and Laura Sheehan. In the back row are Andy Pike, left, Andy Miller and John Mundell. Creation Care Ministry members not in the photo are Sarah Mundell and Julie Reyes. (Submitted photo)

upcoming year,” Sarah noted. “Moving forward, we imagine building an accumulative list under each goal for what are current projects and what are completed projects in each goal.”

‘Set aside egos, agendas and ideologies’

Caring for creation takes the effort of all people as part of their “interwoven relationships with God, neighbor, creation and self [that] determine the fabric in one’s spirituality of human existence,” Archbishop Thompson noted in his homily during the Green Mass—another initiative of the Creation Care Ministry.

“As we pray and discern how best to better respect the dignity of the human person, serve the poor and safeguard the planet, let us set aside egos, agendas and ideologies that we might be more Christ-centered in our efforts of accompaniment, dialogue, encounter and reconciliation.”

(For more information, go to ourcommonhome.org. Parishes interested in monitoring their energy use through the Energy Star Portfolio Manager should send an e-mail to mail@ourcommonhome.org.) †

Director of global Laudato Si’ Action Platform reflects on ‘Laudate Deum’

By Natalie Hoefler

As global director of the Laudato Si’ Action Platform and as a member of the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry, John Mundell anxiously awaited the publication of the Pope Francis’ Oct. 4 apostolic exhortation *“Laudate Deum”* (“Praise God”).

The document is a follow-up to the pope’s 2015 encyclical *“Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home.”*

“The document, as we expected, concludes that things are getting worse [regarding the climate crisis], and we haven’t been doing enough to fix it,” said Mundell, president and senior environmental consultant

for Mundell & Associates, Inc., an environmental consulting services organization in Indianapolis.

The text of *“Laudate Deum”* is not long, 15 pages with six chapters totaling 73 paragraphs.

“The first chapter stresses the technological paradigm, that nature is not a resource to be exploited without end, and recognizing our current use of those resources

is not sustainable and technology is not the solution,” explained Mundell, a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.

He described the other chapters as “addressing the weakness of current international policies, the pope’s thoughts on the progress and failures of past [United Nations’ Conference of Parties—COP] climate conferences,” and the pope’s thoughts on the upcoming COP conference in Dubai on Nov. 30-Dec. 12.

The pope is asking participants of that conference “to do something significant to avoid doom and gloom to humanity,” said Mundell. “It’s a warning shot.”

He called the document’s last chapter, “Spiritual Motivations,” the “most intense chapter.”

“The pope really sets out the reasons why faith is the motivation in this crisis: Faith gives the strength to our human hearts and allows us to transform our lives and transform our goals and shed new light on our relationship with creation as a whole,” Mundell said.

“He talks about how we are not separate from creatures, that we are interconnected. Human life is not sustainable without other creatures. We need them as much as they need us. We have a special family bond, like St. Francis of Assisi’s [canticle of] ‘Brother Sun, Sister Moon.’”

What Mundell found “most significant” about *“Laudate Deum”* were the last two paragraphs, in which Pope Francis states:

“If we consider that emissions per individual in the United States are about two times greater than those of individuals living in China, and about seven times greater than the average of the poorest countries, we can state that a broad change in the irresponsible lifestyle connected with the Western model would have a significant long-term impact. As a result, along with indispensable political decisions, we would be making progress along the way to genuine care for one another.

“‘Praise God’ is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God’s place, they become their own worst enemies” (#72-73).

“Leaving that part to the end really makes us from the U.S. and the U.S. Catholic Church aware that the pope is aware that we have a real responsibility to make a lifestyle change,” said Mundell. “He points out that we make some of the most significant impact on climate change in the world.

“That last line reminds us that we are not God, that only God is God. I think that’s another shot across the bow in remembering the humble spirit we need.” †



John Mundell

WADELTON

continued from page 1

the lives of the four people he had invited to the reception.

Father Wadelton had met Rebeca Barcenas, her husband Rafael Ventura and their daughters, Jennifer and Carmen, when he previously served as the pastor of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis.

In 2020, the then-37-year-old Barcenas had been on dialysis for seven years because of kidney failure. She longed to be the best mother she could be to her children and to have a normal family life. And she knew she needed a kidney transplant to have a chance to fulfill those goals.

Still, she was stunned when Father Wadelton told her he was pursuing the possibility of being an organ donor for her. And she called him “an angel of God” when he said he would do it after extensive testing showed he was a compatible match.

As he shared the reception with the family of four, there was mutual joy.

“I saw the healing effect of a living donation at work right in front of me,” Father Wadelton says. “She’s able to have a normal life. They’re able to go on vacation. They’re able to make plans for the future. She’s working, which helps her daughter Jennifer go to college. Just having the normal, fulfilling life with all the joys—without being tied to dialysis every other day, three days a week.

“She’s expressed her gratitude to me. A couple times a week, she’ll send me a text saying, ‘Remember we love you. We thank you for what you did for our family.’ It’s not the reason I did it, but it clearly shows she and her family are appreciative.”

That overwhelming appreciation flows from Barcenas when she talks about Father Wadelton.

“He gave me this opportunity to be here for my family,” she says. “I always call him ‘my angel.’ He’s a good, good man. He’s with God. He’s our family. We celebrate birthdays together. I told him when he gets older, I’ll take care of him. We love him.”

Seeing the change in Barcenas and her family served as a primary motivation for Father Wadelton to donate part of his liver to help save someone else’s life—even though he wouldn’t know the identity of the person he was trying to help.

This time, the surgery was far lengthier. And the intense pain he endured in the first few days of his recovery in the hospital led him to consider a question that he thought he never would ask.

Understanding the risks and the reward

“The surgery was much more extensive than I expected. It was almost 10 hours long, and the incision is probably 10 or 11 inches in length,” Father Wadelton says. “The first couple days were pretty bad after surgery, just keeping comfortable with the pain.

“In the middle of [that first week of recovery], when I started feeling a little down because of the duration of the pain,

I started questioning, ‘Was this worth it?’ But that’s when I had to remind myself that I was only a few days out from surgery, and that’s a small sacrifice to make with the hopeful health gain for the other person. I can put up with some pain for a few weeks if this person gets to live without liver problems for the rest of their life, God willing.”

As his medication began to help ease the pain, even more so did the impact of a conversation he had with one of the medical staff involved in the surgical removal of part of his liver and the transplant operation involving the donor recipient.

“I asked the person, ‘You probably can’t say anything, but is she doing OK?’ The comment was, ‘I can’t say anything, but you can see I have a big smile on my face.’ I took that as good news. That’s the only indicator that it’s gone well.”

Father Wadelton’s surgeon had a similar reaction for the priest’s part of the transplant, telling him that the surgery was successful and that there were no concerns. Still, Father Wadelton was told to ease into his recovery.

“They gave me the full worst-case scenario timing-wise,” he says. “They said I wouldn’t be able to drive for four to six weeks. And I have lifting restrictions for about three months. But then they kept couching that with, ‘Just listen to what your body is saying. Do what you feel you can do, but don’t push it.’ They indicated fatigue would be my biggest enemy. And that I would feel tired for several weeks.”

They also informed him about the recovery time for the regeneration of his liver, the only organ in the human body which can regenerate itself. Father Wadelton was told his liver should regenerate to its original size in two to three months.

Equally amazing, the transplanted liver portion grows and restores normal liver function in the person receiving it.

Amid all that information and insights about the organ donation, Father Wadelton had the intense desire to return to serving his parishioners at St. Bartholomew as soon as possible—especially in celebrating Mass for them and with them.

‘The community has been wonderful’

After a week of care and recovery in the Indianapolis home of his sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Todd Moore, he returned to his parish on Sept. 29. Since then, he has begun to resume his role as pastor, benefitting—he says with a laugh—from “a bunch of mother hens [on the parish staff] who are protecting me from myself, which is beautiful. I really appreciate them.”

He celebrated one Mass that first weekend while also being present in the narthex before the start of all the liturgies, welcoming parishioners.

“We had a healing Mass, and I helped with the anointing of the sick during that Mass,” he says. “People were surprised to see me so quickly and glad to see me, which was nice.”

Aware of his own continuing need to heal, he has tried to keep his schedule light the first few weeks since the surgery.



Father Christopher Wadelton, pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, left, takes a break for a photo with his nephew, Tom Wadelton. The two hiked together in Colorado this summer. (Submitted photo)

“Everything is just a little more difficult with major abdominal surgery. Walking, sitting up, moving around, it just takes a little more out of me,” he says. “I keep a few appointments every day, but then I disappear in the afternoon to relax, and then I come back in the evening.”

Even so, his schedule ramped up on the weekend of Oct. 6-8. He participated in a camping adventure with parish families at Brown County State Park on the night of Oct. 6, celebrated a Mass with them on Oct. 7, and then celebrated two of the three Masses at the parish church on Oct. 8.

“I think I took another step forward over the weekend, so that felt good,” he says. “We had a great outing with the people. I was pretty much 100 percent the whole weekend. I’m feeling good.”

Taking part in the camp-out and celebrating the Masses were his ways of showing his gratitude and commitment to parishioners.

“The community has been wonderful. They’ve done a meal train. People have been dropping off food—Filipino food, Mexican soups, more fruit than I could ever eat,” he says with a laugh. “I could not be more pleased and humbled by everybody’s support with me taking time off and covering things while I’ve been gone.”

He also expressed his thanks to retired Father Martin Peter for helping to celebrate Masses at the parish while he was away—and to Father Clement Davis, the parish’s senior parochial vicar, for helping to guide St. Bartholomew since May, when Father Wadelton began a three-month sabbatical.

Experiencing ‘the beauty and enormity of God’s abundant creation’

From late May to early September, Father Wadelton embarked on a long road trip that led him across Canada, along the west coast of the United States and down into Mexico before heading back to Indiana for the transplant operation.

He kayaked, rode his mountain bike and camped extensively, including with

friends in the Canadian Rockies. During the journey, he also baptized the son of one of his cousins, visited 18 of the 21 mission churches in California, and spent several days in Mexico, using his command of Spanish to help an organization that assists migrants coming from Central America or who have been deported from the United States.

It was all part of an adventure that Father Wadelton says revealed “the beauty and enormity of God’s abundant creation”—an adventure that replenished his spirit and built up his physical stamina for the transplant surgery.

“This time, I wanted to feel what it was like to give a completely anonymous donation,” he says. “And whoever received it, whether I know them or not, it’s not the reason I’m doing it.”

The prayers from parishioners have poured forth for him through it all. Barcenas and her family have also prayed for Father Wadelton and the donor recipient.

“He feels he needs to help people,” she says. “He always looks to help people. I tell him that God is with him.”

Father Wadelton views his efforts as a living donor as a prayer in itself, living out Christ’s call to show compassion and concern for others.

“Christ just wants us to use whatever talents and gifts we have for the good of others,” he says. “We’re all called to give whatever we can, whether that’s money or time or wisdom. For me, I have a liver that can help somebody, so I wanted to do it. I feel like I needed to do it to help someone else.”

(More than 1,000 Hoosiers are among more than 100,000 Americans waiting for lifesaving organ transplants, according to Donate Life Indiana, an organization that creates awareness and provides ways for Indiana residents to become transplant donors. For anyone interested in learning more about being a living donor, check the websites, www.donatelifelifeindiana.org or www.indianadonornetwork.org.) †

Worst earthquake in two decades kills 2,000 in Afghanistan

(OSV News)—The death toll in one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike Afghanistan in two decades has risen to 2,000, Taliban officials confirmed on Oct. 8.

The 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck on Oct. 7, 25 miles (40 kilometers) west of Herat city in the western Herat province.

Initial assessments of the United Nations indicated that the quake caused deaths across eight villages. Mahal Wadakah was the worst affected village.

Following the initial quake, which struck around 11 a.m. local time, several aftershocks occurred with tremors felt in neighboring Badghis and Farah provinces, according to OCHA, the U.N. humanitarian office.

“Once again, children and families in Afghanistan have been affected by a devastating earthquake, this time in western Herat province,” UNICEF Afghanistan said in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Oct. 7. “UNICEF Afghanistan is on the ground with our U.N. colleagues to assess the full impact. Our heartfelt condolences go out to all families affected,” United Nations Children’s Fund wrote.

The presence of Church charity organizations is close to zero with the Taliban government, an official from one of the Catholic organizations told OSV News. However, some try to work with local partners.

“Our humanitarian partners have

begun relief efforts, sending medical and trauma support to regional hospitals, as well as emergency shelter, food assistance and other supplies to the affected area,” Anne Bousquet, Catholic Relief Services’ (CRS) country representative for Afghanistan told OSV News in an e-mail. CRS is the international relief and development agency of the Church in the U.S.

“CRS, along with other humanitarian organizations, are participating in assessments to determine the scale of the damage and needs in Herat to identify where CRS can best support the response efforts,” Bousquet said on Oct. 8.

The U.N. OCHA release said 465 houses had been reported destroyed and

another 135 were damaged.

“Partners and local authorities anticipate the number of casualties to increase as search and rescue efforts continue amid reports that some people may be trapped under collapsed buildings,” the U.N. said.

The World Health Organization (WHO) in Afghanistan said it dispatched 12 ambulance cars to Zenda Jan to evacuate casualties to hospitals.

“As deaths and casualties from the earthquake continue to be reported, teams are in hospitals assisting treatment of [the] wounded and assessing additional needs,” the U.N. agency said on X. “WHO-supported ambulances are transporting those affected, most of them women and children.” †

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

C.S. Lewis' relevance, popularity increasing years after his death

By Jonathan Luxmoore

(OSV News)—In a rambling red-brick house on the western edge of Oxford, England, a melancholy desk sits at a bay window looking out over tangled woodland.

In the foreground, an ancient ashtray stands broodingly against a worn leather armchair, surrounded by wall maps and pictures depicting a fantasy landscape.

When Clive Staples Lewis in 1930 bought The Kilns, a former brick factory, he used its quiet remoteness to produce a stream of literary and spiritual masterpieces that are still quoted with reverence today.

But he achieved most fame with stories for children that contained deep Christian echoes, the best known of which, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, has sold 100 million copies in more than 40 languages.

Until recently, paradoxically, C.S. Lewis had been largely ignored at Oxford University, where he taught for three decades until his early death from bone cancer on Nov. 22, 1963. He gained greater recognition in the United States, which he never visited.

With popular interest continuing to grow, however, and three Narnia books—*The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*—made into blockbuster films, things could be changing.

“Like his close friend, J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis expressed his Christian faith through narrative and imagination which chimes in well with the needs of our contemporary culture,” said Father Michael Ward, a Lewis expert at Oxford.

“People pick up intuitively on the timeless religious element in his books, even if they’re not directly aware of their fundamentally Christian message,” he said.

Lewis won an Oxford scholarship from his native Northern Ireland in 1916, graduating in classics and English after fighting in World War I, and becoming a fellow of Magdalen College in 1925.

Oxford city landmarks include the Eagle and Child pub, where his informal literary group The Inklings met to discuss ideas; the walkways where he nurtured his fascination for Nordic, Celtic and Greek legends; and the Anglican Holy Trinity Church where he lies buried with his brother, Warren Lewis.

Despite his prodigious output, however, Oxford’s academic establishment had traditionally been dismissive of Lewis.

The English faculty, which he did much to develop, considered him too preoccupied with Christianity, while the university’s theology faculty viewed him as a literary intruder.

As a new generation is introduced to the world of Narnia, Judith Wolfe, editor of Oxford’s *Journal of Inklings Studies*, said a decade ago that Lewis’ Christian vision was then gaining a new relevance.

Lewis was writing at a time of profound change, she said, when the universal acceptance of humanity’s

sinfulness was breaking down under the impact of modern Freudian analysis, and the traditional answers offered by Christian apologists no longer carried conviction.

He saw how Christianity’s witness to the world was diminished by denominational rivalries, and believed his role was to show what united Christians rather than divided them.

“Although Lewis wasn’t a professional theologian, his acute sense of the world Christianity portrays was just as profound as the best modern theologians,” Wolfe said. “He also realized Christian literature was failing to present good and holy characters who were also interesting—the evil ones were always more compelling. By portraying Christ as the lion Aslan in the Narnia stories, he hoped to reveal the attractiveness of the good in real life.”

Born at Belfast in November 1898 into the Anglican Church of Ireland, Lewis abandoned his faith at school, but was reconverted to Christianity at Oxford by the devoutly Catholic J.R.R. Tolkien, author of *The Lord of the Rings*.

In the autobiographical *Surprised by Joy*, he recalled being brought back to Christianity “kicking, struggling, resentful, darting my eyes in every direction for a chance to escape.”

“That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me,” he wrote. “I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England.”

Lewis disappointed Tolkien by declining to become a Catholic, and instead remained a “high church” Anglican. But he was sympathetic to the Catholic doctrines of purgatory, mortal sin and prayers to the saints, and retained an ecumenical focus—perhaps in reaction to the bitter religious divisions of Northern Ireland.

His book *Mere Christianity*, based on acclaimed wartime broadcasts for the BBC, tackled popular objections to Christianity from a skeptical viewpoint.

Diarmaid MacCulloch, Oxford professor of Christian history, said Lewis’ nondenominational approach to Christianity, which predated ecumenical attitudes at the 1962-1965 Second Vatican Council, explained his popularity in the United States.

“Lewis tends to attract more conservative Christians, both Protestants and Catholics, at a time when religion



C.S. Lewis was an English scholar and popular Christian writer who died in 1963. The power of his writings inspired by his faith continues to grow 60 years after his death. (CNS/courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London)

is undergoing a realignment between the forces of tradition and change,” said MacCulloch, a fellow of the British Academy whose monumental 2009 *A History of Christianity* was accompanied by a BBC series.

Walter Hooper, a Catholic American who lived with Lewis at the time of his death, told *Our Sunday Visitor* in 2013 that he saw other reasons why interest in Lewis looks set to grow, particularly among Catholics.

Hooper, who died in 2020 at age 89, recalled then-Cardinal Joseph A. Ratzinger citing Lewis’ 1943 book, *The Abolition of Man*, during a 1988 lecture at Britain’s Cambridge University in Cambridge, England, and praising its defense of natural law and rejection of “destructive relativism.”

Hooper also remembered St. John Paul II revealing a deep knowledge of Lewis’ works when he met Hooper at the pontiff’s request after a general audience at the Vatican, particularly lauding Lewis’ 1960 work, *The Four Loves*, and his devotion to a practical apostolate.

“Lewis owed it to his fans to avoid complexities and set Christianity’s core beliefs in place,” Hooper said around the 50th anniversary of Lewis’ death. “I think he’s being taken much more seriously in the Catholic Church now, at a time when the way these core beliefs are presented is all-important, but the sense of meaning must always stay the same.”

All of this will add pressure for fuller academic recognition of Lewis, whom many now see as one of the 20th century’s most important Christian writers.

Back at The Kilns, the rooms still exist where Lewis received Tolkien and other associates, where he played Scrabble with his American wife Joy Davidman, a former communist and fellow convert before she succumbed to cancer at age 45, and where he died on the same day as President John F. Kennedy.

The once-derelict house, restored as a study center by U.S. volunteers in 1993-2002, is now owned by the California-based C.S. Lewis Foundation, and stands in a suburban landscape much changed from Lewis’ own days.

But visits are increasing as interest grows worldwide in this original and insightful Christian writer.

(Jonathan Luxmoore covers Church affairs in Europe from Oxford and Warsaw.) †



A desk overlooks the garden in The Kilns in Oxford, England, where C.S. Lewis penned his Christian writings, including *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Experts agree that Lewis succeeded in capturing the Christian imagination where the theological abstractions often seemed too high brow. (CNS photo)

Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

Emptying oneself leaves room for God to fill us with gifts to share

I spent the first week of October attending the International Catholic Stewardship Conference (ICSC). It is a gathering of 700 Catholic professionals who serve the Church in areas of marketing, evangelization, stewardship and fundraising. Religious and lay persons from all over the U.S. and other countries come together for a week of education and idea-sharing.

I love my job. I love my profession. And most of all, I love my Church. I have to admit, though, like any job, there are times when the workload is great, and I grow tired. Sometimes I face negative reactions to my being a fundraiser and, increasingly, I find myself defending the Church and its teachings. It can be exhausting. There are times when I need a “pick-me-up.”

Being immersed in the conference with so many folks like myself who are committed to the mission of the Church and her ministries was what I needed. We all need to feel like what we do in

this life is worthwhile. It was affirming to share experiences with colleagues in other Catholic dioceses and remember that we all serve the same mission and the same God. I was also inspired by some of the keynote speakers. A standout was Bishop James R. Golka of the Diocese of Colorado Springs, Colo.

I understand the need for balance in all things. However, I have to say it has always made me feel uneasy in conversations in which folks prioritize self-care above all else. While we are bombarded with messages of self-indulgence in today’s society, Bishop Golka spoke of the opposite.

The focus of his talk was stewardship, but his perspective was on emptying oneself. He explained stewardship as “receiving gifts that don’t belong to you, nurturing them, and then giving them away.”

He spoke of *kenosis*, which is a Greek term meaning “to empty.” Only when we empty ourselves can we accept God’s gifts and be filled with his spirit. Our duty as Christians is to enter into a loop of grace as we continually empty ourselves, accept God’s gifts and give them away.

When we fill ourselves with our own

selfish desires or fixate on accumulating wealth or material items, we leave no room for God to fill us.

During his talk, Bishop Golka related a story of being invited to a parishioner’s birthday party for her grandson. As he entered the home with a gift in tow, the grandmother told him to return the gift to his car as their family tradition is not to accept presents on their birthdays. Instead, the birthday boy carefully made and distributed gifts to each of his invited guests. At first, Bishop Golka said he thought the whole idea was crazy, but then he saw the look of absolute joy on the boy’s face as he gave his treasured gifts away. This is what God wants of us, too.

I am but a very small cog in God’s great design for his Church. But my experience at this conference reminded me that my role is to help others be generous. I get to participate in that great loop of grace that allows people to give for the sake of others. What could be more rewarding than that?

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †



Guest Column/Fr. Patrick Briscoe, O.P.

What makes the St. Michael Prayer so powerful?

Catholics of a certain age will remember reciting a set of prayers after Mass called the Leonine Prayers.



Introduced by Pope Pius IX in 1859, the prayers were offered in the Papal States for the protection of the Holy See’s temporal independence. The prayers included, among other things, three Hail Marys and the Hail Holy Queen.

A few decades later, facing extreme anti-clericalism in Italy, Pope Leo XIII added the Prayer to St. Michael to the Leonine Prayers and asked that they be recited by Catholics throughout the world. Following the Lateran Treaty in 1929, Pius XI ordered that they be said for the conversion of Russia. The practice was suppressed in 1965 as part of the reform of the liturgy following the Second Vatican Council.

Back in popularity

In some places, the custom of praying the St. Michael Prayer after Mass has seen a resurgence. The St. Michael Prayer holds a special place in the hearts of many Catholics, not just for its historical significance but for the profound spiritual shield it provides. It is a reminder that, as we continue on our pilgrimage on this side of eternity, we are not alone. The Archangel Michael stands ready to assist us in our battles against the forces of hell that seek to undermine our faith and virtue.

The prayer itself is a simple yet profound expression of reliance on God’s protection:

“St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.”

In 1994, Pope St. John Paul II said, “Although this prayer is no longer recited at the end of Mass, I ask everyone not to forget it and to recite it to obtain help in the battle against the forces of darkness and against the spirit of this world.” Valuable to Pope John Paul II, we might ask, what makes the St. Michael Prayer so powerful?

First, the prayer invokes St. Michael, the “Prince of the heavenly hosts,” who commands the legions of angels. Pope Francis has explained the archangel’s work, saying, “Michael fights to re-establish divine justice. He defends the people of God from their enemies, especially the enemy *par excellence*, the devil.” The prayer is a call for divine reinforcement in our spiritual battles, providing us with the armor we need to withstand temptation and evil.

Second, by praying the St. Michael Prayer, we acknowledge the reality of spiritual warfare. It reminds us that the devil and evil spirits are active in the world, seeking to lead us away from God. Our plea for St. Michael’s defense is a declaration of our commitment to resist these forces.

Third, we submit ourselves humbly to God’s protection and St. Michael’s intercession in this prayer. This act of surrender reflects our dependence on divine grace. It is a prayer of trust, declaring our hope in God’s plan for our lives.

Finally, the St. Michael Prayer is a unifying force for Catholics. It transcends cultural boundaries, uniting believers in

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Teen’s decision to choose life leads to challenges, blessings

Angela was your typical high schooler. She lived in a suburban home. She was an excellent student who got high grades. She had a happy family who provided for her needs.

She was making plans for her high school graduation and college.

Then everything changed. Angela admitted she made decisions in high school that moved her away from her faith, and she fell in love with a guy who did not love or treat her the right way.

She found out she was pregnant with their son during her senior year. She was terrified and was not sure what to do. Her family was also not the most supportive,

and she did not have a secure living situation. Her son’s birth father and his family had disappeared, and she had no support and felt completely alone.

When Angela finally reached her boyfriend, he wanted her to get an abortion. Angela felt so lost and scared and broke down crying. She had been raised Catholic and did not believe in abortion! Her family’s reaction went beyond disappointment. Her father stopped communicating with her.

Angela was at a breaking point. She googled for help and found St. Elizabeth, a Catholic Charities-operated program in New Albany offering women facing unplanned pregnancies confidential counseling and other services with the goal of helping women choose life for their unborn child. Angela said she was greeted with kindness and no judgment. Consequently, she made a life-changing decision: she chose life!

Angela graduated high school as part of a dual enrollment program with a local community college. Immediately after graduation, she moved to the dorms at a state university. She

had applied for and was accepted by a local university online education program. The online school would give her the flexibility that would allow her to be both a mother to her son and a student.

To pay for college, she worked part time at Panera Bread and applied for and was awarded a Sam H. Jones Community Service Scholarship Program. It provides selected students an ongoing cohort intended to help them develop their interests and skills related to civic engagement and leadership.

Only two weeks into the start of her new life, during the spring of 2017, Angela gave birth to her son, Vaughn! Angela and Vaughn navigated her college career together. Vaughn was born with a flat skull that required him to wear a protective helmet until it grew to cover his brain. He also was missing part of his pupil in his left eye and had to wear a patch on his good eye to strengthen the at-risk one. As Vaughn got older, Angela loved his interest in her work.

She said it was an amazing opportunity to be able to go to school while watching her son. She also liked being able to see his interest in her education, for him to be a part of it. She said it has been an amazing experience.

Angela’s relationship with her family was a difficult situation that, thanks to God, was mended by Vaughn. Angela and her family reconciled after her parents met Vaughn and instantly fell in love with their grandson.

Vaughn also mended another relationship: Angela is certain that Vaughn changed her life ... and restored her relationship with God.

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



Guest Column/Maria Wiering

A lesson for kids about St. Jude’s arm, kitsch and cartoon saints

Early in my Catholic reporting days, someone found an unusual lamp in our office attic—its base was a man wrapped in a green robe, with a flame on his head: St. Jude, with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It was a St. Jude lamp. I wish I had snagged it, but alas, I did not. I wonder who did, or if it’s sitting in a thrift store window someplace, illuminating the night.

I recently thought about that lamp as I drove my oldest son and daughter to a local parish where St. Jude’s relics had stopped for their first U.S. tour. We were on our way to see the bones of an Apostle—an Apostle!—someone who ate, drank, maybe joked with Jesus, but had definitely walked alongside the Son of God. I told the kids that when we got to the relic, we should pray an Our Father

together—maybe St. Jude was there when Jesus taught his disciples the prayer. I wondered if that was something we could even wrap our minds around.

I brought my two oldest—ages 7 and 10—because I wanted to help them understand that Jesus is real and his incarnation is true. Maybe they would see “proof” in the bones of one of his friends, someone who loved Jesus, watched him die, saw him resurrected, and then left his home to evangelize, ultimately dying a martyr. Maybe in a moment of wavering faith years down the road, they would remember kneeling before that golden arm-shaped reliquary and remember that Jesus is real, he loves them, and he is worth living and dying for.

Adventures in Catholic parenting always go differently in my head than in reality. As I picked them up from school, I said, “Guess what we’re going to do: Go see an Apostle’s arm!” My son actually said, “Noooooo!” My daughter said, “That will give me nightmares!” On

the way, I tried to pull up a kid-friendly podcast about relics, but the first few sentences about all the bones in Rome didn’t seem to ease my kids’ concern so I turned it off.

So I started to explain, the best I could, why the Church has long used relics to help people around the world feel close to the saints and Jesus Christ. I reminded them, too, that St. Jude is the patron saint of “hopeless causes,” and a reminder that nothing is impossible with God.

At the church, we waited in line to kneel next to the relics. When it was our turn, the kids pressed St. Jude keychains against the glass box surrounding the reliquary, and I did the same with my Bible. We prayed, briefly examined the bones through a window in the reliquary, and then our time of veneration was over, as we made way for the next person’s turn.

We sat in the pews for a few minutes processing what we had just experienced.

See WIERING, page 14



See BRISCOE, page 14

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 15, 2023

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

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



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

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

Also, usually, the prophets saw little in which they could truly rejoice. They invariably wrote that human sin, not divine revenge or indifference to human distress, was the cause of trouble in the world.

So, the prophets frequently counseled the people to be always true to God.

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

The prophet also insists that if the people are faithful to God, all will be right. Peace and security will reign. Prosperity will prevail. The holy city of Jerusalem, God's city, and the royal capital, will be seen throughout the world as the center of a great nation.

The second reading is from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. On several occasions recorded in the Acts of the Apostles or in Paul's epistles, the Apostle was imprisoned, having been arrested for preaching against the establishment or simply for disturbing the peace. This passage from Philippians was written during one such period of captivity for Paul.

Being jailed, humiliated and abused were his plight. Nevertheless, Paul says that his faith in God never wavers. His commitment to proclaiming the Gospel always leads him. Nothing else matters to him, not even his comfort or personal

well-being. God gave Christ to the world. Paul must extend this gift far and wide.

St. Matthew's Gospel furnishes the last reading. The reading is a parable with three parts.

In the first part, a king (who represents God) invites guests, familiar and even privileged, to a wedding banquet for his son. These people reject the invitation. The king invites other guests. Again, the invitation is ignored. Then, in the second part, the king invites outcasts and strangers to the feast. They come.

However, in the third part, the king sees a guest at the banquet improperly dressed. He orders this guest to be removed.

The king's servants represent the prophets. The prospective guests who spurn the invitation represent the people of Israel. The outcasts and strangers represent the aliens and the sinful.

The message is that God's mercy extends to everyone. Even so, God drags no one into the kingdom of heaven. Sinners must reform to be worthy of heaven.

Reflection

These readings recall several basic facts. The first is that God never fails in mercy. He does not disown the promise spoken long ago through the prophets, and then finally by Christ, to guide people to everlasting life by revealing to them the laws of righteousness and by strengthening their resolve to be righteous.

The second fact is simple and constant throughout history. Humans just cannot accept it. The fact is that humans sin. The sin of Adam and Eve always weakens humans. Their nature is distorted. They are myopic. They exaggerate their own powers, therefore discounting their need for God.

Conversion requires a frank realization of who and what humans are. We are sinful, but God loves us.

In this realization, humans come to the same conviction that drove St. Paul to proclaim the Lord in spite of all. Nothing matters other than to be in union with God. Everything other than living in union with God is fickle and impermanent and foolhardy. †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 16

St. Hedwig, religious
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, virgin
Romans 1:1-7
Psalms 98:1-4
Luke 11:29-32

Tuesday, October 17

St. Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
Romans 1:16-25
Psalms 19:2-5
Luke 11:37-41

Wednesday, October 18

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

Thursday, October 19

St. John de Brebeuf, priest,
St. Isaac Jogues, priest,

and companions, martyrs
Romans 3:21-30
Psalms 130:1-6
Luke 11:47-54

Friday, October 20

St. Paul of the Cross, priest
Romans 4:1-8
Psalms 32:1-2, 5, 11
Luke 12:1-7

Saturday, October 21

Romans 4:13, 16-18
Psalms 105:6-9, 42-43
Luke 12:8-12

Sunday, October 22

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

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

The Church presumes all marriages to be valid until proven otherwise

Q Can there be situations where a Catholic can date another person who has been divorced but has not yet received a declaration of nullity for that marriage?



In a previous column you stated the following: "All marriages are presumed valid until proven otherwise." I have relatives and friends who date divorcees. Couldn't this become an emotional nightmare if eventually they do get serious and an annulment falls through? (Indiana)

A Yes, it is true that the Catholic Church presumes that marriages are valid until proven otherwise. And it's only logical that faithful Catholics should discern their life choices in light of this general principle. I always advise divorced Catholics not to start dating unless and until they are declared free to marry by a Catholic marriage tribunal.

The Catholic belief in the absolute permanence of marriage has its foundation in Jesus' own words in sacred Scripture. As we read in St. Matthew's Gospel, when Pharisees question Jesus as to whether a marriage can be dissolved, Jesus responds: "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. I say to you, whoever divorces his wife [unless the marriage is unlawful] and marries another commits adultery" (Mt 19:8-9).

This theological reality is reflected in our current Code of Canon Law. Canon 1060 tells us: "Marriage enjoys the favor of law. Consequently, in doubt the validity of a marriage must be upheld until the contrary is proven."

Practically, this means that, apart from certain situations where it is plainly obvious on the surface that a valid marriage was never contracted (specifically, I'm

thinking of "lack of form" cases where a Catholic attempted to marry in a non-Catholic ceremony without the required special dispensation from the local bishop), a civilly divorced person will always be considered married in the eyes of the Church unless and until their union is declared null by a Church marriage tribunal after the appropriate canonical process.

Therefore, dating someone who is still considered married in the eyes of the Church, or choosing to date someone with a known prior marriage bond, is, at best, imprudent. As you note, becoming emotionally close to someone you hope to marry, but may not be able to in the end, has the potential to lead to serious heartbreak.

At worst, a romantic involvement with someone who is presumed to be already married has the potential to cross the line into the sin of adultery.

Incidentally, this understanding of marriage as fundamentally indissoluble applies equally to all marriages, for Catholics and non-Catholics alike. So, for example, if two Protestants marry in their own church, divorce, and then one of them later wishes to marry a Catholic, that initial Protestant wedding would need to be investigated and declared null by a Catholic marriage tribunal in order for the wedding to the Catholic to be allowed to take place.

Because marriage tribunals don't exist to rubber-stamp requests in a perfunctory way, but rather to discern the actual truth about the circumstances surrounding a marriage, an affirmative decision (i.e., a decision to grant the declaration of nullity) can never be guaranteed. To be fair, at first glance some marital unions may seem especially likely to be declared null. Still, this should never be presumed or taken for granted.

In fact, most marriage tribunals state quite clearly in their introductory paperwork that those seeking a declaration of nullity must not set a date for a new wedding until the process is concluded.

That all being said, it's never too late to try to make a difficult situation right. Even if a person with a presumptively valid prior marriage has gotten romantically involved with a new partner, marriage tribunal staff will still be more than happy to work with them through the nullity process.

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

My Journey to God

Listening to the Trees

By John Boucher

While I was on my sometimes-weekly walk in the park, I asked the trees to tell me about the Creator. I heard them say, "We are joyful to show the glory of God in our many-hued autumn colors." I replied, "Thank you, trees, for sharing your beauty, and thanks to the Creator." The trees spoke again. "We mourn the loss of our leaves. But we've been through this many, many years. We know that the Creator will bring us new life in the spring because God is good." "All the time," I replied.



(John Boucher is a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: Afternoon light illuminates a maple tree in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.) (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

ADAMS III, John W., 74, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Sept. 28. Husband of Mary Beth Adams. Father of Johnny, Patrick, Stephen and Tim Adams. Brother of Jill Meyer. Grandfather of eight.

BESSLER, Margery T., 84, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Sept. 27.

DICKMAN, Elizabeth, 74, St. Paul, Tell City, Sept. 19. Mother of Misty Harris. Sister of Peggy Cardin, Carolyn Cash, Nickii Freeman, Connie Kahler, Brenda Simpson, Judy, Henry and Richard Sumner. Grandmother of three.

DOLL, Donna V., 68, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Sept. 29. Sister of Julie Eckstein, Mary Ellen Grossman, Cathy Schene and George Doll. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

DRISTAS, Beth Ann, 58, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 16. Wife of Christopher Dristas. Mother of Maeci Dristas and Raegan Dristas-Otley. Sister of Janet Bozak, Sandy Furman, Bobbie Lemmons, Patty Masty, Jerry, Ray and Ron Wojkovich. Grandmother of one.

DUERSTOCK, Riley H., 21, St. Louis, Batesville, Sept. 4. Daughter of Deron and Jill Duerstock. Granddaughter of Janet Blair. Sister of Ryan Duerstock.

FAULKENBERG, Kelly, 66, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 13, 2022. Husband of Suzanne Faulkenberg.

GIFFORD, MaryLou, 73, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 22. Mother of Shannon Doody Burke, Brian Doody and Cory Gifford. Sister of Ron Rinear. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of four.

GROTE, Geralene, 80, All Saints, Dearborn County,

Sept. 27. Wife of Joe Grote. Mother of Deborah McIntyre and Rick Grubb. Sister of Betty Allen, Kathy Brock, Margaret Brown and Jack Hinkle. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of six. Great-great-grandmother of six.

GUNN, Kim, 64, St. Paul, Tell City, Sept. 28. Wife of Bill Gunn. Mother of Brooke McWhirter, Kara and Trent Gunn. Daughter of Ruby Koessel. Sister of Tim Koessel. Grandmother of five.

HORNBACK, Andrew J., 92, All Saints, Dearborn County, Sept. 26. Husband of Fran Hornbach. Brother of Margie Wendel. Grandfather of two. Great-grandfather of two.

KEATTS, Charles E., 81, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 26. Husband of Geraldine Keatts. Father of Tresa Henschen and Ruth Price. Brother of Star Ragsdale, Jackie Rosemeyer and Lane Keatts. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of 10.

MEEK, Frieda (Neiman), 89, St. Mary, Greensburg, Sept. 26. Mother of Kevin Meek. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of six.

MEYER, Gary U., 69, St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County, Sept. 25. Husband of Sue Meyer. Brother of Eileen Duff, Susan Everage, Grace Schneider, Yvonne Schneider, Carolyn Sorber, Mary Louise, Eugene, Jerome, Joe and John Meyer. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

PATTERSON, Leocia, 66, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Sept. 22. Mother of Leslie Gitsis, Kelly Fuller-McCreery, Aimee Shafer, Olivia, Charles, Joel and Nolan Patterson. Sister of Helen Balingit, Corkie Ford, Teresa Franklin, Carmelita Hale-Scott, Zenaida Hunt, Ben Balingit, Matjeu, Paul and Tony Stapleton. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of one.

SANDIFER, Charles, 89, St. Mary, New Albany, Sept. 14. Father of Shannon Speth, Andrew and Scott Sandifer. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of five.

SCHUBERT, Rebecca, 77, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Sept. 23. Mother of Michaelann Davis, Tracy Oaks, Bernadette Roy, Denise, Dale and Eric Schubert. Sister of Philip Jones. Grandmother of six.

Parish anniversary celebration



Worshippers fill St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 30 for a Mass to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant of the liturgy. (Submitted photo)

SIEFERT, Ruth M., 85, St. Louis, Batesville, Sept. 23. Mother of Anita Dieckman, Tom and Wayne Siefert. Sister of Mildred Cutter. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of four.

SNYDER, Mary Ann (Welsh), 88, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Sept. 28. Mother

of Jama Maenza, Doug, Eric, Patrick and Paul Welsh. Step-mother of Betty Freeland, Brian, Clay, Laird, Michael and Samuel Snyder. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of four. Step-grandmother and step-great-grandmother of several.

WEISENBACH, Rose A., 83, St. Anthony, Morris,

Sept. 23. Wife of Raymond Weisenbach. Mother of Kim Hountz, Krissy Jackson, Shari Strassel, Sandy Volk, Jeff, Joe and John Weisenbach. Sister of Jacqueline Armbruster. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 24. Step-grandmother of one. Step-great-grandmother of five. †

Benedictine Brother Jerome Croteau had a variety of monastery work assignments

Benedictine Brother Jerome Croteau, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, died on Sept. 30 at the monastery. He was 94.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Oct. 5. Burial followed at the Archabbey Cemetery.

Brother Jerome was a jubilarian of monastic profession, having celebrated 74 years of monastic profession.

Brother Jerome was born on April 8, 1929, in Belcourt, N.D., and given the name Adolph at his baptism. A Native American, he was a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa and lived on what was at the time the smallest reservation in the U.S.

Brother Jerome was invested as a novice at Saint Meinrad in 1948. He professed simple vows on May 10, 1949, and perpetual vows in 1952. Those vows were solemnized on May 10, 1974.

Brother Jerome's varied monastic assignments included assisting in the construction of St. Bede Hall at Saint Meinrad and on the building of Blue Cloud Abbey, a foundation of Saint Meinrad in Marvin, N.D.

At Saint Meinrad, he also worked in the archabbey sacristy, in its kitchen, vineyard and wine cellar, on the landscaping crew and as a carpenter and grave digger. Brother Jerome was also a longtime member of the St. Meinrad Volunteer Fire Department.

He is survived by a sister, Benedictine Sister Mary Claude Croteau of Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese, and brothers Edward Croteau of Seattle, Francis Croteau of Denver and James Croteau of Bismarck, N.D.

Memorial gifts may be sent to Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, IN 47577. †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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



BRISCOE

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a shared understanding of the spiritual battles we face. Accordingly, it fosters a sense of community among Catholics worldwide.

While the world around us grapples with spiritual challenges and the relentless forces of darkness, the St. Michael Prayer shines. It is a timeless beacon of

hope and strength for Catholics everywhere. Pope St. John Paul II's plea for its continued recitation echoes in our ears. As we navigate the complexities of this world, let us not forget the power of the St. Michael Prayer—a call to arms, a declaration of faith and a reminder of the protective strength that the Archangel Michael offers.

(Dominican Father Patrick Briscoe is the editor of Our Sunday Visitor.) †

WIERING

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I reflected on “impossible causes” in my life, roadblocks to be hurtled, people to be healed.

In the car, my son noted that his keychain likeness of St. Jude looked a little silly. The style is on trend with the cartoon-likenesses of the saints designed to appeal to kids: Tiny Saints charms, Shining Light Dolls and sweet saints books. My home is full of them. And while I love them, my job as a parent is to use these images to help my children draw close to the saints, and help them then grow out of the “cute saints,” maturing to the point of

prayerful reflection on a martyred man's bones.

If all my kids know of the saints are big eyes and bright colors, those saints and their witness may be left in childhood along with Cocomelon and Bluey, only to resurface in adulthood as Catholic kitsch, their own versions of the St. Jude lamp. The real men and women of history will be lost, trapped in a Peter Pan facade that never grew up.

I want my kids to know the saints were real—are real—because the reality of the saints points to the reality of Jesus. Two-thousand-year-old bones are a good start.

(Maria Wiering is OSV News senior writer. She writes from Minnesota where she lives with her husband and four children.) †

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

40 Days for Life



In the photo at left, Ramona Travino speaks during a 40 Days for Life kickoff event outside of the Planned Parenthood facility in Indianapolis on Sept. 27. For years, Travino, a Catholic, justified working at a Planned Parenthood referral center in Texas by telling herself she wasn't involved in abortion directly, just handing out contraceptives. She shared with those at the event how she came to see the truth that contraceptives are abortifacients, and how prayers of 40 Days for Life volunteers helped her leave her job. She is now on the national 40 Days for Life team. Her story is shared in her book *Redeemed by Grace*. In the photo above, Linda Kile, right, reads a prayer at the beginning of the event. Kile, president and director of Gabriel Project in Indianapolis, also announced at the event the gift of \$100,000 received that morning from an anonymous donor to help toward the goal of \$350,000 for the opening of Gabriel Project's 1st Choice for Women pregnancy care center on the southwest side of Indianapolis. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

SYNOD

continued from page 2

were absent that day because they were diagnosed with COVID.

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, relator general of the synod, introduced the module by telling participants that a key question from the synod's preparatory process—which included listening

sessions on the parish, diocesan, national and continental levels—was, "How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?"

God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is "the basis of all communions," he said, and "this God, who is love, loves the whole of creation, every single creature and every human being in a special way.

"All are invited to be part of the Church," the cardinal said. "In deep communion with his Father through the Holy Spirit, Jesus extended this communion to all the sinners. Are we ready to do the same? Are we ready to do this with groups which might irritate us because their way of being might seem to threaten our identity?"

Father Timothy reminded participants that the issue of "formation," which is broader than training or education, came up repeatedly in the synod's first week of discussions of how to promote a synodal Church, one where people walk together, listen to each other and all take responsibility for mission.

"A synodal Church will be one in which we are formed for unpossessive love: a love that neither flees the other person nor takes possession of them; a love that is neither abusive nor cold," he said.

But too often, Father Timothy said, "what isolates us all is being trapped in small desires, little satisfactions, such as beating

our opponents or having status, grand titles.

"So many people feel excluded or marginalized in our Church because we have slapped abstract labels on them: divorced and remarried, gay people, polygamous people, refugees, Africans, Jesuits," the Dominican said to laughter. "A friend said to me the other day: 'I hate labels. I hate people being put in boxes.'"

Rowlands told the synod members and participants that it is in the Eucharist that

the different dimensions of communion meet because "this is the place where the communion of the faithful is made manifest [and] where we receive the gifts of God for God's people. The sacramental order teaches us, by feeding us, communion." †



Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P.

Sisters of Providence welcome new postulant to their order

In a ceremony on Sept. 9 at Providence Hall on the campus of the motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, the religious community welcomed Stephanie Rivas as a new postulant.

Rivas, 36, is a native of Corpus Christi, Texas, where she was a member of St. Rose of Lima Parish.



Stephanie Rivas

She earned a bachelor's degree in management from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio and a master's degree in childhood development from Texas A&M University—San Antonio.

After completing her graduate work, Rivas worked as a teacher on a reservation in South Dakota where she also began discerning a possible call to religious life.

During her postulancy with the Sisters of Providence, which lasts at least 10 months, Rivas will take part in various ministries within the community and continue her discernment and initial formation in religious life. †

Employment

Archdiocese of Indianapolis Maintenance Technicians

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking to hire part-time and full-time maintenance technicians.

The person hired for this job will work as a member of the Catholic Center Staff. This person may be asked to do maintenance at any one of our associated properties in Indianapolis. The part-time position can have flexible hours. The full-time position can be either a four day or five day a week position totaling forty hours a week.

The major responsibility of the person in this position is to keep the Archdiocese' buildings and property in good working condition. Knowledge in the areas of: Mechanical, electrical, HVAC, plumbing, carpentry, and painting is a plus.

The person in this job will need to be an independent thinker.

- This person is responsible for the security of the buildings where they work.
- Good communications are required to prevent scheduling conflicts and insure access to work.
- A candidate for the position needs to have had some prior building maintenance experience.
- This person must have a GED.
- A valid work visa, green card or US passport is required.
- A valid driver's license is a plus.

If you are interested, please contact Daniel Herbertz at dherbertz@archindy.org.

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Employment

Archdiocese of Indianapolis Construction and Remodel Project Coordinator

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Construction and Remodel Project Coordinator in downtown Indianapolis. This is an office position with the goal of training into a future parish site inspection capability. This job is a full time position. Monday – Thursday.

This position will be utilized to supplement the Staff of the office of Property Management. This position will report to the Director of the Office of Property Management. This position will be responsible for organizing, coordinating, scheduling, and tracking budgets on projects they are assigned.

This candidate must be capable of good written and verbal communications with Pastors, parish representatives, architects, engineers, contractors, and archdiocesan officials. The goal is to complete projects; remedy construction issues; and develop networks to create healthy long-term relationships. This is a great opportunity for a person who is on a construction or property management career path and needs to see every building issue that might occur.

Requirements: high school diploma; enrolled in school/ have completed some level of higher education /career advancement training related to building construction/ property management.

Benefits: Professional Development Opportunities; Comprehensive Health Plan; Employer-Contributed HSA for plan participants; FSA and Dependent Care FSA; Dental Insurance; Paid Vacation, Sick, and Personal Days; Life and Disability Insurance; and 403(b) matching.

Please contact: dherbertz@archindy.org if interested.

ROSARY

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in an increasingly secular culture that will challenge their faith.

“We’re hoping and praying that, through the intercession of Mary, they’ll be able to have fortitude and courage going forth,” Kara said. “We don’t know where

they’ll go [in the future]. But we hope that they’ll be able to pull strength from this.”

When Kara became a mother, she turned to Mary for help in living out her vocation.

“I was on my knees to her,” she recalled. “I asked her to help me lead in grace like she did. I want to bring my children to her Son. I want my children to be at his feet.”

Msgr. William F. Stumpf, St. Matthew’s pastor and archdiocesan vicar general, is happy to see the Children’s Rosary group helping young people grow in their love for Mary.

“It’s a beautiful ministry,” he said. “You have the beauty of introducing children to a wonderful relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary, learning to pray the rosary, and about how consoling it can be. It’s beautiful how families are coming together to pray.”

Anna Taul, a member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, came there on Oct. 7 with her husband Wes and their children John, 4, James, 2, and Monica, who is about 2 months old.

Anna prays that her children will grow in their love for Mary just like the other children who attend the Children’s Rosary group have.

“It is so encouraging,” Taul said. “We know as parents that we are the first teachers of the faith. But we also need a community around us to be good teachers, to get great ideas, to have inspiration.

“It helps to know that spark is there and that it’s reinforced in other places—in school, in the parish, in activities that we do together as a family.” †



Anna Taul sits with her son James while praying the rosary with some 30 children and their parents on Oct. 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, in the daily Mass chapel of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.



Maria Tappel prays the rosary with some 30 children and their parents on Oct. 7, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, in the daily Mass chapel of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)



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