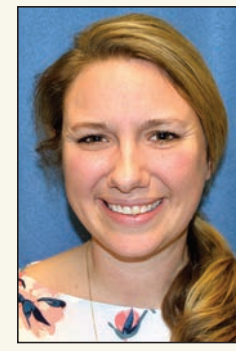




The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Pastoral Ministries

Respect Life Month reminds us 'to serve moms in need,' page 12.

CriterionOnline.com

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Daniel Hernandez, Jr., left, his brother David, their sister Sara Cabrera, far right, and her friend Olivia Murrey, all members of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, proclaim their support for life outside SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the Life Chain event following the Respect Life Sunday Mass at the cathedral on Oct. 2. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Florida continues rescue efforts after devastation of Hurricane Ian

WASHINGTON (CNS)—As authorities in Florida continued rescue efforts, Catholic parishes and dioceses in the U.S. moved rapidly to collect aid in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian, and U.S. President Joe Biden said it could take years to rebuild what was destroyed.



Archbishop José H. Gomez

Though Ian was downgraded to a tropical storm after wrecking swaths of Florida, it regained strength and regrouped as a hurricane before heading toward South Carolina.

Biden approved an emergency declaration to send federal help before it made landfall near Charleston, S.C., on Sept. 30. Residents of Florida and the Carolinas face a recovery estimated to cost tens of billions of dollars.

As of press time on Oct. 3, at least 101 people were confirmed dead, and more than 1,900 people had been rescued in parts of southwest and central Florida.

The Diocese of St. Petersburg, Fla., will hold a special collection at its parishes in October to help with the damage, including in the neighboring Diocese of Venice, and is asking for others to help at www.dosp.org/disasterrelief.

"Our hearts are moved with compassion for all those who have suffered damage and destruction due to Hurricane Ian, especially our brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Venice," St. Petersburg's Bishop Gregory L. Parkes said of the diocese that suffered the brunt of the damage.

Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), called on Catholics and all people of goodwill to pray for those who lost their lives in the Caribbean and the southwest United States due to Hurricane Ian.

He urged prayers "for the comfort of their grieving families and communities"

See HURRICANE, page 2

'Rejoice in hope' but 'remain vigilant,' archbishop says at Respect Life Mass

By Natalie Hoefler

Only twice in the history of Respect Life Sunday—the first Sunday in October—has it been observed without the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion serving as the law of the land.

The first instance was in 1972, when Respect Life Sunday was initiated by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The second was on Oct. 2.

In his homily that day during the archdiocesan Respect Life Sunday Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis,

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson noted the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* this summer by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* case.

"Just as did the 1973 [*Roe v. Wade*] decision, so has the 2022 [*Dobbs v. Jackson*] decision sparked celebration as well as outrage," he said. "It seems the only thing all sides are able to agree on is that the polarization of society has only increased since 1973, until this present day.

"The events of recent months remind us of the need to remain vigilant in prayer, advocacy and defense of life [and]

See PRO-LIFE, page 8

Faith leads Nicaraguan family to leave all behind for a new life in the United States

By Sean Gallagher

Felix and Paholla Navarrete were saddened but not surprised by the images coming out of their home country of Nicaragua in early August.

Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, was seen kneeling in prayer outside his home, his arms raised up in prayer, with members of the national police in riot gear standing nearby.

See NICARAGUA, page 3

Felix Navarrete, right, and his wife Paholla, fourth from left, three of their children and his parents pose on March 27, 2018, with Bishop Rolando Alvarez in Matagalpa, Nicaragua. (Submitted photo)





A man helps a woman next to a damaged boat in downtown Fort Myers, Fla., on Sept. 29 after Hurricane Ian caused widespread destruction across the Sunshine State. (CNS photo/Marco Bello, Reuters)

HURRICANE

continued from page 1

as well as prayers for those who have lost their homes and businesses. “May they find peace and comfort in God’s enduring love for us, even amid these most trying circumstances,” he said.

In a statement released late on Sept. 30, the archbishop also prayed the emergency responders would be kept “from harm as they seek to bring relief, comfort and healing” to storm victims.

At a news conference on Sept. 30, Biden told Floridians that the federal government would do all it could to help, particularly to rescue people and other recovery efforts.

He also announced that 44,000 utility workers were working to restore electricity for those left without power since the hurricane struck.

In preparing for Ian, the Florida Division of Emergency Management said it had coordinated with utility companies to make sure crews were prepared “to respond and restore power.”

As of Oct. 2, 590,000 people were still without power in Florida, but that figure was a significant reduction from the nearly 2 million who had no power immediately after Hurricane Ian struck.

“It’s not a crisis for Florida, it’s an American crisis,” Biden said during the news conference.

He said the situation on the ground was “far more devastating” than initially believed and “is likely to rank among the worst in the nation’s history.”

The president and first lady Jill Biden were visiting Puerto Rico on Oct. 3 to see the devastation wrought by Hurricane Fiona, which slammed into the island a week before Ian hit Florida. The Bidens planned to visit Florida on Oct. 5.

In the Diocese of Venice, Bishop Frank J. Dewane gave thanks via Twitter for those who prayed for people in the path of the Hurricane Ian.

“Damage is still being assessed, but it is clear that the devastation in the diocese is widespread,” he wrote. “There are several crews already at work throughout the diocese, and Catholic Charities is putting their local team into action. We are grateful for all those who have helped, and continue to help, during this difficult time.”

Catholic Charities USA is collecting donations at ccusa.online/Ian.

In Charleston, S.C., Bishop Jacques E. Fabre-Jeune offered Mass hours before the storm made landfall “for the protection of all people affected by Hurricane Ian and especially for our essential personnel working to keep us safe,” the diocese said on its Facebook page.

Ian hit close to 2:30 p.m. local time on Sept. 30 as at Category 1 hurricane, flooding historic Charleston, with maximum sustained winds of 85 mph. The storm was later downgraded to a tropical storm as it hit North Carolina.

As the storm went through the Carolinas, about 850,000 people had no electricity, but news reports said power was restored to more than half of them by the weekend. †



Stan Pentz walks in Iona, Fla., on Sept. 29 after Hurricane Ian caused widespread destruction. (CNS photo/Andrew West, The News-Press, USA Today Network, Handout via Reuters)



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

October 8–21, 2022

October 8 – 11 a.m.

75th Anniversary Celebration Mass followed by lunch at Carmelite Monastery of St. Joseph, Terre Haute

October 9 – 9:30 a.m.

Mass at St. Philip Neri Church, Indianapolis

October 12 – 3 p.m.

Indianapolis Eucharistic Revival Planning Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 13 – 8:15 a.m.

Virtual Judicatories meeting

October 13 – 10 a.m.

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

October 15 – 3:30 p.m.

National Black Catholic Men’s Conference and Mass at St. Rita Parish, Indianapolis

October 18 – 10 a.m.

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

October 18 – 2 p.m.

Council of Priests meeting at St. Joseph Parish, North Vernon

October 18 – 6 p.m.

Catholic Radio Indy Annual Dinner at 502 East Event Center, Carmel, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese)

October 19 – 10 a.m.

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

October 19 – 7 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Monica Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

October 20 – 7 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Gabriel Parish the Archangel, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

October 21 – 2 p.m.

Virtual National Eucharistic Revival Bishops Advisory Group meeting

Attorney general to appeal judge’s ruling on disposal of babies’ remains

Criterion staff report

A federal judge in Indiana has blocked a law that would require babies that have been aborted to be buried or cremated.

U.S. District Judge Richard Young for the Southern District of Indiana’s decision on Sept. 26 means that babies that have been aborted can be treated as medical waste.



Mike Fichter

Indiana Right to Life CEO Mike Fichter, in a statement, said the state prevailed on this issue before the U.S. Supreme Court, and he is confident it will happen again.

“But the sad reality of how the remains of aborted babies will once again be treated in our state is heartbreaking,” he said. “This brings home the tragic reality of what abortion really is.”

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, a defendant in the lawsuit, said his office will appeal the ruling.

“The U.S. Supreme Court several years ago upheld our law requiring respectful disposition of aborted fetal remains because it safeguards human

dignity,” Rokita said in a statement released to WTHR-News. “We plan to appeal this ruling permitting disrespect for human remains as mere ‘medical waste.’”

The requirement to cremate or bury aborted babies was part of House Enrolled Act 1337, which was signed into law by then-Gov. Mike Pence in March of 2016.

The ruling notes that prior to the March 2016 law, Indiana permitted but did not require facilities to dispose of fetal tissue via “incineration, steam sterilization, chemical disinfection, thermal inactivation and irradiation.”

According to the text of Judge Young’s ruling, the plaintiffs (listed generically as Jane Doe, *et al.*) levied “a bevy of constitutional claims against these requirements, namely that the requirements violate the Due Process Clause, the Equal Protection Clause, the Free Speech Clause, the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause.”

The final decision denied the complaints against constitutional infringement of Due Process, Equal Protection and the Establishment Clause.

However, it did find in favor of the plaintiffs in terms of Free Speech and Free Exercise. †

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La fe lleva a una familia nicaragüense a dejarlo todo por una nueva vida en Estados Unidos

Por Sean Gallagher

Félix y Paholla Navarrete estaban tristes, pero no sorprendidos, por las imágenes que llegaban de su país natal, Nicaragua, a principios de agosto, en las cuales se veía al obispo Rolando Álvarez, de Matagalpa (Nicaragua), arrodillado en oración fuera de su casa, con los brazos alzados en actitud piadosa. Cerca de él aguardaban miembros de la policía nacional ataviados con equipo antimotines.

La policía había rodeado su casa después de que el gobierno presentara una denuncia infundada contra el obispo en la que se le acusaba de organizar una oposición violenta contra el Estado.

El obispo Álvarez fue finalmente capturado por la policía en una redada llevada a cabo antes del amanecer del 19 de agosto y colocado en arresto domiciliario en Managua, la capital de Nicaragua.

Además de las acciones emprendidas contra el obispo Álvarez, el gobierno nicaragüense del presidente Daniel Ortega ha expulsado al nuncio apostólico del país y a los miembros de las Misioneras de la Caridad que prestaban servicio allí, ha detenido a sacerdotes, ha cerrado emisoras de radio católicas y ha prohibido las procesiones religiosas al aire libre.

En un discurso reciente, Ortega describió a los líderes católicos del país como “una pandilla de asesinos” que, junto con el Papa Francisco han instaurado “una dictadura perfecta.”

Félix y Paholla conocen bien, tanto el lugar que ocupa la Iglesia en la sociedad nicaragüense, como la oposición del gobierno a ella. Los esposos eran activos en la Iglesia y trabajaban para la corte suprema del país antes de mudarse a Indianápolis en 2018.

“Para el gobierno de Nicaragua, la Iglesia católica nicaragüense ha sido durante muchos años el principal enemigo, porque ella representa al pueblo,” afirma Paholla. “Habla en nombre del pueblo y Ortega le tiene miedo al

obispo Álvarez porque es un verdadero líder del pueblo. Si le pasara algo al obispo Álvarez, mucha gente saldría a la calle, marcharía y protestaría.”

La creciente oposición del gobierno nicaragüense a la Iglesia complicó la vida de los Navarrete en 2018.

En la primavera de ese año, manifestantes estudiantiles de todo el país protestaron contra la corrupción del gobierno y la privación de las libertades. Cientos de personas murieron en la violenta represión de los manifestantes.

“Nuestras iglesias tenían las puertas abiertas de par en par,” comenta Félix sobre la respuesta de la Iglesia en Nicaragua a las protestas. “Ayudaron a las personas que necesitaban un lugar seguro para refugiarse.

Todos los sacerdotes que conocía colaboraban muy de cerca con sus feligreses. Era muy inspirador ver que nuestra Iglesia estaba tan cerca de la gente que sufría.”

Durante la época de las protestas, Félix y Paholla empezaron a experimentar presiones para apoyar públicamente al gobierno.

“Nos llamaban para que participáramos en las marchas contra los estudiantes,” recuerda Félix. “Le dije a mi esposa que no iba a hacer nada de lo que esa gente me pedía. Ella pensaba igual.”



Los esposos Félix y Paholla Navarrete se arrodillan en oración el 1 de septiembre en la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario en Indianápolis. (Fotografía de Sean Gallagher)

“El secretario político intentaba atrapar a los empleados. Decían que, si querías mantener tu trabajo, tenías que hacer lo que fuera necesario en las protestas contra los ciudadanos que se manifestaban,” asevera Paholla.

Félix y Paholla se enfrentaron a una decisión que les cambiaría la vida: ¿permanecer en Nicaragua donde tenía una vida bien establecida o dejarlo todo sin vuelta atrás?

“Llegamos al punto de pensar en qué sería mejor,” dice

Ver FAMILIA, página 7

NICARAGUA

continued from page 1

The police had surrounded his home after the government accused the bishop—without evidence—of organizing violent opposition to it.

Bishop Álvarez was eventually seized by the police in a pre-dawn raid on Aug. 19 and taken to live under house arrest in Managua, Nicaragua’s capital.

In addition to the actions taken against Bishop Álvarez, the Nicaraguan government of President Daniel Ortega has expelled the country’s apostolic nuncio and members of the Missionaries of Charity serving there, arrested

priests, shut down Catholic radio stations and banned outdoor religious processions.

In a recent address, Ortega described the country’s Catholic leaders as “a gang of murderers” who operate with Pope Francis “a perfect dictatorship.”

Felix and Paholla are well familiar with both the place the Church has in Nicaraguan society and the government’s opposition to it. The husband and wife were active in the Church and worked for the country’s supreme court before moving to Indianapolis in 2018.

“For the government in Nicaragua, the Catholic Church has been for many years the main enemy, because the Church in Nicaragua represents the people,” Paholla said. “It speaks up for the people.

“Ortega is afraid of Bishop Álvarez because Bishop Álvarez is a true leader of the people. If something happened to Bishop Álvarez, many people will take to the streets, march and protest.”

The growing opposition of the Nicaraguan government to the Church made life difficult for the Navarretes in 2018.

In the spring of that year, student demonstrators across the country protested against government corruption and its repression of freedom. Hundreds died in violent suppression of the marchers.

“Our churches had wide open doors,” Felix said of the Church in Nicaragua’s response to the protests. “They helped the people who needed a safe place to stay. All

the priests that I knew were working very closely with their parishioners. It was so inspiring seeing that our Church was very close to the people who were suffering.”

During the time of the protests, Felix and Paholla started to experience pressure to publicly support the government.

“We were called to go to marches against the students,” Felix said. “I told my wife that I wasn’t going to do any of what these people were asking me to do. She had the same position.”

“The political secretary would try to trap employees,” Paholla said. “They’d say that if you want to keep your job, you have to do whatever needs to be done at the protests against citizens who are marching.”

Felix and Paholla faced a life-changing choice: stay in Nicaragua with their well-established life? Or leave it all behind with no going back?

“We got to the point where we were thinking about what would be better,” said Paholla. “To stay for a position with a salary, or to show your children what was the right thing to do?”

With such a momentous decision looming, the family went to God in prayer.

“We prayed together as a family, and we asked God to guide us to take the right steps,” Paholla said.

“We took a step of faith,” said Felix. “It was the hand of God that was working in every step. We saw it. We felt it.”

They left in early June for Costa Rica for what appeared to be a vacation. Only their family knew of their plans. Felix and Paholla didn’t quit their jobs at the supreme court or do anything with their home to make it appear that they were leaving permanently.

“If we had done that, we would have been in trouble,” Felix said.

“If we had stayed, we’d probably have become political prisoners,” Paholla said.

“We would not have given up our faith for anything. We’d have been considered traitors by the government.”

In Costa Rica, they were surprised by being able to quickly secure visas for the family from the U.S. embassy there to travel to the U.S. By the end of June, they had arrived in Indianapolis where Paholla’s mother lives.

“I have always been confident in what God has planned for me and my family,”

Felix said. “So, even when I thought that I would be in terrible danger if I stayed in my country, I always saw that God was acting in my life.”

Looking back on the decision they made four years ago, Paholla knows they could have only made it because of their faith.

“If we hadn’t been involved in service in the Church for several years before coming to the United States, we probably wouldn’t have made the decision to move here,” she said. “We were moved by faith. We were confident in what God wanted us to do.”

Within six months of arriving in the U.S., the Navarrete family was well established in Indianapolis. Felix found a job in accounting, and their children were enrolled at Holy Spirit School. They are now members of of Holy Spirit and Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary parishes,

both in Indianapolis.

In the years since then, Felix has begun leading retreats for Hispanics in the Catholic charismatic renewal movement. He and Paholla also teach natural family planning classes in Spanish for the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life.

From 7-9:30 p.m. on Oct. 14 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, Felix will help lead a bilingual eucharistic adoration prayer service for peace in Nicaragua.

“It’s amazing how God is using us now,” Felix said. “I’m happy for the life that we’re having now. I can say that I wouldn’t change anything.”

(For more information about the prayer service, contact Navarrete at 317-597-3751 or at felixjavierministry@gmail.com.) †

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Mike Krokos
Signed: Mike Krokos, Editor



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Editorial

The rosary and the power of prayer

Like May, October is a month where the Blessed Mother is at the center of our Church calendar.

In Catholic tradition, the entire month of October is dedicated to the holy rosary. This monthlong observance is largely due to the liturgical feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, which is celebrated on Oct. 7.

Initially known as Our Lady of Victory, the feast day marks a 16th-century naval victory which saved Europe against a Turkish invasion. Crew members on more than 200 ships of the Holy League—Genoa, Spain and the Papal States—prayed the rosary on Oct. 7, 1571, in preparation for the battle, as did Catholics throughout Europe, encouraged by Pope St. Pius V to gather in their churches to invoke the Virgin Mary against the Turkish forces. The Christian victory over the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Lepanto on that day is credited with saving Western Europe.

The then-Holy Father said people of faith owed the victory to the Blessed Virgin, and the feast offers an example where our Blessed Mother interceded for God's people.

There are many other examples of the Virgin Mary answering prayers for us. Popes throughout the Church's history have displayed a strong devotion to the Blessed Mother.

In October of 2002, Pope St. John Paul II released his apostolic letter, *"Rosarium Virginiae Mariae"* ("The Rosary of the Virgin Mary"). With the family and society in mind, its aim was to help the Church rediscover the beauty and power of the rosary, which the Holy Father hoped would lead to a greater practice of prayer, a closer walk with Christ and a more lasting peace in the world (#40-41).

In the apostolic letter, St. John Paul also introduced the Luminous Mysteries of the rosary. The new set of mysteries focuses on Jesus' public ministry between his baptism and Passion, and includes the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, the Wedding at Cana, the Proclamation of the Kingdom of God, the Transfiguration and the Institution of

the Eucharist. The Luminous Mysteries are prayed on Thursdays.

"To recite the rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ," the pope wrote (#3). "The rosary, precisely because it starts with Mary's own experience, is an exquisitely contemplative prayer."

He later wrote, "If Jesus, the one Mediator, is the Way of our prayer, then Mary, his purest and most transparent reflection, shows us the Way. Beginning with Mary's unique cooperation with the working of the Holy Spirit, the Churches developed their prayer to the Holy Mother of God, centering it on the

person of Christ manifested in his mysteries" (#16).

In his book, *Mother Mary: Inspiring Words from Pope Francis*, our current Holy Father calls the rosary "a simple, contemplative prayer, accessible to all, great and small."

"In the rosary, we turn to the Virgin Mary so that she may guide us to an ever-closer union with her Son Jesus to bring us into conformity with him, to have his sentiments and to behave like him," Pope Francis wrote. "Indeed, in the rosary while we repeat the Hail Mary we meditate on the mysteries, on the events of Christ's life, so as to know and love him ever better. The rosary is an effective means for opening ourselves to God,

for it helps us to overcome egotism and to bring peace to hearts, in the family, in society and in the world."

Family, society and the world are always appropriate prayer intentions for the rosary. And as we continue to see the chaos and heartache that surround many—including inflation that is hurting Americans and others across the globe, Hurricane Ian that devastated parts of southwest and central Florida, and Russia's unjust invasion of Ukraine—we must envelop our brothers and sisters in Christ in prayer.

Prayer is a universal language. May we use the rosary and other petitions this month and beyond to make sure the needs of our families, society and the world are never forgotten.

—Mike Krokos



(CNS photo/David Maung)

Be Our Guest/Mike O'Connell

Don't let the devil win

Being an athlete all of my life—both as a player and now as a coach—I have trained physically, mentally, psychologically and emotionally to perform at the highest level and, yes, to win. The more I know about my competition (their strengths and weakness) the better opportunity I have to defeat the opponent.

The devil has been trying to defeat us since the beginning of time. He knows our strengths and weaknesses, and he is very clever in trying to win the battle over our souls. So keep fighting—don't let him win!

The devil knows that God so lovingly created us to love him and to be with him for eternity. One of the devil's greatest tactics and strategies is to convince people that he doesn't exist, so this frees us to do whatever we want without any consequence.

Jesus tells us, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28). So what is a strategy to not let the devil win?

- Believe that the devil exists, and you know exactly what his intentions are; he is the father of lies.

- Begin a prayer life. Find time to develop a relationship with our almighty Lord, Jesus Christ. Remember what Padre Pio said: the rosary is the weapon of today; when we say our rosary, the angels and saints rejoice.

- Know your weaknesses and failures and confront them head on. Work to turn

those vices into virtues through your good efforts.

- Find time to read Scripture and the written word and let the Holy Spirit guide you. Work to have a clear mind, which is one of our greatest gifts.

- Follow the examples of our Lord, especially when he was tempted in the desert by the devil. What was his reply to every question the devil asked him?

- Seek out a spiritual advisor and holy people who can counsel and mentor you in living a good life, which will help you defeat the devil's temptations.

- Practice penance. The Bible tells us that certain sins can only be defeated or cast out through fasting and penance.

- Turn to Mary. In our constant battle against the devil and his army, we must have recourse our Blessed Mother.

- After you fail or fall, don't give into despair, anger or resentment. Get up, admit your failure, but trust in the loving forgiveness and mercy of our Lord.

- The most important: As read in the Gospel of Matthew, "Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and ... love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37, 39).

Remember as you navigate this world and travel your spiritual journey: don't let the devil win!

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

Letters to the Editor

Column affirms convert's belief in offering prayers for the dead

This is in response to Andrew Motyka's column on the Perspectives page in the Sept. 16 issue of *The Criterion*. Its headline read "Praying for the dead is one of the most loving things we can do."

As a Catholic convert who spent 40 years in evangelical churches, I can tell you that we had no such practices for our deceased: when they were gone, they were simply gone. To even speak of such things such as praying for the dead was in many churches considered borderline occult.

Now as both a Catholic and a student at St. Meinrad, I appreciate the Catholic

Church's larger view of life. Yes, there is an ending on one hand, but a continuation on the other: the person simply passes from one type of existence to another.

Scripture makes clear that people do not just continue on in theory or vanish into some kind of cloudlike existence: our friends and relatives are with Jesus in heaven, and giving thanks and praise to God continuously and praying for us back here on Earth.

And for souls still in purgatory, we can pray for them.

**Sonny Shanks
Corydon**

Notre Dame reflection leads to fond memories for 'father of the bride'

I just read John Shaughnessy's reflection in the Sept. 30 issue of *The Criterion* about the Grotto and the log cabin overlooking St. Mary's Lake at the University of Notre Dame.

Our oldest daughter was engaged at the Grotto; her fiancé's roommates filled the place with flowers.

I choke up every time we visit, as most of us do I expect.

Thanks for the excellent work, as always.

**Greg Cafouros
Indianapolis
Notre Dame Class of 1972**

Newspaper's terminology should reflect the lives of the unborn, reader says

Why not stop using the words "abortion ban" in headlines and start using "legal protection of unborn babies" blocked by a judge?

We all know what ban means, and there is definitely not a complete ban on

abortions under the Indiana law passed after the Supreme Court handed the issue to the States.

**Linda Ricker
Indianapolis**

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

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



Christ the Cornerstone

The rosary's mysteries illumine life's mysteries

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The publication date for this column is Friday, Oct. 7, the memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary. There are Marian feasts celebrated throughout the year, and, in fact, every ordinary Saturday is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, but the months of October and May are times when we, the people of God, express with particular intensity our love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is especially fitting in these months to pray the rosary at home within the family.

That's why, as we begin the month of October with a memorial dedicated by our Church to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and as we pay particular attention to her role as Our Lady of the Rosary, it's appropriate to meditate prayerfully on the meaning of this most popular Marian devotion.

In its present form, recitation of the rosary dates back to the late Middle Ages when the Hail Mary became one of the most common prayers that

Christians offered in recognition of Mary's singular role as both a witness to the life of Christ her son and as an intercessor on behalf of her children. By the end of the 16th century, the recitation of 150 Hail Mary's while meditating on scenes from the New Testament (now known as the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries) became increasingly popular among ordinary Christians.

In 2002, Pope St. John Paul II sought to renew and strengthen the Marian piety of the Catholic people by recommending that an additional five mysteries, which he called the Luminous Mysteries, or Mysteries of Light, be added to the traditional 15 mysteries. These new mysteries reflect on the public ministry of Christ from his baptism to the institution of the Eucharist, and they remind us that the rosary, while it is addressed to Mary, is really about Jesus, her divine son.

As we pray the rosary, all of the mysteries—the original 15 and the five added by St. John Paul II—invite us to see the life of our Lord Jesus Christ through the eyes of Our Blessed Lady.

Mary was the first Christian disciple. She followed in her son's footsteps through all the experiences of his

life—joyful, sorrowful, glorious and luminous. She was present when her son rose from the dead, when he ascended into heaven, and when he sent the Holy Spirit to enlighten the minds and hearts of the disciples. She witnessed the birth of the Church at Pentecost, and she accompanied her adopted son, St. John the Evangelist, as he traveled to Ephesus (modern day Turkey) where, by the singular grace of God, Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven.

Recent popes have all agreed that there are many devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary that we, as missionary disciples of Jesus, should actively cultivate.

One excellent way to accomplish a renewal of Marian piety is through a resurgence of prayerful devotion to the rosary. According to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, "the rosary is a meditation on all the important moments of salvation history." After several decades of neglect, Pope Benedict says, the rosary is experiencing "a new springtime." He describes the renewal of interest in the rosary as "one of the most eloquent signs of love that the young generation nourish for Jesus and his mother." †

Pope Francis also encourages individuals and families to pray the rosary daily to ask for our Blessed Mother's special protection and care. This was especially true during the pandemic, when Mary's intercession was sorely needed to address the serious problems faced by people throughout the world. But certainly it remains true now, considering the urgent economic, social and political challenges we are facing today.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of God and our mother, sets us apart from those who do not understand or appreciate Mary's unique position in the story of our salvation—past, present and future. That's one reason why the Church continues to ask all of us to prayerfully consider making this beautiful practice of praying the rosary an integral part of our personal and family spirituality.

May Our Lady of the Rosary help us to open our hearts, as she did, to the grace of the Holy Spirit in our lives. May her intercession strengthen us and give us hope. May she inspire us to call on the Holy Spirit whose gifts of courage, wisdom, patience and good judgment are greatly needed in these challenging times. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Los misterios del rosario iluminan los misterios de la vida

Dios te salve María, llena eres de gracia, el Señor es contigo. Bendita tú eres entre todas las mujeres y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre, Jesús. Santa María, Madre de Dios, ruega por nosotros pecadores, ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte. Amén.

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el viernes 7 de octubre, la celebración del memorial de Nuestra Señora del Rosario. A lo largo de todo el año se celebran fiestas marianas y, de hecho, todos los sábados ordinarios están dedicados a la Santísima Virgen María, pero los meses de octubre y mayo son momentos en los que nosotros, el pueblo de Dios, expresamos con especial intensidad nuestro amor y devoción a la Santísima Virgen María. En estos meses es especialmente oportuno rezar el rosario en casa, en familia.

Por eso, al comenzar el mes de octubre con el memorial que dedica la Iglesia a la Santísima Virgen María, y al prestar especial atención a su papel como Nuestra Señora del Rosario, es conveniente meditar en oración sobre el significado de esta devoción mariana tan popular.

En su forma actual, la devoción del rosario se remonta a la Baja Edad Media, cuando el Ave María se convirtió en una de las oraciones más

comunes que los cristianos ofrecían en reconocimiento del singular papel de María como testigo de la vida de Cristo, su hijo, y como intercesora en favor de sus hijos. Hacia finales del siglo XVI, se popularizó en el pueblo cristiano la costumbre de rezar 150 avemarías mientras se meditaba sobre escenas del Nuevo Testamento (ahora conocidas como Misterios Gozosos, Dolorosos y Gloriosos).

En 2002, el Papa San Juan Pablo II trató de renovar y fortalecer la piedad mariana del pueblo católico recomendando que se añadieran a los 15 misterios tradicionales otros cinco, que denominó Misterios Luminosos o Misterios de Luz. Estos nuevos misterios reflexionan sobre el ministerio público de Cristo, desde su bautismo hasta la institución de la Eucaristía, y nos recuerdan que el rosario, aunque se dirige a María, se refiere en realidad a Jesús, su hijo divino.

Al rezar el rosario, todos los misterios (los 15 originales y los cinco añadidos por San Juan Pablo II) nos invitan a ver la vida de nuestro Señor Jesucristo a través de los ojos de la Virgen.

María fue la primera discípula cristiana; siguió los pasos de su hijo en todas las experiencias de su vida: alegres, dolorosas, gloriosas y

luminosas. Estuvo presente cuando su hijo resucitó de entre los muertos, cuando ascendió al cielo y cuando envió al Espíritu Santo para iluminar las mentes y los corazones de los discípulos. Fue testigo del nacimiento de la Iglesia en Pentecostés y acompañó a su hijo adoptivo, San Juan Evangelista, en su viaje a Éfeso (actual Turquía) donde, por la singular gracia de Dios, María fue asunta en cuerpo y alma al cielo.

Todos los papas recientes han coincidido en que hay muchas devociones a la Santísima Virgen María que nosotros, como discípulos misioneros de Jesús, debemos cultivar activamente.

Un modo excelente de lograr una renovación de la piedad mariana es retomar la devoción al rosario. Según el Papa emérito Benedicto XVI, "el rosario es una meditación sobre todos los momentos importantes de la historia de la salvación." Después de varias décadas de abandono, tal como afirma el Papa Benedicto, el rosario está experimentando "un nuevo florecimiento." Describe la renovación del interés en el rosario como "uno de los signos más elocuentes del amor que las generaciones jóvenes alimentan por Jesús y su madre." †

El Papa Francisco también anima a

individuos y familias a rezar el rosario diariamente para pedir la protección y el cuidado especial de nuestra Santa Madre. Esto fue especialmente cierto durante la pandemia, cuando la intercesión de María era muy necesaria para hacer frente a los graves problemas que sufrían las personas en todo el mundo. Pero ciertamente sigue siendo cierto ahora, teniendo en cuenta los urgentes desafíos económicos, sociales y políticos a los que nos enfrentamos hoy.

La devoción a la Santísima Virgen María, madre de Dios y madre nuestra, nos distingue de quienes no comprenden ni aprecian la posición única de María en la historia de nuestra salvación, pasada, presente y futura. Esa es una de las razones por las que la Iglesia sigue exhortándonos a que consideremos en oración hacer de esta hermosa costumbre de rezar el rosario una parte integral de nuestra espiritualidad personal y familiar.

Que la Virgen del Rosario nos ayude a abrir nuestros corazones, como ella, a la gracia del Espíritu Santo en nuestras vidas. Que su intercesión nos fortalezca y nos dé esperanza. Que nos inspire a invocar al Espíritu Santo, cuyos dones de valor, sabiduría, paciencia y buen juicio son muy necesarios en estos tiempos difíciles. †

Nicaraguan Catholic in Indianapolis shares story of generations of suffering

(Editor's note: The woman interviewed for this article immigrated to the U.S. to escape the growing repression in her home country of Nicaragua. Because her son was killed there by members of a government-affiliated paramilitary unit and she still has a child there, her identity is being protected. She will be referred to in this article as Lucia.)

By Sean Gallagher

Lucia has known turmoil and unrest in her home country of Nicaragua from the time she was a toddler in the late 1970's when Daniel Ortega and the Sandinista party came to power there.

Her family was opposed to them, and three of her older brothers died as a result.

"My family suffered at their hands," said Lucia, who moved to Indianapolis from Nicaragua in July, in an interview with *The Criterion*.

The initial rule of Ortega, whom Lucia called a "bandido," came to an end in 1990, but he was re-elected as president in 2006 and has ruled ever since. The legitimacy of the elections that have kept him in office have been increasingly questioned by international observers.

Nearly 40 years after Lucia's family was scarred forever by Ortega's government, its violence touched her again—this time through her then-young adult son.

In the spring of 2018, students across Nicaragua took to the streets to protest against government corruption and political repression. Hundreds of students died in the violent suppression of the protests.

At the time, Lucia's son was assisting an uncle who ran a radio program that was opposed to the Ortega regime.

Members of a government-affiliated paramilitary unit tracked the uncle and Lucia's son. The uncle escaped, but Lucia's son did not. He was shot and killed in the streets.

"My son didn't provoke anything. It's really hard and really difficult," said Lucia through tears. "God is the one who strengthens us in times of anguish."

She is concerned for her daughter who still lives in Nicaragua with her husband and children.

Lucia is also saddened by the suffering the Church in Nicaragua is undergoing.

In recent months, the apostolic nuncio and members of the Missionaries of Charity have been expelled from the country, priests have been arrested, Catholic radio stations have been shut down and outdoor religious processions have been banned.

In early August, members of the national police in riot gear surrounded the home of Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, after the government had accused him of fomenting violent opposition to the Ortega regime.

On Aug. 19, police officers in a pre-dawn raid seized Bishop Álvarez and the priests, seminarians and lay Catholics living with him and took them to Managua, Nicaragua's capital.

Bishop Álvarez has been kept there under house arrest while the others seized with him were sent to Chipote Prison, notorious as a place where political prisoners have been tortured.

"The hardness of hearts of those in government is why they are doing this [to Bishop Álvarez]," said Lucia.

She especially wanted to speak up for the suffering priests of Nicaragua.

"They're coming after priests, who are instruments of God," Lucia said. "They're doing nothing. I need to tell their story."

Despite the suffering that Lucia, her family and the Church in Nicaragua have experienced, she has remained close to Christ.

"He helps heal our hearts, and he gives us forgiving hearts," Lucia said, noting that she has forgiven the men who killed her son.



Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, is pictured in a screenshot from video at his residence in Matagalpa as riot police block the door. The police kept him and a group of priests, seminarians and lay Catholics under house arrest for about two weeks until Aug. 19 when the police seized them in a pre-dawn raid and took them in custody to Managua. (CNS screenshot/YouTube)

"I would love to return to Nicaragua to be with my family," she said. "I am on the path right now that God has me on. The persecution there is so bad, and I am concerned about my family still there. I am afraid for them."

Lucia said that Catholics in the archdiocese and beyond need to learn about what's happening in Nicaragua and take it to God in prayer.

"There is so much that the people in Nicaragua need," she said. "Of course, prayers are the most important thing. Pray that the enemy is not able to put hate in more people's hearts, that they stop causing damage, because they are causing tremendous damage to humanity there." †

Una católica nicaragüense en Indianápolis comparte la historia de generaciones de sufrimiento

(Nota del editor: La mujer entrevistada en este artículo emigró a Estados Unidos para escapar de la creciente represión en su país natal, Nicaragua. Para proteger su identidad y dado que su hijo fue asesinado en ese país por miembros de un grupo paramilitar afiliado al gobierno y que todavía tiene una hija en Nicaragua, en este artículo la llamaremos Lucia.)

Por Sean Gallagher

Lucía ha conocido la agitación y los disturbios en su país natal, Nicaragua, desde que era niña, a finales de los años 70, cuando Daniel Ortega y el partido sandinista llegaron al poder.

Su familia se opuso a ellos, y tres de sus hermanos mayores murieron a consecuencia de ello.

"Mi familia sufrió a manos de ellos," comenta en la entrevista que ofreció a *The Criterion*, luego de trasladarse a Indianápolis desde Nicaragua en julio.

El gobierno inicial de Ortega, a quien Lucía denomina un "bandido," llegó a su fin en 1990, pero fue reelegido como presidente en 2006 y ha gobernado desde entonces. La legitimidad de las elecciones que le han mantenido en el cargo ha sido cada vez más cuestionada por los observadores internacionales.

Casi 40 años después de que la familia de Lucía quedara marcada para siempre por el gobierno de Ortega, su violencia volvió a tocarla, esta vez a través de su entonces joven hijo adulto.

En la primavera de 2018, los estudiantes de toda Nicaragua salieron a las calles para protestar contra la

corrupción del gobierno y la opresión política. Cientos de estudiantes murieron en la violenta represión de los manifestantes.

En ese momento, el hijo de Lucía ayudaba a un tío que dirigía un programa de radio que se oponía al régimen de Ortega.

Los miembros de una unidad paramilitar afiliada al gobierno rastrearon al tío y al hijo de Lucía. El tío escapó, pero el hijo de Lucía no. Lo mataron a tiros en la calle.

"Mi hijo no provocó nada. Es muy duro y muy difícil," dice Lucía entre lágrimas. "Dios es quien nos fortalece en los momentos de angustia."

Le preocupa su hija, que sigue viviendo en Nicaragua con su esposo y sus hijos.

A Lucía también le entristece el sufrimiento de la Iglesia en Nicaragua.

En los últimos meses, el nuncio apostólico y los miembros de las Misioneras de la Caridad han sido expulsados del país; han detenido a sacerdotes, han cerrado emisoras de radio católicas y han prohibido las procesiones religiosas al aire libre.

A principios de agosto, miembros de la policía nacional con equipo antimotines rodearon el domicilio del obispo Rolando Álvarez de Matagalpa, después de que el gobierno lo acusara de fomentar la oposición violenta al régimen de Ortega.

El 19 de agosto, en una redada realizada antes del amanecer, los agentes de policía detuvieron al obispo Álvarez y a los sacerdotes, seminaristas y laicos católicos que vivían con él y los llevaron a Managua, la capital de Nicaragua.

El obispo Álvarez ha permanecido allí bajo arresto domiciliario, mientras que los demás detenidos con él fueron enviados a la prisión de Chipote, conocida por ser un lugar donde se ha torturado a los presos políticos.

"La dureza de corazón de los gobernantes es la razón por la que hacen esto [al obispo Álvarez]," asegura Lucía.

En especial, desea mencionar lo que están sufriendo los sacerdotes de Nicaragua:

"Están persiguiendo a los sacerdotes, que son instrumentos de Dios," comenta. "No están haciendo nada. Tengo que contar su historia."

A pesar del sufrimiento que Lucía, su familia y la Iglesia en Nicaragua han experimentado, se ha mantenido cerca de Cristo.

"Él ayuda a sanar nuestros corazones, y nos da corazones que perdonan," afirma Lucía, señalando que ha perdonado a los hombres que mataron a su hijo.

"Me encantaría volver a Nicaragua para estar con mi familia. Ahora estoy en el camino que Dios me tiene preparado. La persecución allí es terrible, y me preocupa que mi familia siga allí. Temo por ellos."

Lucía dijo que los católicos de la Arquidiócesis y de fuera de ella deben informarse de lo que está ocurriendo en Nicaragua y elevarlos en oración ante Dios.

"Hay muchas cosas que necesita la gente de Nicaragua," afirma. "Y, por supuesto, las oraciones son lo más importante. Rezar para que el enemigo no sea capaz de meter el odio en el corazón de más personas, para que dejen de causar daño porque allí están causando un daño tremendo a la humanidad." †

FAMILIA

continúa de la página 3

Paholla. "¿Quedarse por un puesto con sueldo, o mostrar a tus hijos lo que era lo correcto?"

Ante una decisión tan trascendental, la familia acudió a Dios en oración.

"Rezamos juntos en familia y pedimos a Dios que nos guiara para dar los pasos correctos," afirma Paholla.

"Dimos un salto de fe," señala Félix. "Fue la mano de Dios la que actuó en cada paso. La veíamos y la sentíamos."

Se fueron a principios de junio a Costa Rica en unas aparentes vacaciones. Solamente su familia conocía sus planes. Félix y Paholla no renunciaron a sus trabajos en el Tribunal Supremo ni hicieron nada con su casa de modo que no

pareciera que se iban definitivamente.

"Si hubiéramos hecho algo, habríamos tenido problemas," dice Félix.

"Si nos hubiéramos quedado, probablemente nos habríamos convertido en presos políticos," asegura Paholla. "No habríamos renunciado a nuestra fe por nada. El gobierno nos habría considerado traidores."

En Costa Rica, se sorprendieron al poder conseguir rápidamente visas para la familia en la embajada estadounidense de ese país para viajar a EE. UU. A finales de junio, habían llegado a Indianápolis, donde vive la madre de Paholla.

"Siempre he confiado en los planes que Dios tiene para mí y mi familia," declara Félix. "Así que incluso cuando pensaba que correría un terrible peligro si me quedaba en mi país, siempre veía que Dios actuaba en mi vida."

Al recordar la decisión que tomaron hace cuatro años, Paholla sabe que únicamente pudieron hacerlo gracias a su fe.

"Si no hubiéramos estado involucrados en el servicio a la Iglesia durante varios años antes de venir a Estados Unidos, probablemente no habríamos tomado la decisión de mudarnos aquí. Nos movió la fe. Teníamos confianza en lo que Dios quería que hiciéramos."

A los seis meses de llegar a Estados Unidos, la familia Navarrete estaba bien establecida en Indianápolis. Félix encontró un trabajo en contabilidad, e inscribieron a sus hijos en la escuela Holy Spirit. Ahora son miembros de las parroquias Espíritu Santo y de Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario, ambos en Indianápolis.

En los años transcurridos desde entonces, Félix ha comenzado a dirigir

retiros para hispanos en el movimiento de renovación carismática católica. Junto con Paholla imparten clases de planificación familiar natural en español para la Oficina de Matrimonio y Vida Familiar de la Arquidiócesis.

El 14 de octubre, de 7 a 9:30 p.m., en la Catedral de San Pedro y San Pablo (1347 N. Meridian St.), en Indianápolis, Félix ayudará a dirigir un servicio de adoración eucarística bilingüe por la paz en Nicaragua.

"Es increíble cómo Dios nos está utilizando ahora," afirma Félix. "Me siento feliz por la vida que tenemos ahora. Puedo decir que no cambiaría nada."

(Para obtener más información sobre el servicio de oración, póngase en contacto con el Sr. Navarrete en el 317-597-3751 o en felixjavierministry@gmail.com). †



George Kane, second from left, and his wife Annie hold their children Jubilee and Lazarus as they pray after Communion during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 2. The family, along with their son Ignatius, not pictured, are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



On Oct. 2, Respect Life Sunday, members of Right to Life of Jennings County promote life with signs, a banner and a crucifix in North Vernon. Among those present were members of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes in Jennings County, Prince of Peace Parish in Madison, St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and First Baptist Church in North Vernon. (Submitted photo by Kelly Elkins)

PRO-LIFE

continued from page 1

the family,” he added, as a current lawsuit in Indiana lead to a temporary injunction on Senate Bill 1 (S.B. 1) on Sept. 22, thus again allowing abortions up to 22 weeks gestation to take place in the state until a decision on the lawsuit is reached. Per S.B. 1, all abortion except in cases of rape, incest and specific medical emergencies were banned as of Sept. 15.

Archbishop Thompson quoted from Pope Francis’ 2020 encyclical, “*Fratelli Tutti*: on Fraternity and Social Friendship.”

“Goodness, together with love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all,” the archbishop read from the document. “They have to be realized each day. It is not possible to settle for what one has achieved in the past and complacently rejoice as if you could somehow resist the fact that many of our brothers and sisters still endure situations that cry out for our attention.”

He expounded on the quote, stating, “In contrast to a throw-away mentality, we must embrace the inter-relatedness

of our relationship with God, with others, self and all creation.

“In doing so, we must realize that our integrity in defending the unborn is closely related to our defense of the poor, the elderly, the sick, the lonely, the dying, the immigrant and refugee, the incarcerated, marriage and family and the environment, all persons regardless of race, gender and economics. ... Each and every person created in the image of God possesses innate dignity and sanctity.”

Archbishop Thompson reminded those present that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the faith where the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ become present.

“Now at this Eucharist,” he said, “we bring to this celebration all that matters, every life from the moment of conception to natural death. We bring to the Lord not just those we love and with whom we get along, but all humanity, including those who disagree with us and even those who wish us harm. Sacramental grace has the power to transform, to heal, to reconcile.”

While there is reason to celebrate in the recent overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the archbishop said, “We have just as much reason to remain vigilant.

“That we may be effective witnesses to respecting life, let us take nothing of God’s grace for granted. In both celebration and vigilance—keeping before us the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ—we indeed have reason to rejoice, and to rejoice in hope.”

(See related articles on page 9 about Dr. Michael Padilla, who received the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award, and Eric Dessauer, who received the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award.) †



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson



Bracelets, bumper stickers and small dolls representing the size of a baby at 10-12 weeks gestation are among the free items made available at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the Respect Life Sunday Mass held there on Oct. 2. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Annette Durholz, right, a member of Annunciation Parish in Brazil, joins others in Brazil on Oct. 2, Respect Life Sunday, in holding signs promoting life. (Submitted photo)

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Founder of Franciscan FertilityCare receives archdiocese's Respect Life award

By Natalie Hoefler

In a moment of *deja vu*, Dr. Michael Padilla walked up the steps of the sanctuary of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 2 to receive an archdiocese's pro-life award from the archbishop.

The same scene took place 15 years prior. Except then he was in high school, the prelate was Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and the honor was the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award.

This time, Padilla received the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Respect Life Award from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson.

Padilla said he received his first award in 2007 "for being active in 40 Days for Life, and I did a project at my school that picked apart Planned Parenthood."

This year, his list of accomplishments earning him an award is much longer.

Foremost is founding the Franciscan FertilityCare Center, part of the Franciscan Health network in Indianapolis, a year ago. He also serves as medical director for the center.

As she introduced Padilla, Brie Anne Varick noted that he "worked for years to start" the Franciscan FertilityCare Center, which is "one of the only hospital-based Creighton fertility clinics in the country." Varick is director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, which sponsors the pro-life awards.

By using the Creighton Method of Natural Family Planning and NaproTechnology, she said, Padilla "works with couples who are struggling with infertility and provides alternatives to *in vitro* fertilization, giving hope to couples as well as respecting God's design for fertility and creating life."

The accomplishments don't stop there for Padilla, who, with his wife and two children, is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

He has also been trained in the

abortion pill reversal method and serves as the medical director for the Gabriel Project's mobile ultrasound unit.

Padilla also serves as president for the Catholic Medical Association's St. Raphael Guild of Indianapolis. In this role, said Varick, he "takes on the formation of Catholic doctors so these physicians are able to truly respect and uphold the dignity of all their patients."

Padilla has also testified at the Indiana State House regarding abortion-related legislation, spoken at pro-life events and, with his wife Dana, presented at marriage retreats on fertility issues and being open to life.

Padilla credits his pro-life passion to the witness of his parents, who immigrated from the Philippines in the late 1980s.

"It started when my parents became Gabriel [Project] angels at St. Bartholomew" Parish in Columbus, he said. Gabriel "angels" help mothers in unplanned pregnancies carry their babies to term. "As immigrants, they both felt like so much had been done for them and wanted to give back to people in need. They basically just opened our doors to women who needed a place to live to carry their babies to term."

As he made his way through medical school at Marian University in Indianapolis, Padilla realized "I am a



Dr. Michael Padilla, center, smiles with his family in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis after receiving the archdiocese's Archbishop O'Meara Respect Life Award during the Respect Life Mass on Oct. 2. Among those posing with him are his wife Dana (holding their son Gabe) their daughter Mary Elise (holding the award) and his parents Lourdes and Mike Padilla, third from right and far right, respectively. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

doctor because of the pro-life movement.

"Being pro-life, my experience with women in need drove me to be a doctor, but seeing in a more intentional way how much we do a disservice to women in medicine—as a country, as a society, but especially in medicine."

Padilla strongly believes that "women should get to be moms if they want to be moms," he said.

"A lot of women come to my mind who said as they had an abortion or after they took the [abortion] pill that they felt like they didn't have a choice and then regretted their decision. Even in the face of feeling like they didn't have a choice, their heart still desired for them to be the mom they knew they could be."

Despite all Padilla's medical and pro-life activities, the person who nominated him for the award said his "most important roles are as a son of God, a husband and a father ... [who] commits

himself to daily prayer, frequent confession and receiving the Eucharist.

"With all of the incredible work that he does for his patients, the Church and the city of Indianapolis, he continues to put God and family first."

He said he was surprised to receive the award, but even more surprised that "someone knew all the things I was doing. Some people know part of it, but not even my parents know about all I do."

So, it made sense when he learned that it was his wife Dana who nominated him.

"Being a pro-life physician, in every way, is rare these days," she wrote. "We are blessed to have Dr. Mikey Padilla at our parish and in our archdiocese. ...

"But," she added, "I might be biased!"

(For more information on Franciscan FertilityCare Center, go to cutt.ly/FranciscanFertilityCare.) †

Pro-life youth award winner felt called to be 'voice of the pro-life movement'

By Natalie Hoefler

High school junior Eric Dessauer got involved with pro-life activities during his sophomore year at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.



Eric Dessauer smiles as he receives the archdiocese's Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award presented to him by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during the Respect Life Sunday Mass in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 2. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

His efforts in just one year led to Eric receiving the archdiocese's Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 2.

"My parents were always pro-life," said Eric, 17. "For me, it really started when my dad ran for a state office in 2010. I got into politics like my dad. As that grew, my conservative values grew, and one of those is obviously the pro-life stance."

When he experienced some opposition to those views his freshman year, Eric did not lose heart.

Instead, he said, he felt "inspired, because I saw that [the pro-life stance] needed to be studied more. The opposite information influenced my generation with social media."

Eric felt called to be "the voice of the pro-life movement while others supported abortion or just said nothing."

He said due to the effects of COVID-19 in 2020, the school's pro-life club had for the most part become inactive.

While attending the Right to Life of Indianapolis Celebrate Life dinner last October, Eric met Mary Carmen Zakrajsek, the Great Lakes regional coordinator for Students for Life of America.

Later, he and a friend "reached out to her and expressed an interest in starting a [pro-life] club, because she helps grow clubs all over Indiana," Eric recalled. They soon became co-presidents of Chatard's pro-life student group.

During the school's pro-life week in January, the club focused on raising awareness of the effects of abortion "because it's killing generations," said Eric.

They invited Zakrajsek to speak on the topic to the student body, filled the school lawn with crosses representing the nearly 65 million lives lost to abortion between 1973-2021 (according to the National Right to Life Educational Foundation), offered a pro-life apologetics training and participated in the Mass and Indiana March for Life and Rally in Indianapolis on Jan. 24.

Eric was also inspired by participating in his first

National March for Life in Washington in January.

"It helped me see just how much the pro-life movement had grown," he said. "At a conference the next day, there were a lot of teens who shared my views and the struggles of having to deal with being the minority in our views."

"It really inspired me. It helped me realize my voice and the impact I can make, that my voice can influence five, 10 or even just one person, and that person can influence another."

He said he also realized his power "as a person with dwarfism, having a voice for the disabled and speaking out and saying, 'We're not OK with the discrimination. We're an image of God and his creativity.'"

Zakrajsek was one of those who nominated Eric for the pro-life youth award.

"He is amazing, dedicated, resilient and humble," she wrote.

She recounted how, in May, Eric attended a pro-life rally in Indianapolis and posted about the event on social media.

"One post in particular drew over 2,000 comments, mostly from pro-abortion activists," she noted. "He was severely bullied, harassed and even threatened for his pro-life beliefs, but remained strong!"

While Eric is registered with his family at Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, he often worships at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. The church is near Guérin Catholic High School in Noblesville, Ind. (also in the Lafayette Diocese), where he started as a junior this semester.

Only a student for a few months at Guerin Catholic, Eric is already co-president of the school's pro-life club.

"It's an honor" to receive the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award, he said. "I never thought I'd get an award like this. It's humbling to know that people appreciate my work."

But Eric also noted that he is not active in the pro-life movement "for anyone's appreciation. I'm doing it because I believe it's an extremely important cause." †

HHS urged to ‘reconsider misguided mandate’ on transgender procedures

NEW YORK (CNS)—Catholic hospitals and their workers “must not be coerced by the government to violate their consciences” by being forced to perform “gender transition procedures” against their religious beliefs, said two U.S. cardinals writing in *America* magazine.

In a Sept. 26 article in the national weekly Jesuit publication based in New York, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York addressed a proposed revision to the Affordable Health Care law drafted by the civil rights office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The HHS proposal, or “proposed rule” as it is called, would apply to implementation of an Affordable Care Act (ACA) provision, Section 1557, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex—including pregnancy, sexual orientation and gender identity—in covered health programs or activities.

This provision “rightly prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in health care. We wholeheartedly support all efforts to ensure that everyone, without exception, receives the best health care that is their due,” Cardinals Cupich and Dolan wrote.

“Catholic hospitals do not discriminate against anyone and to do so would be offensive to the embracing and expansive healing ministry of Jesus Christ,” they said, noting that one of every seven Americans in need of hospital care will receive it in a Catholic facility.

“All people who come to us” are treated with dignity, “no matter their age, sex, racial or ethnic background or religion. It is also true for people who identify as transgender. They will receive the same treatment as any other patient,” the prelates said.

“However, if health care facilities are to be places where the twin pillars of faith and science stand together, then these facilities and their workers must not be coerced by the government to violate their consciences,” they said.

Besides forcing health care workers to perform gender transition procedures, the revisions would require health insurance plans to cover the costs of such procedures.

The HHS proposal will likely apply to all health care providers, clinics, nursing homes, hospitals, group health insurers and third-party administrators of self-funded plans.

The full proposal, published under the heading “Nondiscrimination in Health Programs and Activities,”

can be found on the Federal Register’s website at [bit.ly/3d0wwkJ](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/08/04/2022-15577). The site includes a link to submit comments and provides other ways to submit comments.

It was published on Aug. 4 by the Federal Register, opening a 60-day period for public comment. The last day for submissions was on Oct. 3.

“Under this new proposed rule, it would be considered discrimination for a health care facility or worker to object to performing gender transition procedures, regardless of whether that objection is a matter of sincerely held religious belief or clinical judgment,” Cardinals Cupich and Dolan said. “This is government coercion that intrudes on the religious freedom of faith-based health care facilities.”

They urged HHS “to reconsider its misguided mandate.”

“Such a mandate threatens the conscience rights of all health care providers and workers who have discerned that participating in, or facilitating, gender transition procedures is contrary to their own beliefs,” they added.

The cardinals said that “people of many faiths, or of no faith yet with deep personal convictions, may find these procedures profoundly troubling, and their constitutional rights deserve to be respected.”

“In a society that protects the free exercise of religion, religious health care providers cannot be expected to violate the teachings of their religion as a condition of continuing their care, and religious health care workers cannot be expected to violate their consciences as a condition of employment,” they said.

Cardinals Cupich and Dolan asked the question: “Does objecting to performing gender transition procedures—but welcoming patients who identify as transgender—constitute discrimination?”

“Of course not,” they wrote. “The focus of such an objection is completely on the procedure, not the patient.”

“Prohibiting the removal of a healthy, functioning organ is not discrimination, provided that the same determination would be made for anyone of any sex or gender, which is true at Catholic hospitals,” they continued.

The cardinals confirmed what other critics of the HHS proposal said when they first became aware of it back in July, that it would not include federal conscience protection for those in health care who object to performing these procedures.



From left, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York and Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago.

“The proposed regulation does not codify the rights of faith-based providers to decline procedures based on conscience, as other federal laws do,” the prelates said. “Rather, it holds that HHS reserves the right to decide whether, despite those existing conscience protections, it can force faith-based providers to violate their beliefs.”

“Considering that the government is currently fighting court rulings that held that it violated religious freedom laws the last time it tried to impose a mandate like this, it is reasonable to lack confidence in the department’s commitment to construing these laws to provide appropriately robust conscience protections,” they said.

One such court ruling was handed down on Aug. 26 by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans.

In a unanimous decision, the court blocked an HHS transgender mandate in a case that dates back to the Obama administration.

The ruling came in the case *Franciscan Alliance v. Becerra*. The lawsuit was first filed in 2016 by Franciscan Alliance, a Catholic health care network, and a group of nearly 19,000 health care professionals.

That year, the Obama administration began implementing a mandate requiring doctors to perform gender transition procedures on any patient, including children, and required private insurance companies—except plans run by Medicare and Medicaid—and many employers to cover gender reassignment therapy or face severe penalties and legal action. †

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Visual art provides a means of encountering God in prayer

By Lindsey Weishar

In the past few years, the term “*visio divina*” has gained traction in the Catholic lexicon. Like “*lectio divina*,” which is an ancient way to pray with Scripture, *visio divina* translates to “divine seeing” and is a way to pray with art or other visual media alongside Scripture.

I first encountered *visio divina* in June 2021 at the GIVEN Forum, a conference dedicated to helping young women activate their gifts for the good of the Church and the world. One of the projects inspired by the 2016 forum was Katie Weiss’ Behold, a ministry that, according to its website, uses *visio divina* to help women to “encounter the beauty of God and themselves, and go forth into the world sharing this beauty.”

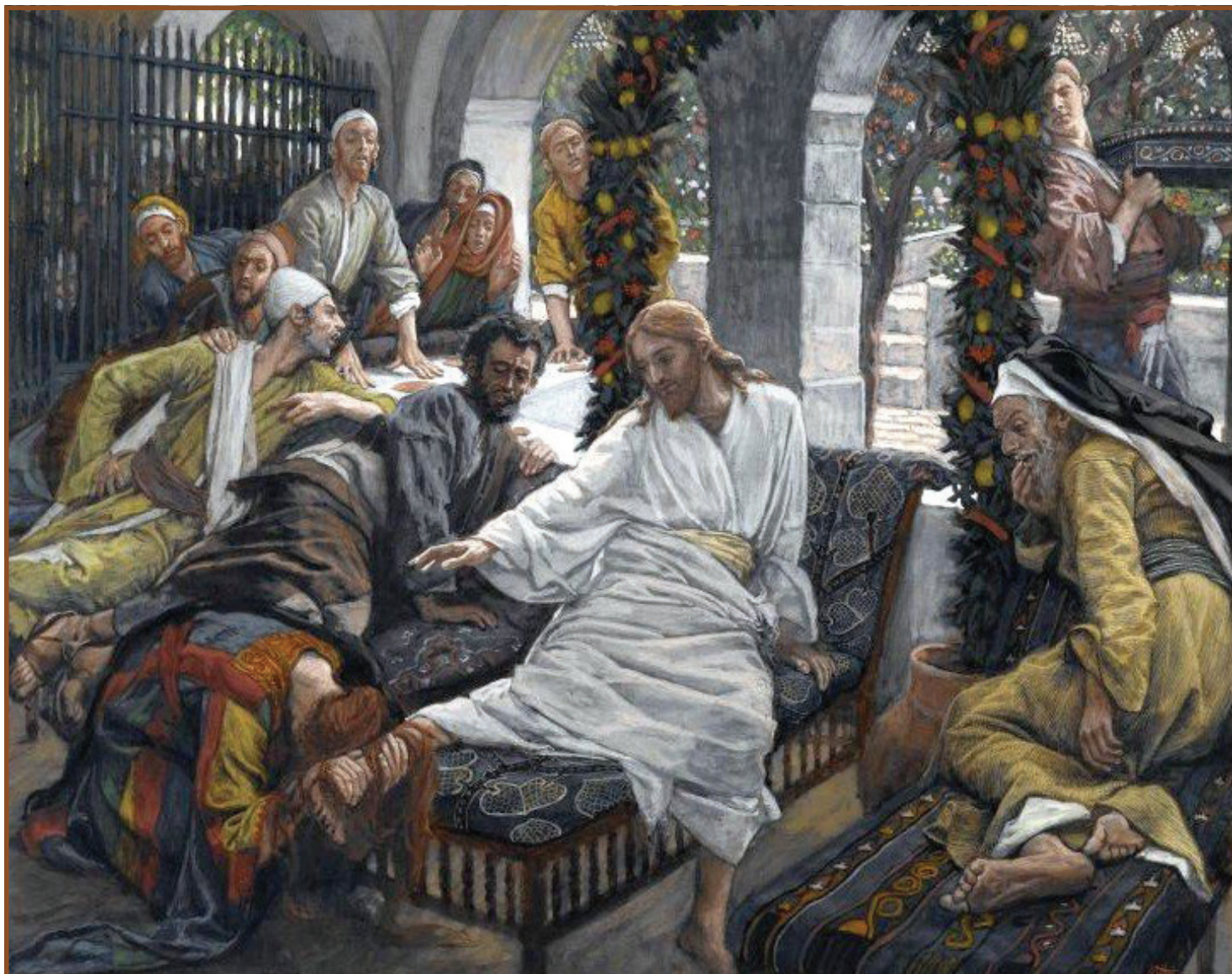
During the forum, Weiss led the participants through a time of *visio divina*. She showed us an image of 19th-century French artist James Tissot’s painting, “The Ointment of the Magdalene.” Then she took us through the following steps (which are also found on her website). These steps also largely follow the same pattern in *lectio divina*:

—*Visio*: We were asked to spend time looking at the image and “praying how it speaks to [our] heart.”

—*Meditation*: Weiss then read us an accompanying Scripture passage (Jn 12:1-10) and invited us to ponder the painting more deeply with the guidance of reflection questions. As one would experience during *lectio divina*, we were asked: “What strikes you about this image and Scripture?”

—*Prayer*: We were then invited to enter into dialogue with the Lord about what was speaking to us from the Scripture and painting.

—*Contemplation*: Weiss describes this step as “simply resting in God” and “a



The painting “The Ointment of the Magdalene” by 19th-century French artist James Tissot is seen at the Brooklyn Museum in this undated photo. Various forms of visual arts can be used as a means of encountering God in prayer. (CNS photo/Public Domain)

time of divine intimacy.”

—*Action*: The final question of our prayer was, “How can you live out the fruit

of this meditation?” The point of this step is for the words we read and the image we gazed upon take root in us, change us and call us to some kind of response.

Praying with this painting was powerful. I was struck by Mary Magdalene’s utter abandonment before the Lord, as well as the shocked and somewhat disapproving faces of the people around Jesus.

Jesus, however, reaches a hand toward her, perhaps pointing out to those assembled her example of humility. He is not at all embarrassed by the fact that her hair is draped over his feet. In this moment of abandonment, Mary has given all her worldly and spiritual goods to the Lord. The sweetness of the ointment fills the room.

During the meditation, one of Weiss’s questions was: “Does anything hold you back from receiving your gifts?” This led me to ponder areas of fear and lack of trust in my own life, to bring these to prayer and to discern the action of finding a spiritual director so I could more freely empty my alabaster jar over Jesus’ feet.

In June, I got a chance to sit down with Weiss to discuss more deeply her own experiences of praying with art. Before founding Behold, she spent time with a religious order discerning her vocation. Though struggling to pray with Scripture alone, she found prayer came more easily before Fra Angelico’s “Annunciation.”

“It gave me permission to feel what I was feeling,” Weiss shared. “I was feeling I wasn’t called to the religious community I was with, but I was afraid to see that.” Praying before this painting gave her permission to acknowledge hard feelings—like fear and suffering and, in this instance, the courage to discern out of the religious community.

More recently, art has helped

her process the profound grief of a miscarriage she experienced. An artist herself, she felt called to paint in the weeks following this loss: “I painted this image of Mary holding our baby, Lucy. It was really healing to acknowledge a loss and to express what I was feeling inside.”

Art has been a catalyst for helping Weiss grow in intimacy with the Lord, and her ministry is guided by the belief that it can do the same for others. Behold has served post-abortive women and has also offered small group opportunities to pray through the mysteries of the rosary with art and to use hand lettering to pray with a Scripture verse.

Weiss describes these experiences of creating or engaging more of the senses while praying with art as incarnational. It is also very much a part of the Catholic tradition—while researching for Behold, she found a book on Eastern Catholicism that mentioned the practice of praying with icons and Scripture.

Stained glass, Weiss says, is another visual way to engage with Scripture, and in the early days of its use would have helped a largely illiterate population engage more deeply with faith.

Since Behold’s launch in 2016, Weiss has seen the term “*visio divina*” explode. She believes that the Holy Spirit is using this way of praying to touch souls.

The beautiful thing about our Church is that it holds a rich treasury of ways in which we can draw close to our Lord. *Visio divina*, I’ve found, vibrantly brings the Scriptures to life and invites the viewer to rest in the visual poetry of an artist’s inspiration.

Visit www.beholdvisiodivina.com to learn more.

(Lindsey Weishar is a poet and freelance writer.) †



The transfiguration of Jesus is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Aloysius Church in Great Neck, N.Y. Various forms of visual arts can be used as a means of encountering God in prayer. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Pastoral Ministries/Brie Anne Varick

Respect Life Month reminds us 'to serve moms in need'

Each October, the Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month.

As Catholics we are called to cherish, defend and protect those who are most vulnerable, from conception to natural death.



During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life and to build a

culture that protects it. To help us focus and dive more deeply into the dignity of every human life, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) gives the Church in the United States a theme. This year, it is "Called to Serve Moms in Need."

To receive a better understanding of what it looks like to be "Called to Serve Moms in Need," we should look to our Blessed Mother Mary.

In the Gospel of Luke, we hear the story of the annunciation where the angel Gabriel shares the good news that Mary will be the mother of God. The angel Gabriel also shares that Mary's cousin Elizabeth is pregnant. Mary not only gives

her "yes" and surrenders to God's will, but with Jesus dwelling within her, makes haste to serve Elizabeth in her unexpected pregnancy.

Our Blessed Mother shows us how to respond to receiving the gift of Jesus Christ with generosity and love. Mary received the most wonderful grace; God was dwelling within her! She did not demand to be served or seek affirmation in this amazing gift, but in humility and "in haste" (Lk 1:44) offered herself in service. She went to accompany a mom in need.

Mary not only offers herself, but she brings Jesus with her! We too are called to receive Jesus and bring Jesus to serve moms in need.

As Catholics, we have the gift of the sacrament of the Eucharist that allows us to enter this mystery in a tangible way. Mary received the Word made flesh and Jesus dwelled within her.

As Catholics, we receive the true presence of Jesus. We receive his body, blood, soul and divinity. When we go to Mass and receive Communion, Jesus dwells within us. This, the Eucharist, is the source and summit of our faith!

When we can surrender to the grace

that allows us to believe and know that it is Jesus that we truly receive, we will come to understand that we are not alone. It is through the Eucharist where our strength, compassion, patience, perseverance and mercy flows.

Mary received Jesus and responded immediately to the call to serve, to reveal the reality that God is with us and we are not alone. It is also our call to serve the vulnerable and share Jesus with them.

I pray that we all may come to know the reality that Jesus abides in us and dwells in us. I pray that we may respond in haste to the call to serve moms in need so that they too may know the reality that they are not alone.

(Brie Anne Varick is director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. Her office and the Catholic Charities-Social Concerns Ministry have created a new website, walkingwithmomsindy.org, to list resources located in central and southern Indiana for pregnant and parenting moms. Respect Life Month materials from the USCCB's Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities can be found online at respectlife.org/respect-life-month.) †

For the Journey/Effie Calderola

No flower goes unseen

It was an old electric wringer washing machine. My mom used it in the basement of our farmhouse before she graduated



to a modern washer/dryer set more like those we have now.

You can find these old machines online marketed as "collectibles." They had a big round tub, with an agitator, but there was no spin cycle, or any cycle for

that matter. When the water drained out of the tub, you took the item of clothing and fed it through a wringer that squeezed the excess water out.

One day, as a 2-year-old, I was "helping" Mom, probably standing on a very high stool, and accidentally began to feed my own little hand into the wringer. The machine was quickly turned off, I suffered no broken bones and all was well.

I would never remember the incident—or the old-fashioned wringer—if I hadn't heard the story repeated so many times in later years.

That was because mom loved to recall my subsequent performances. After the initial tears, I was fine until dad came in from the fields that afternoon. Then, the pain and many crocodile tears returned. The hand and arm needed much concern and consolation.

All was peaceful again until grandpa came out to visit that night. The story was repeated, the tears returned, the arm held up for inspection and compassion. I knew a good attention-getter when I saw one, and hammed it up effectively.

Deep down, don't we all want some special attention now and then? Don't we want to be recognized, to have our concerns and hurts addressed, to have someone care? Even a 2-year-old desires to share their life experience with those who will embrace their pain and listen to their story.

The group "The Porter's Gate" performs a song called "Little Things With Great Love." I find the first line deeply consoling: "In the garden of our Savior, no flower grows unseen."

Outside my dining room window is a huge bed of white hibiscus. They have bloomed profusely this summer, and happy bees have been busy in their blossoms. But now, as the nights cool and the rains come, they diminish.

There were hundreds and hundreds of blossoms, each one a perfect work of art. I enjoyed the effect of their bounty. But how many of those beautiful blossoms received my individual admiration? Not many.

But the God of the universe, the God of black holes and galaxies, the God who is aware of the children killed in Ukraine, the individuals lost to mass graves in the Holocaust, the God of the suffering and the poor, that God saw every blossom on my hibiscus bushes, that God sees the deepest needs of each heart.

As we deepen our relationship with a God who cares about us so completely, it encourages us to pay more attention, not just to the beauty and glory of God's bounty in our yard, but to the beauty of this Earth so challenged right now.

Our relationship with this God compels us to ask: What can I do? How can I honor the Earth's resources more carefully? How can I hear the cry of the poor in a more generous way?

How can I look beyond the glory of my hibiscus to my neighbors near and far? How can I stop to listen, to be a consoling presence? How can I learn to "hear" what is sometimes unspoken? Two-year-olds make their needs known. But silent pleas are all around us.

The Savior who lets no flower go unseen listens to us, just where we are.

(Effie Calderola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

A More Human Society/Richard Doerflinger

Falsehoods have us wishing for a real debate on abortion

So many falsehoods and confusions fill the media lately on abortion that I find myself pining for an actual argument.

For an example, I do not want to pick on our president. But he started it, by picking on Catholic teaching.



In a recent speech to supporters, President Joe Biden is reported as saying:

"You have [Sen.] Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and others talking about how they're gonna, you know, make sure that *Roe* is forever gone and *Dobbs* becomes a national law. ... Talk about, what, no exceptions. Rape, incest, no exceptions. ... Now, I'm gonna deal with

my generic point. I happen to be a practicing Roman Catholic, my Church doesn't even make that argument."

He also promised that if his party wins two more seats in the Senate, "we're going to codify *Roe* and once again make *Roe* the law of the land."

In how many ways is this misleading?

First, it makes no sense to talk of the Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision becoming the law of the land, because it makes no law one way or the other. It says the Constitution leaves the people and their elected representatives free to make the abortion laws they support.

Second, the law that Graham has introduced bans most abortions after 15 weeks of gestation. That leaves about 94% of abortions untouched. It also has exceptions for danger to the mother's life and cases of rape or incest.

Third, the law the president wants to sign, the Women's Health Protection Act, would not codify *Roe*. Besides legalizing abortion throughout pregnancy, it attacks hundreds of modest state laws that have remained in effect under *Roe*, dealing with informed consent, parental rights when minors seek abortions, safety protections for women at abortion clinics and even the requirement that abortions be done by licensed physicians.

That law has passed the House. The president refers to two

Senate seats because he supports ending the Senate filibuster, allowing this most extreme abortion law in U.S. history to be approved by simple majority.

Then there is, most seriously, that business about the Church.

In his great encyclical on "The Gospel of Life," St. John Paul II reviewed how Catholic teaching has rejected abortion since the Church's first centuries. Reaffirming that constant tradition, he declared that "direct abortion, that is, abortion willed as an end or as a means, always constitutes a grave moral disorder, since it is the deliberate killing of an innocent human being" (#62).

After citing Scripture on our need to obey God's commands when faced with injustice, he added, "In the case of an intrinsically unjust law, such as a law permitting abortion or euthanasia, it is therefore never licit to obey it, or to 'take part in a propaganda campaign in favor of such a law, or vote for it'" (#73).

In this same paragraph, Pope John Paul II discussed a common problem for pro-life legislators: When a current or pending law allows abortion and full protection for the unborn is not practically possible, may one support "a more restrictive law, aimed at limiting the number of authorized abortions"? His answer was yes.

Since 1975, the U.S. bishops have said much the same thing in their Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, calling for laws protecting the unborn child "to the maximum degree possible." Both words, "maximum" and "possible," are important.

So Catholic teaching allows for supporting a bill like Graham's when broader protection is not possible, but rejects the bill the president supports.

As Jonathan Swift once wrote, "Falsehood flies, and truth comes limping after it." So much limping is needed to get past the falsehoods these days that there is little genuine debate on how to best serve pregnant women and their children.

(Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.) †

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Trust that our merciful God will provide for you each day

Not long ago, I was given this quote by my spiritual director: "Trust the past to God's mercy, the present to God's love and the future to God's providence."



How different—and fantastic—would life be if a person attempted to truly live in such a manner?

As I reflect on my life, I become aware of just how often I spend unnecessary energy

rehashing the past and wondering what would be if "things had been different"—if I had not made some of my negative choices in life?

Have you ever wondered if God could possibly forgive you for something that

you did in the past? Do you truly believe that God is merciful and forgiving if you are truly sorry? And in the present, do you wonder if you are worthy of God's continued love right here and now?

A good deal of anxiety in the present moment could be dispensed if a person could proceed daily knowing that God's love surrounds them, that God wants only good for them, and that God's love does not depend on a vague event that will somehow materialize in the future.

Briefly consider how much energy you have exhausted while worrying about the future. Do you really believe God has a plan for you? Can you be more patient and peaceful as you wait for that plan to unfold in God's time?

In the Gospel of Luke, we read, "Do not worry about your life and what you will eat,

or about your body and what you will wear. ... Notice the ravens: they do not sow or reap. ... Notice how the flowers grow. They do not toil or spin" (Lk 12: 22, 24, 27).

How different would life be if a person seriously believed that God will provide for them, like the lilies of the field and the birds of the air?

Why not take a few moments now—and each day—to sit quietly and reflect on these thoughts: that God is merciful, that you are loved and that God will always provide for you?

It can make simply breathing in each moment a much easier task.

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.) †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 9, 2022

- 2 Kings 5:14-17
- 2 Timothy 2:8-13
- Luke 17:11-19

The Second Book of Kings furnishes the first reading at Mass this weekend.

Once the two books of Kings were a single volume, but as time passed, editors divided the volume into two parts.

They are among the Old Testament's historical writings. While they are interested in the careers of the early kings of Israel, as the name implies, none of the Old Testament is primarily about history in and of itself.

Instead, the Old Testament books all are concerned with religion, and more precisely with the relationship between God and the Hebrew people. In the view of the ancients, the most important question in life was how to live in faithfulness to God. Nothing else ultimately mattered.

So, while the kings are prominent in these books, religious figures also are much in evidence.

This weekend's reading is an example. The central personality is not a king, but Naaman. Two strikes are against Naaman. He is a Gentile and a leper. It was much more than a coincidence of birth, religious choice or bad health. Each circumstance smacked of estrangement from God. Leprosy was seen, for instance, as punishment for sin.

Naaman was cured by bathing in the Jordan River. The Jordan formed a border between the promised land, home of the people of Israel, and the foreign world, filled with treachery and death and unbelievers. Crossing the Jordan symbolized and was entry into the land of God's chosen people.

After being cured, Naaman went to thank God, represented by Elisha, the prophet. It is a story, then, of divine mercy and of recognizing God's power and mercy.

St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy is the source of the next reading. Paul reassured and challenged Timothy, a disciple of Paul, an early convert to Christianity and a bishop. Anyone who

truly dies with Christ by dying to sin receives everlasting life with God.

St. Luke's Gospel provides the last reading. Leprosy is mentioned throughout the Scriptures. What was it in today's clinical sense? It was chronic and then without any known cure. Modern medicine has an answer. Then, it was a fearful fate.

Unaware of most of the workings of disease, ancient Jews saw a curse from God in leprosy. Somehow, somewhere, the leper had disobeyed God.

Fearing contagion, communities forced lepers to live apart. Isolated and spurned, lepers were forced to live lives of want to the point of starvation.

This reading also has an ethnic component. Jews scorned Samaritans since Samaritans long ago tolerated pagan invaders and intermarried with them, producing offspring not purely Hebrew, thereby blurring the identity of the chosen people. Jews thought that Samaritans were the worst of the worst, incapable of anything good.

Amid this, Jesus healed and forgave. His actions were works of the merciful God. He was God.

Reflection

It is impossible today to imagine the amazement of people when they heard Jesus speak kindly of lepers or of Samaritans, who, in popular opinion, were irredeemable sinners shunned by God. This is critical for understanding the readings.

Presumably Jews, nine of the lepers cured in this story from St. Luke's Gospel saw themselves as being entitled to God's mercy and forgiveness.

The 10th leper was different. An unworthy Samaritan, he nevertheless realized that God's mercy had come to him. He gave thanks to Jesus, whom the leper understood to be the bearer of divine mercy.

By sinning, we all have deserted God. We all are lepers and Samaritans. We deserve nothing, yet with unending love, God cures us of the weakening effects of our sin, restores us to life and welcomes us into the fold of those loyal to God.

The key is our own humility and recognition of our need for God. †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 10

Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1
Psalm 113:1b-5a, 6-7
Luke 11:29-32

Tuesday, October 11

St. John XXIII, pope
Galatians 5:1-6
Psalm 119:41, 43-45, 47-48
Luke 11:37-41

Wednesday, October 12

Galatians 5:18-25
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 11:42-46

Thursday, October 13

Ephesians 1:1-10
Psalm 98:1-6
Luke 11:47-54

Friday, October 14

St. Callistus I, pope and martyr
Ephesians 1:11-14
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 12-13
Luke 12:1-7

Saturday, October 15

St. Teresa of Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church
Ephesians 1:15-23
Psalm 8:2-3b, 4-7
Luke 12:8-12

Sunday, October 16

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 17:8-13
Psalm 121:1-8
2 Timothy 3:14-4:2
Luke 18:1-8

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Following teachings of Christ, the Church is the only sure means of salvation

(Editor's note: This column by Father Kenneth Doyle was originally published in 2014.)



QI was given a prayer folder that tells me that I will suffer no purgatory and be taken directly to heaven when I die, provided that I say certain prayers daily for 12 years. (Missed days can be made up.) I am about ready

to start the third year, but a dear Catholic friend has just told me that this promise is not true.

The prayers are called "The Seven Sorrows of Mary, as given to St. Bridget and The Twelve-Year Prayers of St. Bridget on the Passion of Jesus." I have read that these prayers were confirmed by Pope Clement XII and Pope Innocent X. I don't really mind doing the prayers, but I would like to know if I can guarantee my salvation. (Arkansas)

ANo prayer—not even one said every day for 12 years—can "guarantee salvation." Even a plenary indulgence, which remits all of the temporal punishment due to sin, covers only those sins committed up until the time the indulgence is gained; it is not "prospective."

The surest way to eternal happiness is, with the help of God's grace, to live out the teachings of Jesus Christ as learned from the Gospels and the teachings of the Church. I quote as my witness Jesus himself, who explained in the Gospel of Matthew that "not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Mt 7:21).

It strikes me as a bit like magic to think that the mere recitation of certain words could by itself win joy that is eternal. After all, a plenary indulgence

requires, in addition to the particular prayer or action, the reception of the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, prayers for the pope's intentions and a complete detachment from all sin.

Having said this, I would still encourage you to continue the recitation of the prayers you mentioned. Most often, the effect of prayer—as well as comforting the soul—is to bring one closer to Jesus in thought and action, which is the goal of our lives and the safest path to salvation.

QI am getting married in Cancun, Mexico, and the pastor of my Christian church (Valley Point Church) here in Pennsylvania is coming to marry us. We will actually get married civilly at a courthouse here at home before we travel to Mexico, in order to be sure that the wedding will be recognized in the U.S.

My brother-in-law is a Catholic priest here in Pennsylvania, and I have invited him to be present (but not officiate) at our wedding on the beach in Cancun. He says that he is not allowed to attend since it is not a Catholic wedding in a church, and that he can only come to the dinner afterward at the resort restaurant.

Is that true? Everyone I talk to says that this can't possibly be a rule for Catholic priests. (Pennsylvania)

AI take it from your question that you are not a Catholic, since your church would seem by its name to be a nondenominational Christian one. I do not know whether your husband-to-be is Catholic, and my answer hinges on whether he is.

If he is not, I don't see why your brother-in-law should feel that he cannot attend the wedding. If, however, the man you are marrying is a Catholic, his responsibility is either to be married by a Catholic priest in a Catholic church or to receive the necessary permissions for the marriage to be performed by someone other than a priest and in a setting other than a Catholic church.

My guess is that the groom is in fact a Catholic and has not received the needed permissions—in which case I can understand your brother-in-law's reluctance to attend.

Especially as a priest, he is required to avoid giving scandal, and he has evidently decided that his presence at the wedding would create the misimpression that the ceremony was approved by the Catholic Church.

I would guess, further, that he has made the judgment that for the sake of family harmony—and with the hope that later you might decide to have your marriage blessed by the Catholic Church in what is called a "convalidation"—it would be better that he be present at the reception. †

My Journey to God

TRULY PRESENT

By Gayle Schrank

A child in the womb...
...is a baby
among us...
...truly present
NOT YET revealed.

The Eucharist...
...is Jesus
Humanity and Divinity...
...truly present
NOT YET unveiled.

(Gayle Schrank is a member of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton. Photo: A woman holds a sign displaying ultrasound images of her son's development at 6 weeks and 33 weeks alongside his high school senior portrait during the Philadelphia March for Life rally on Jan. 23, 2021.) (CNS photo/Gina Christian, CatholicPhilly.com)



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, Christopher R., 26, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, Sept. 12. Son of Mitchell and Angela Adams. Brother of Audrianna and Noah Adams. Grandson of Phyllis Adams, David Greenwell, Sr., and Janice Greenwell. Great-grandson of Margaret Greenwell.

AUGUSTIN, Joseph, 90, Prince of Peace, Madison, Sept. 25. Father of Nancy Fitton, Linda and Roy Augustin. Grandfather of three.

BROWN, Mary L., 101, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Sept. 21. Mother of Mary Beth Oakley. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of four.

CLARK, Iva Maye, 88, St. Joseph, Rockville, Aug. 22. Mother of Mary Jo Harkrider, Kathleen Rayborn, Patricia Salter, John, Marcus, Michael and Scott Clark. Grandmother of 28. Great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother of several.

DURBIN, Jerry Lou, 86, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Aug. 15. Wife of Earl Durbin. Mother of Teri Parkman, Donald and Steve Durbin. Sister of Penny Nossett. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 10.

FERGUSON, Mary E., 97, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Sept. 16. Mother of Laura McDonald, Christopher and James Ferguson. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of three. Great-great-grandmother of one.

GRIFFITH, Sr., George L., 60, St. Mary, Greensburg, Sept. 19. Husband of Ruth Griffin. Father of Amanda Browning, Michelle Cummins,



The Church of Our Lady of the Assumption of the Norbertine Abbey of St. Michael in Silverado, Calif., is seen in this undated photo. The stained-glass window will—as it was designed to do by architect Jean-Louis Pagès—flood the altar with evening sunlight at the beginning of Vespers at 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 29, the feast day of the archangels St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael. (CNS photo/courtesy St. Michael Abbey)

Benjamin, Carl, Daniel and George Griffith, Jr. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of four.

HAVENS, Robert, 78, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Sept. 24. Husband of Linda Havens. Father of Michele Hopwood, Angie Strum and Gary Havens. Brother of Martha Buckel, Nola Gregg, Mike and Walter Havens. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of five.

KEISER, Olga C., 74, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Sept. 21. Mother of Molly and Michael Kaiser. Sister of Rudy Candido. Grandmother of four.

MEIER, Catherine A., 65, St. Michael, Brookville, Sept. 14. Sister of Mary Beth Baird and Joseph Meier. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

MEUNIER, Raymond L., 94, St. Malachy, Brownsburg,

Sept. 22. Father of Theresa Crowe, Bryon, Devin, Mark, Michael, Paul, Thomas and Vince Meunier. Brother of Annette Logston. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of eight.

MIGGENBURG, Martin, 72, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Sept. 10. Husband of Kim Miggenburg. Father of Shannon Burton and Mitch Miggenburg. Stepfather of Megan North, Chris and Nick Kerr. Brother of Paula Walters, Bill and Linny Miggenburg. Grandfather of nine.

PIERRARD, Bill, 96, St. Paul, Tell City, Sept. 18. Father of Cynthia Joyal and Janet Macy. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of five.

QUINN, Agnes B., 86, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Sept. 20. Mother of Denise Rohde, Joan

Scott and Mark Quinn. Sister of several. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of six.

REINE, Maria M., 54, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Aug. 28. Wife

of Gregg Reine. Mother of Alexander Reine. Sister of Christopher, Michael and Robert Funk, Jr.

SGROI, Ruth C., 98, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Sept. 22. Wife

of Tony Sgroi. Mother of Julie Christiansen, Mary Kay Morgan, Frances Sebring, Carol and Bill Allen. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 16. †

Daughter of Charity Sister Mary John Tintea served at St. Vincent Hospital

Daughter of Charity Sister Mary John Tintea died on Sept. 13 at Seton Residence in Evansville, Ind. She was 93.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Sept. 19 at the Seton Residence Chapel. Burial followed at St. Joseph Cemetery in Evansville.

Sister Mary John was born on June 20, 1929, in Detroit and was given the name Helen Genevieve at her baptism. She entered the Daughters of Charity in 1951.

Sister Mary John earned a bachelor's degree in theology at the former Marillac College in St. Louis and a clinical pastoral education certificate at Hotel Dieu Hospital in New Orleans.

During her 71 years as a member of the Daughters of Charity, Sister Mary John ministered in education and in other ministries in Alabama, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan and West Virginia.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary John served as a receptionist and chaplain at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis from 1989-2013. Upon her retirement from ministry at St. Vincent, she retired to a life of prayer at the Seton Residence in Evansville.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Daughters of Charity, 4330 Olive St., St. Louis, MO 63108. †

Federal judge sides with Catholic school over guidance counselor's firing

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A federal judge in Indiana sided with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and one of its Catholic high schools in a lawsuit filed by a former guidance counselor who said her contract was not renewed because of her same-sex union.

The Sept. 30 ruling in *Fitzgerald v. Roncalli High School and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis*, relied on previous Supreme Court rulings that have emphasized a ministerial exception protecting a religious school's employment practices from government intrusion.

The recent decision echoes a nearly identical ruling from a year ago based on a lawsuit filed against the same school and archdiocese from another school counselor whose contract was similarly not extended due to her same-sex union.

The decisions in both cases were issued by U.S. District Judge Richard Young for the Southern District of Indiana.

Young said the Indianapolis Archdiocese and its schools can select, retain or dismiss faculty according to their religious standards, something he also stressed a year ago.

The current case involved Shelly Fitzgerald, former co-director of guidance at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis for 15 years. Her employment was terminated in 2018 after she confirmed to the school that she was in a same-sex union and the school declined to renew her contract for the following year.

School officials said her conduct was prohibited by the agreement she signed with the school.

Fitzgerald filed a discrimination lawsuit in 2019 against the school and the archdiocese.

On Sept. 29, the court dismissed the lawsuit, noting that "Roncalli entrusted Fitzgerald to teach the Catholic faith and carry out" its religious mission.

The contract described school employees as ministers of faith. It

also contained a clause stipulating that employees would forfeit their positions if they engaged in conduct that did not adhere with "the moral or religious teachings of the Roman Catholic Church."

The ruling on the similar case last year also involved a 2019 complaint filed by Lynn Starkey, another former guidance counselor at Roncalli.

After that ruling, Starkey appealed her case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit in Chicago, which in late July of this year determined that the Catholic school and its archdiocese have a constitutional right to hire staff who will uphold their core religious teachings.

In court documents in Fitzgerald's case, the judge pointed out that the role of a guidance counselor is "predominately secular" and that although it could seem "a stretch" to describe a guidance counselor as a minister, the role falls under that umbrella because the school spells out in its faculty handbook and employment agreement that it "entrusted guidance

counselors like Fitzgerald to convey the Church's message in addition to their secular duties."

The judge granted summary judgment and resolved all of the claims at issue in the case.

Luke Goodrich, vice president and senior counsel at Becket Law, which represented the defendants, said the case echoes the Supreme Court's stance that "religious organizations have a constitutional right to hire individuals who believe in their faith's ideals and are committed to their religious mission."

"This is a commonsense ruling: Catholic schools exist to pass on the Catholic faith to their students; to do that, they need freedom to ask Catholic educators to uphold Catholic values," he said in a statement. †



Luke Goodrich

Novena and trust in God lead business owner along new path

By Jennifer Lindberg

COLUMBUS—Perhaps it's the stylish pillow with the word "Blessings" embroidered across it that best describes the answer Tina Sherman received after praying a novena to St. Thérèse of Lisieux earlier this year.

A French Carmelite saint of the 19th century, St. Thérèse is known to send showers of roses down upon her devotees when a novena is answered.

Sherman received her roses, and a little something else: The Ark Book and Gift Store in Columbus, which she became owner of in May.

The business wasn't quite what Sherman was expecting when praying about whether to close her toy store, Little Frogs and Fairies, in Greensburg. Since the building she rented was to be sold and the retail economy was shaky, Sherman thought it might be time to end her business career.

"I wasn't expecting to open another store!" said Sherman, a member of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon. "I'm only here because this is what God wants of me."

A mother of six, Sherman earned a bachelor of science degree at Marian University in Indianapolis. She never intended to be an entrepreneur in the retail business. She felt the call to the business world as a way to support her family and still be with her kids. Her littlest ones grew up at the toy store, watching her tag merchandise and getting the first look at all the new Christmas toys on the market.

The Ark represents a shower of blessings for Sherman and a leap of faith into some uncharted territory of evangelization—the 40-year-old business has largely existed as a book and gift store

catering to non-denominational Christians and selling Protestant Bibles.

"I do a lot of listening to people," Sherman said. "I get to see where they are in their faith life and a lot of them are not Catholic."

The Bible remains the store's best seller, said Sherman. She's learned there are hundreds of Protestant translations—which only contain 66 books—compared to the few approved Catholic versions, which include the entire canon of Scripture with 73 books.

As Sherman brings more Catholic elements into The Ark, she is having to sharpen her own knowledge about the Catholic faith.

"I have to explain Mary a lot," she said. "Usually, [customers] say that they didn't realize [a certain aspect] about Mary because they had been taught differently. I try to never correct them unless they say something that isn't what the Catholic faith teaches. I want this store to be for everyone."

Sherman's motto is to simply follow St. Paul's words "to be all things to all people" (1 Cor 9:22). The store provides quality religious items and gifts, and Sherman tries to quietly witness to her faith and proclaim it when necessary.

Sherman's answered novena has deepened her trust in God, she noted.

She wanted a clear response about closing the toy store, "so I asked for white roses" from St. Thérèse, Sherman said. She knew the stories of how St. Thérèse favored requests with roses, and Sherman wanted a specific color to know whether the saint heard her prayer or not.

At the end of the novena, Sherman received no white roses directly. But when she walked into an ALDI grocery store, all that was in front of her were white roses, she recalled.



Store owner Tina Sherman holds a pillow with the word "Blessed" in The Ark Book and Gift Store in Columbus. (Photo by Jennifer Lindberg)

"Now, I've been to ALDI a lot, and they usually have various colors of roses," she said. "But all that was in the store that day were white roses."

That could have been the end of the story. However, Sherman hit the pause button on this sign because it seemed so final. White roses meant closing the store.

So Sherman prayed another nine-day novena to St. Thérèse. This time she didn't get any roses or even massive sightings of them. However, she did get a "feeling of deep peace," and a phone call.

A friend told her Angela Burton, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, wanted to close The Ark. But Sherman wasn't the first in line for the store. And if she became the new owner

of The Ark, it meant closing the toy store and taking over The Ark's retail business simultaneously.

"There was no rest," said Sherman. "But it just felt right."

"I enjoy all the people I meet," she added. "I even got to keep some of my toy store inventory," she said. "People are really liking it, too."

Eventually, Sherman plans to put a large St. Thérèse statue in the store.

"I just keep thanking St. Thérèse," she said with a smile as she stuffed the pillow with the word "Blessings" onto a shelf.

(Jennifer Lindberg is a freelance writer and a member of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon.) †

Resettlement agencies applaud U.S. goal to welcome 125,000 refugees

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A White House goal to welcome up to 125,000 refugees in fiscal year 2023 received support from two agencies working to resettle newcomers in the United States.

Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, and Joan Rosenhauer, executive director of Jesuit Relief Service/USA, welcomed the Biden administration announcement in separate statements on Sept. 28.

"This is an ambitious and worthwhile goal for our nation, which has benefited from many blessings throughout its history including the generations of refugees we have already enriched American communities," Bishop Dorsonville said.

He added that the U.S. bishops remain committed to the Catholic Church's long tradition of welcoming people who are fleeing war, violence, natural disasters, political instability and persecution.

The USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services department is one of the largest agencies working to resettle refugees in the U.S.

Rosenhauer said the White House announcement comes at a time when "the world is witnessing the highest levels of global displacement on record with more than 100 million people forced to flee their homes."

In June, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees released a report enumerating the rising number of refugees around the world who are leaving their homelands, citing food insecurity, climate

change, wars and lack of safety as leading causes.

The White House announced the goal of resettling 125,000 refugees on Sept. 28 as the Biden administration rebuilds the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program following declining refugee quotas and cutbacks in services in recent years.

Since the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program was established in 1980, it has

settled about 3.5 million refugees.

Bishop Dorsonville said that as the number of refugees admitted returns to higher levels, the USCCB will continue to "embrace this ministry given to us by Jesus," adding that "we look to the president and Congress for their continued support of a robust resettlement program, consistent with our national values." †

Employment

Archdiocese of Indianapolis Maintenance Technician

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is always on the lookout for good, competent and committed maintenance technicians. We have regular turnover of maintenance staff at the Archdiocesan level, as well as at our parishes. We are looking for both entry-level maintenance technicians who can be trained and career maintenance professionals who may be looking to make a career change. Working with the Archdiocese and our parishes can be a tremendous way to enhance your spiritual connection with the Church. This may also be an excellent way for you to apply your time, talents and treasures.

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Fax: 317-254-3210

Pope Francis tells Russian President Putin: Stop the war

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With “rivers of blood and tears” still flowing in Ukraine and with the increasing threat of the use of nuclear weapons, Pope Francis begged Russian President Vladimir Putin: “Stop this spiral of violence and death.”



Pope Francis

With the situation being “so serious, devastating and threatening,” the pope did not offer his customary commentary on the day’s Gospel

reading before reciting the *Angelus* prayer on Oct. 2. Instead, he focused on the war and the “terrible and inconceivable wound” it is inflicting on humanity.

While constantly calling for peace and offering prayers for the victims since the war began in late February, the pope drew attention in his talk to “the serious situation that has arisen in recent days with further actions contrary to the principles of international law,” a clear reference to Putin’s announcement on Sept. 30 that Russia was annexing four occupied territories in Ukraine.

The decision, the pope told people in St. Peter’s Square, “increases the risk of nuclear escalation to the point of fears of uncontrollable and catastrophic consequences worldwide.

“My appeal is addressed first of all to the president of the Russian Federation, begging him to stop this spiral of violence and death, also for the sake of his people,” the pope said.

But “saddened by the immense suffering of the Ukrainian people as a result of the aggression suffered,” Pope Francis also appealed to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy “to be open” to any “serious peace proposals.”

The pope also asked world leaders “to do everything in their power to put an end to the ongoing war, without allowing themselves to be drawn into dangerous escalations, and to promote and support initiatives for dialogue.”

While remembering Ukraine’s “thousands of victims,” including children, the destruction and the displacement of millions of people, Pope Francis also spoke of specifics.

“Some actions can never be justified. Never!” the pope said.

“It’s distressing that the world is learning the geography of Ukraine

through names like Bucha, Irpin, Mariupol, Izium, Zaporizhzhia and other towns that have become places of suffering and indescribable fear,” the pope said, referring to cities previously occupied by Russian troops and where mass graves were found once the areas were liberated.

“And what about the fact that humanity is once again faced with the atomic threat?” the pope asked. “It is absurd.

“How much blood still must flow before we understand that war is never a solution, only destruction?” the pope asked thousands of people gathered in the

square for the midday prayer.

“In the name of God and in the name of the sense of humanity that dwells in every heart,” he said, “I renew my call for an immediate ceasefire.”

Pope Francis prayed for a negotiated settlement of the conflict, one that is “not imposed by force, but agreed, just and stable.”

A just solution, he said, must be “based on respect for the sacred value of human life, as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country, and the rights of minorities and legitimate concerns.” †

Biking for Babies



The Indiana portion of the annual Biking for Babies took place on Sept. 9-11. A prayer rally took place at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 10, with several speakers highlighting the value of all human life. This year, 24 riders participated in the local ride, in which they rode for 18 miles, pedaling for life. Approximately \$30,000 was raised through the local campaign. Next year’s event will be held on Sept. 8-10, 2023, with the local ride and prayer rally being held on Sept. 9, 2023. For more information on Biking for Babies, go to bikingforbabies.com. (Submitted photo)



STILL THE PLACE TO BE FOR MOMS-TO-BE

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