Capt. Andy Guidugli, son of John and Judy Guidugli of Hamilton, says he’s thrilled to be home to his family after several years of Army service. His third child was just two weeks old when he was deployed to Afghanistan. Guidugli is pictured with Badin High School principal Brian Pendergest.

Badin grad home from service

Badin High School class of ’05 graduate Andy Guidugli is in the final stages of what has been a whirlwind military career.

Guidugli will muster out as a captain in the United States Army in another couple of months following four years of active duty. “Overall, yes, it has been a positive experience,” he said during a visit to Badin recently. “It has really helped me grow a lot. I was pretty immature when I went into the military. Now I know who I am.”

Guidugli, a popular student at Badin who was voted “Best Personality” in the senior edition of the school newspaper, just returned home at the end of August following a nine-month tour of duty in Afghanistan. That was his second tour in the Middle East during his four years.

Guidugli will spend October at Fort Stewart in Georgia wrapping up his service, then be on “terminal leave” for three months before standing down. He and his wife, McKenzie, currently live in Springfield with their three children. They hope to relocate to Butler County early next year.

“When you get asked a question like, ‘What would you do in a situation like this …’ that can be hard to answer, because you’ve spent the last few years being told what to do.”

Guidugli is a graduate of Wright State University, and was commissioned through the ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) program. “When I was six years old, my cousin went into the ROTC,” Guidugli recalled. “I looked at him and said, ‘That’s what I’m going to do!’ I’d been planning my career for a long time.”

During his service in Iraq, he was actually stationed in Kuwait, and would run convoys into Iraq for 14 days at a time. As part of convoy security escort teams, he led 10 convoys over those 12 months.

“We’re like UPS, except we have guns on our trucks,” he said with a smile. But, he recalled that very first convoy being hit hard by an improvised bomb. “That really woke us up!”

“The Kuwaiti’s still love us (because of Operation Desert Storm in 1991). We were like rock stars there,” Guidugli said. “The Iraqi’s were ready for us to leave. It’s a completely different culture. We’d been there for 10 years, and they were ready for us to go.”
The Caregiver Assistance Network of Catholic Charities presents “Partnerships in Motion: A Renaissance in Aging” from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26, at the Hyde Park Health Center’s Terrace Auditorium (3983 Rosslyn Drive, Cincinnati 45209). This support group explores partnership as an approach to creating vitality, satisfaction, and workability in aging. Through uplifting reflective exercises, participants will develop action plans for quality of life, purpose, balance, decision-making, and death and dying choices. The program empowers participants to shift the aging paradigm for themselves and individuals under their care. Contact Sarah Ostrow at 513-272-5573 to register or to obtain more information.

Catholic Charities will host a Parenting Education Class from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Sept. 26 through Nov. 21 at the Hamilton office of Catholic Charities, 1910 Fairgrove Avenue, Suite B, for at-risk parents of school age children (6-12 years). Classes will help parents who are trying to learn new parenting skills. Free to Butler County residents, $60 per person or $80 a couple for nonresidents. Contact Pam Mortensen to register or for more information at (513) 863-6129 ext.26 or pmortensen@ccswoh.org.

The Parenting and Life Skills Program of Catholic Charities will present “Better than Yelling” from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26, at St. Antoninus Church in the Undercroft (5425 Julmar Drive, Cincinnati). Learn ways to effectively communicate to your children, encouraging cooperation and positive family connections. Cost is $15 per person. To register or to get more information, contact Sandy Keiser at skeiser@ccswoh.org or 513-241-7745.

Project Rachel is a post-abortive healing ministry of the Archdiocese. The first step is a confidential helpline 513-784-0531 where you can speak with people who will not condemn you for your decision. The ministry also consists of support groups and retreats. A retreat will be offered Sept. 27-29 in Cincinnati. Support groups are now meeting in both Dayton and Cincinnati. For more information or to register, call 513-784-0531 or email Mary Anne Boyd at mboyd@catholiccincinnati.org.

The Jesuit Spiritual Center at Milford is sponsoring overnight Ignatian retreats based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, including “Praying Your Life Story with Jesus and St. Ignatius” with Fr. Fran Daly, SJ, Sept. 27-29. The retreats are silent and held on the Center’s quiet 37-acre campus. For information, or to register, call 513-248-3500, ext. 10, or visit www.jesuitspiritualcenter.com.

You are invited to take part in a bicycle pilgrimage through the Land of the Cross Tipped Churches on Saturday, Sept. 28, 2013. Beginning at the Maria Stein Relic Shrine, 2291 St. Johns Road, Maria Stein Ohio 45860, will be from 7 to 10 a.m. The pilgrimage blessing for the riders will begin at 8 a.m. The cost is $20 per person.

The Marianist Awakening the Dreamer Team is offering “Awakening the Dreamer,” a symposium using videos, personal reflection, and group activities to explore the most critical concerns of our times. Discover new opportunities to make a real difference in accelerating the emergence of an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling, and socially just human presence on this planet. The program will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Sisters of Charity Motherhouse, 5900 Delhi Road in Cincinnati. Fee is $45, which includes lunch. A $10 non-refundable registration fee is due by Sept. 23 (applied to total cost). Call 513-347-5449 or email spirituality.center@srcharitycinti.org for more information.

The 42nd annual St. Lawrence Catholic Church Turkey Shoot and Family Festival in Rhine will be held on Sunday, Sept. 29, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the church, located three miles east of Botkins on Botkins Road. Activities include a 12-gauge shotgun shoot, a cornhole tournament, children’s games, adult games, and homemade soups, sandwiches, and pies. New this year is a BB gun shoot and a Christian band along with more than $3,000 in raffle and door prizes.

A survivor of human trafficking who is also a victim’s advocate will present as part of the Tuesday, Oct. 1, Distinguished Speaker Program in Dayton and make a luncheon appearance in Sidney. Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley and the Archdiocesan Catholic Social Action Office with the support of the Weavers of Justice will present Theresa Flores, 2013 Distinguished Speaker St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Beavercreek. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. A truck stop-style dinner of hot dogs, hamburgers, cole slaw, chips and dessert is symbolic. There is a suggested donation of $10 per person.
Pope excommunicates Australian Catholic priest

MELBOURNE, Australia — Pope Francis has ordered the excommunication of a Catholic priest in Australia who illicitly offered Mass, taught that women should be ordained priests and advocated for redefining marriage to include homosexual couples.

An Archdiocese of Melbourne spokesman said the Pope had ordered the excommunication of Father Greg Reynolds, who has also been dismissed from the clerical state, according to the Australian Associated Press.

Australian newspaper The Age reported that Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne said the excommunication was due to the priest’s public celebration of Mass without faculties to do so and his preaching contrary to the teachings of the Church.

The letter announcing the penalty, written in Latin, was dated May 31.

Excommunication is a canonical penalty intended to warn and correct those who commit grave offenses against the Church. Priests who are excommunicated may not receive or celebrate the sacraments.

Reynolds said he expected to be dismissed from the clerical state but did not expect to be excommunicated. He said he was told that Archbishop Hart did not apply for the dismissal from the clerical state, but that someone else contacted the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Reynolds had resigned as a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Melbourne in 2011. He founded a group called “Inclusive Catholics” the following year, and he has indicated he will continue his work with the group.

In August 2012, a visitor to the group’s woman-led religious service reportedly fed “consecrated bread” to his dog. Media reports at the time were unclear whether the bread was in fact the holy Eucharist, as the priest’s involvement in the service was minimal. However, the reports led Archbishop Hart to say such a sacrilege of the Blessed Sacrament would be an “abomination.”

Agencies stretching to meet needs of displaced Syrians

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Governments and nongovernmental agencies are struggling to keep up with the needs and pressures created by the displacement of nearly a third of Syria’s population because of the country’s civil war. Assistance to the refugees and displaced people is coming from around the world, although resources are thinly stretched. Representatives of several Catholic agencies that are involved at various levels told Catholic News Service that their programs include helping make sure children can go to school and get help dealing with psychological trauma, as well as providing the basics for survival, such as food, water, housing and medicines.

Benedict XVI refutes atheist, says he never hid abuse cases

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- In a letter to an atheist Italian mathematician, retired Pope Benedict XVI defended his own handling of allegations of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy and politely criticized the logician's total reliance on scientific facts for meaning. "I never sought to conceal these things," the pope said of cases of clerical abuse, and lamented the scholar depicting the church as the only place where such "deviation" and "filth" occur.

As migration rises worldwide, pope calls for cooperation

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis called for greater international cooperation to improve conditions for the world’s rising numbers of migrants and called on the media to combat prejudices that make immigrants unwelcome in their new countries. The pope's words came in his annual message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, which will be celebrated Jan. 19, 2014. The message was released by the Vatican Sept. 24. "Contemporary movements of migration represent the largest movement of individuals, if not of peoples, in history," the pope wrote. According to the United Nations, 232 million people, representing 3.2 percent of the world’s population, are currently international migrants, up from 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990.
‘Make sure you tell the whole story’

Rev. Mr. Royce Winters
Director, African American Ministries

A group from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati including Dr. Michael Gable, Director, Mission Office, Ms. Melonise Knight, Dr. Jessie Thomas, Ms. Barbara Wuest, Mrs. Donna Goddard, Mrs. Nor-Rita Winters, and I traveled to Ghana, West Africa on a mission trip on Sept. 8-21. This trip was very important for me because it allowed me to fulfill a promise I had made to my friend and mentor, the late Rev. Paul Rehling.


But, it was the words of Bishop Atuahene that struck me the most, for he said, “Make sure you tell the whole story of the Ghanaian people and their culture.” The words pierced me because I was being challenged to look beyond the depth of poverty, oppression, and the corruption that seizes the people and the country.

During one of our informal gatherings, I asked Bishop Atuahene, “When you encourage the youth of Africa to dream, what is the dream?” Bishop Atuahene responded, “The dream is for them to know the dignity of life in their lifetime. The people of Goaso support themselves as subsistence farmers. The village will not survive if we fail to educate our children and give them skills to support themselves and their families.”

Even though poverty, oppression and corruption are a major part of their daily lives, there is progress being made in Ghana. There are new roads and bridges that provide greater access to each other and the world. There are wells which gives them access to clean water which leads to better health. There are more homes with access to electricity.

Though impoverished, the greatest gifts of the Ghanaian people are their culture, faith, joy, and hope. Bishop Atuahene said it this way, “I am encouraged that the people get up early every morning to meet the needs of the day. They do this without complaint and with great joy. They do so knowing that God will take care of them, and that is the joy of my ministry.”

Blue Mass blessing

Father Steve Angi, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and Chaplain for the Cincinnati Police Department, blesses a police vehicle before the annual Blue Mass held last weekend at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains. The Mass drew police officers and their families from the area and included a reading of the roll call of officers lost in the past year. For more photos see www.thecatholictelegraph.com.