



The Catholic Virginian

Serving the People of the Diocese of Richmond for 90 years



Vol. 95, No. 19

www.catholicvirginian.org

July 13, 2020

Archeologists dig deep into basilica's history

Discoveries could aid in discovering development of Church in Norfolk

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

The discovery and exploration of crypts under the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk, is unearthing layers of history previously thought to be lost and is expected to create a clearer picture of the parish's heritage.

There's little documentation on the early parish, once called St. Patrick's, largely because the parish has been interracial since the early to mid-1800s when whites, free blacks and slaves worshipped there, according to Father Jim Curran, basilica pastor.

"Black history throughout the country, specifically in the south but also in Norfolk and Virginia, was not really seen as worthy of recording by the people documenting history at that time," Father Curran said. "A lot of what we know is not from official documents but was passed down orally from one generation to the next."

Uncovering history

St. Mary's, the oldest Catholic parish community in the diocese, is finishing a six-year renovation on



Archeologists sift through remains found in crypts below the floor of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk. David Brown, supervising archeologist for the project, speculates the burials took place between 1800 and 1856. (Photo/Brian Palmer/brianpalmer.photos)

its 1858 church that may reveal the congregation's early history. During construction and ensuing archaeological investigation, two brick tunnels and several burials were found beneath the concrete floor at the entrance to the worship space.

Ground penetrating radar detected "dozens upon dozens" of burials in other places under the

church, said David Brown, project supervising archaeologist and co-director of Fairfield Foundation, a Gloucester-based nonprofit center for archaeology and preservation.

St. Mary's traces its origin to a group of French immigrants fleeing persecution in the French Revolution in 1791. According to differing accounts, immigrants from Ireland,

the Dominican Republic and Haiti may have been among the first congregants.

The parish was established in 1794 and built a wood-frame chapel by 1803, just east of the corner of Holt and Chapel streets where the basilica stands. A brick chapel replaced it in 1831, a larger one, in 1842, according to a 2017 register nomination that Commonwealth Presentation Group, a Norfolk historic preservation consultant working with the parish, submitted to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR). The register nomination said "as early as 1842, there is documentation of African American parishioners at St. Patrick's."

The 1842 church building was destroyed in a fire in 1856, a suspected arson by the Know Nothings, a short-lived clandestine political party in the mid-1800s known for its anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic beliefs.

The parish changed its name to St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception when the new church was dedicated in 1858. The majestic structure is built at least partially over St. Patrick Church's graveyard.

According to the basilica's web-

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New York cardinal: 'Stop demonizing' the police

Editor's note: Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, archbishop of New York, wrote the following op-ed which appeared in the July 1 issue of the New York Post.

Whenever I go back home to Missouri, family and friends ask me, "What do you like most about New York?" The list is lengthy, I reply. Saint Patrick's Cathedral is up there, of course, and nothing beats that magical feel of Manhattan around Christmastime. But near the top would be the men and women of the New York Police Department.

I chat with them on their beat. I have a coffee with them in the kitchen of my home behind the cathedral. I celebrate their weddings, baptize

their kids and show up at their events. And yes, I visit them in the ICU, and attend their wakes and funerals when they're wounded or killed in the line of duty, which happens more often than I care to recall.

Much too frequently of late, I have grieved with the family of an officer who took his or her own life.

Our valiant police officers have one of the most perilous, stressful duties around, and from what I have seen in my nearly dozen years here, they do it with care, compassion and competence.

Now we have added to their load with continual, at times exaggerated, rash and inaccurate

criticism, combined with rocks, Molotov cocktails and taunts.

Do police forces deserve criticism sometimes? You bet they do. The vicious killing in Minneapolis of George Floyd by a policeman, with his partners idly watching, reminds us in a nauseating way that for some cops, black lives do not matter.

The most stinging rebuke of that outrage in Minneapolis that I hear comes from – guess who? The cops I chat with on the sidewalks of New York.

They, and their department, realize criticism is called for. When it comes, they listen and

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7800 Carousell Lane
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CLERGY ASSIGNMENTS

The Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, bishop of the Diocese of Richmond, has announced the following appointments, effective Monday, Aug. 17, 2020, unless otherwise noted:

OFFICIAL

Pastors

Father Rogelio L. Abadano from administrator of St. Peter the Apostle, Onley, to pastor of St. Mary, Lovingson, and St. Francis of Assisi, Amherst.

Father James E. Gordon from director of Clinical Services at Saint Luke Institute, Silver Spring, Md., to pastor of St. Ann, Ashland.

Father G. Leoval Guadalupe from administrator of Church of the Holy Spirit, Virginia Beach, to pastor of St. Andrew, Chincoteague Island.

Father Michael M. Imperial from administrator at St. Andrew the Apostle, Chincoteague Island, to pastor of St. Peter the Apostle, Onley.

Father Carlos H. Lerma from pastor of St. Mary, Lovingson, and St. Francis of Assisi, Amherst, to pastor of St. Francis of Assisi, Rocky Mount, and St. Joseph, Martinsville.

Administrator

Father Matthew A. Kiehl from chaplain of the Catholic Campus Ministry serving the College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, and rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Williamsburg, to administrator of Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Virginia Beach.

Chaplains

Father Francis K. Boateng from chaplain of Church of the Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach, and chaplain of the Catholic Campus Ministry serving Old Dominion University, Norfolk, to chaplain of Church of the Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach, and priest in residence at St. Matthew, Virginia Beach.

Father Nicholas E. Redmond from parochial vicar of St. Joseph, Petersburg, and associate director and promoter of vocations to promoter of vocations and chaplain of the Catholic Campus Ministry serving the College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, effective Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020.

Sacramental Priest

Father James M. Glass in addition to his role as pastor of Holy Trinity, Norfolk, sacramental priest for the Catholic Campus Ministry serving Old Dominion University, effective Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020.

Rector

Msgr. Joseph P. Lehman, III rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Williamsburg, in addition to pastor of St. Bede, Williamsburg.

Parochial Vicars

Father Patricio D. Alcantara from parochial vicar of Prince of Peace, Chesapeake, to parochial vicar of St. Theresa, Farmville; Sacred Heart, Meherrin; and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Blackstone.

Father John R. Christian from parochial vicar of St. Andrew, Roanoke, to parochial vicar of St. Bridget, Richmond, and two days a week as Auditor and Assessor at the Diocesan Tribunal.

Father Jaime G. Delgado from parochial vicar of Church of the Incarnation, Charlottesville, to

parochial vicar of St. Augustine, Richmond.

Father Anthony Ferguson, parochial vicar of St. Andrew, Roanoke.

Father Paul Kkonde from parochial vicar of Church of the Resurrection, St. Paul Catholic Church, Church of the Holy Angels, Portsmouth, and St. Mary, Chesapeake, to parochial vicar of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke.

Father Policarpio Lagco from parochial vicar of St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, to parochial vicar of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Newport News.

Father Raner O. Lucila from parochial vicar of St. Augustine, Richmond, to parochial vicar of St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe, and St. Joseph, Hampton.

Father Christopher M. Masla from parochial vicar of Blessed Sacrament, Harrisonburg, to parochial vicar of Church of the Incarnation, Charlottesville, and Our Lady of the Rosary, Crozet.

Father Daniel R. Molochko from parochial vicar of St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe, and St. Joseph, Hampton, to parochial vicar of Church of the Resurrection, St. Paul, Church of the Holy Angels, Portsmouth, and St. Mary, Chesapeake.

Father Kyle S. O'Connor from priest in residence at Blessed Sacrament, Harrisonburg, to Parochial Vicar of Blessed Sacrament, Harrisonburg.

Father James P. O'Reilly from parochial vicar of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, to Parochial Vicar of St. Joseph, Petersburg.

Father Julio Reyes, parochial vicar of Our Lady of Lourdes, Henrico, effective Saturday, July 11, 2020.

Retired

Father Christian J. Haydinger from pastor of St. Ann, Ashland, to retired status.

CONSCIENCE

1820

TIME CAPSULE

2020

A CIVIC EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE ON THE EVE OF WAR

Throughout the Catholic Diocese of Richmond's bicentennial year, a time capsule recalling a particular time in diocesan history is scheduled to be published in each issue of The Catholic Virginian. The bicentennial time capsules have been researched and compiled by Father Anthony E. Marques, chair of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond's Bicentennial Task Force.

World War II (1939–1945) forever changed the United States. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (Dec. 7, 1941) catapulted the country out of its isolationist foreign policy; the Great Depression (1929–1939) came to an end; and America emerged from the conflict as a nuclear superpower.

The war also irrevocably changed the social standing of Catholics in Virginia. As they did during the Civil War (1861–1865) and World War I (1914–1918), Catholics in the commonwealth supported the war effort, which included military service. In this way, they demonstrated their patriotism, which had the effect of dispelling anti-Catholic bigotry in Virginia.

Furthermore, the Catholic Church experienced rapid growth in northern Virginia and Tidewater as a consequence of the expansion of the federal government during and after the war and because of the post-war population boom. Catholics from other states came to these areas of the commonwealth to work for

the government, including the military and related industries. As these new arrivals joined the ranks of the middle class, the Catholic Church came to be more widely accepted in Virginia society.

Five months before Pearl Harbor, an editorial in The Catholic Virginian (July 1941) warned about the external threat posed by Nazi Germany. The piece, written on the occasion of the Fourth of July, also warned against the internal threats to American democracy posed by a simultaneously unholy and un-American way of life.

In this way, the editorial made the point that to be a good Catholic was to be a patriotic American:

We look out on a world abroad that seems to threaten chaos come again, a world whose condition seems to menace all things that, politically and social speaking, make American life worth living. ...



A bomber crew on Langley Field (today Langley Air Force Base) in Hampton, in 1942. (Photo/Diocese of Richmond Archives)

But just as Nazi influence here [in the United States] has been waning, Nazi power abroad has been growing by leaps and bounds. ... There is room for debate as to the precise way in which

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'Love is more contagious than COVID'

Faith fortifies nurse dealing with coronavirus

KRISTEN L. BYRD
Special to The Catholic Virginian

For 17 years, Nerissa Lorenzo put on her scrubs and went to work. She spent her days caring for others – taking vitals, assessing patients, administering medications, offering support to families, helping in any way she could.

Nursing is more than just a profession for Lorenzo; it's a calling — a way to express her faith.

One could say it was in her blood: her father, sister and several cousins are all in the health care field.

"My parents taught us that it is not enough just to go to church on Sunday. We have to live everyday like Christ, to be kind, to do what's right, to be humble," she said.

Lorenzo's first degree was in microbiology, but she didn't feel connected to the field. Looking for something more fulfilling, she spent a summer at a Washington, D.C. medical facility for the homeless called Christ House.

"It allowed me to open my eyes to the lack of and the need for available health care," she said. "I knew that I wanted to do something that's meaningful."

This soon led her to nursing.

World changes

Over the years, Lorenzo has worked in various cardiac, thoracic and care units. She works at a Catholic hospital in Richmond where she has seen many illnesses and helped hundreds of patients. But in May 2020, her world changed.

When news of the coronavirus was first reported by the nation's media, there was little information and many unknowns, but Lorenzo had a feeling the virus would not go quietly.

"I knew that once a case was identified in the U.S., it wouldn't take long for the virus to spread across the country. It was only a matter of time before it would reach this state, this city, this community," she said.

Lorenzo's unit was gradually transformed into a COVID unit. The mother of a 10-year-old son, Charlie, she educated him early about the virus and made sure he understood the risks she was taking working with COVID-19 patients. Her son and her husband, Erik, gave her their full support.

"I knew that every day I worked there was a risk of exposure," Lorenzo said. "It didn't stop me from caring for my patients, from giving them respect, from treating them the best that I could."



As a nurse in the COVID-19 unit of a Catholic hospital in Richmond, Nerissa Lorenzo had the support of her husband Erik and their son Charlie despite the risk. She contracted the coronavirus in May and continues to recover. (Photo courtesy of Nerissa Lorenzo)

She explained that caring for a hospitalized COVID patient is complex because of the myriad of health conditions that can be exacerbated by the disease and because the disease manifests itself differently in different people.

'God was with me'

Lorenzo began noticing symptoms a few days after Mother's Day. Her body ached, her head burned, her breathing shallowed.

"The phrase, 'It's like I've been hit by a bus,' is an understatement," she said.

By the 10th day, Lorenzo couldn't breathe and was rushed to the hospital. She remembers the look of fear and sadness on her son's face when the EMTs arrived.

Lorenzo remained in the hospital for five days before returning home, where she stayed in the guest room for weeks and only saw her husband and son via FaceTime.

"I felt imprisoned within my home. It was hard not to be able to hug them or kiss them goodnight. My husband ended up testing posi-

tive for the coronavirus, and it broke my heart," she said, noting her husband only exhibited mild symptoms and her son has not tested positive.

One thing Lorenzo has clung to for support has been her commitment to putting faith ahead of fear.

"Faith has been central in my COVID journey," she said. "Having spent many days in isolation, you can imagine how alienated I felt from the world outside the four walls of the bedroom. But I knew that God was with me, and I trusted in him to help me not feel so alone in this battle. When I wanted just to stay in bed all day and cry and feel anxious and afraid, I would just pray."

Lorenzo started her days praying the Our Father and ended them reciting the rosary. She also began sharing her story on social media as a way to educate others and put a familiar local face on the global disease.

Her church community, St. Edward the Confessor, Richmond, has rallied around her, offering prayers, meals and care packages.

"I am beyond grateful to our community for their love and support," she said. "They have nourished our bodies and souls with their kindness. Even though the COVID virus is contagious, love is more contagious."

Ready to return

Lorenzo continues to test positive, despite being homebound since mid-May and being symptom-free since early June. She has to wait seven days between tests and needs two consecutive negative tests before she can return to work, something she is eager to do.

"I want to go back because it's what I do," she explained. "I want to care for patients. I want to help these patients and their families get through this difficult time. Having been through it, I empathize with what they're going through. Being isolated in that hospital room, a COVID room, not being able to have visitors, it can be very lonely. I want to go back and tell my patients, 'I know what you're going through, and I'm going to help you get through it.'"

Lorenzo said that the relationship between a provider and a COVID patient is unique. Since COVID patients are rarely allowed visitors, their only interaction is with nurses and doctors. They become a kind of makeshift family, a support system.

"Many are scared. Some are angry. Sometimes these patients just want us to be with them, to hold their hand," she said.

Police

Continued from Page 1

undertake reform. Ongoing examination of procedures, enhanced training in "de-escalation," more intense screening of admissions, bodycams and reviews, community outreach and a successful effort at diversity in recent decades (my friend Rabbi Joseph Potasnik likes to observe, "The majority is the minorities in the NYPD"): These reforms are all in effect in the NYPD.

The men and women of the department realize they are far from perfect. But we know that while bad apples there indeed may be, they are very rare.

As I mentioned to Police Commissioner Dermot Shea during a recent meeting, this point particularly resonates with me, as I have seen the overwhelming majority of good, faithful priests tarred by the heinous actions of a very few.

Not long after I arrived here, I was walking down the center aisle of the cathedral after Sunday Mass. From out of the congregation jumped a man holding an object in his hand. What he was clutching I did not know, but I have to admit, I feared it to be a pistol.

Apparently, the officer on duty that morning did, too. He lunged not at the man, but at me, shielding me from the rushing congregant. Then

we both saw the man was holding a cross, which he asked me to bless.

What moved me was the police officer's spontaneous instinct to protect me, literally "to take a bullet for me." The NYPD would do that for any of us, members of the community they swear to serve and protect.

A few years ago, I did the funeral of a police officer shot on duty. He had his gun pulled and aimed at the perpetrator who had already shot others and could easily have fired his weapon. But he didn't pull the trigger. Why? The culprit was holding a baby he had grabbed. The cop lost his life lest he endanger that of another.

As Rep. Peter King, (R-NY), eloquently remarked on the floor of the

House last week, our racial minorities in the tense and poor areas of the city especially

In a recent meeting with community activists, one black leader reminded us: "Don't give me this 'get-rid-of-the-cops' rant! You on Madison Avenue or Park Avenue might not need the police. We up in The Bronx sure do!"

One of the tumors on our beloved nation, past and present, is that we often target African Americans, profile them, caricature them, blame them and suspect them as the cause of all evil and woe in society. That is raw injustice. But for God's sake, let's not now, in a similar way, stereotype the NYPD.

'50 years a good, long run' for jubilarian

Father Maier has served in numerous parishes in diocese

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Having attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help School and St. Andrew Seminary in Rochester, New York, for elementary and high school, respectively, Father Paul Maier said he felt "gradually" called to the priesthood "early in grade school."

His family was also very religious. "My parents were pretty much daily Mass goers," said the priest.

That ongoing pull toward the priesthood resulted in a 50-year vocation that has taken Father Maier across the Diocese of Richmond.

He celebrated his golden jubilee on May 16.

After graduating from St. Andrew, Father Maier attended St. Bernard Seminary in Rochester and earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy.

"I had left the seminary in the middle of third theology, and I still had an interest in education, so I was working on a degree in religious education," he said.

He earned a Master of Religious Education from Catholic University of America in Washington in 1968.

Father Maier then returned to St. Bernard and earned a Master of Divinity in 1974.

He also holds a Doctor of Ministry from St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Maryland (1981); and a Master of Pastoral Stud-



Father Paul Maier

ies from Loyola University in New Orleans, Louisiana (1991).

According to Father Maier, his post-graduate education helped him in his ministry with "background and interaction and knowledge" as he connected with the faithful.

Father Maier said coming to serve in the Diocese of Richmond after growing up in New York was a "natural thing" after finishing his degree at Catholic University because at that time, the Diocese of

Richmond extended into northern Virginia. The Diocese of Arlington was established in 1974.

Father Maier was ordained by Bishop John J. Russell, whom he described as "a great Vatican II bishop."

Throughout his 50 years of priesthood, Father Maier has most enjoyed making the sacraments available to people, "especially the Eucharist and reconciliation."

Interacting with the many people he has encountered in his vocation and administering the sacraments have been key, he said, in being a happy priest.

Father Maier said his first assignment, first as deacon and then associate pastor at St. Jerome, Newport News, helped lay the foundation for the subsequent years of his vocation.

"A real key is my first assignment with Father Richard Dollard, who really helped set the tone

for my ministry. When I arrived at the door, he said, 'As far as I'm concerned, this is a team ministry.' And it was," said Father Maier. "We mentored each other. We had a good and close and fruitful relationship for those 25 months."

Father Maier served in a variety of roles during his active ministry. He was associate pastor at St. Jerome, Newport News (1970-1971); St. Mary, Richmond (1973-1975); and Holy Cross, Lynchburg (1975-1977); administrator at St. Mary, Coeburn; Good Shepherd, Lebanon; and St. Therese, St. Paul (2005-2006).

He was pastor of St. John, Highland Springs (1977-1982); St. Joseph, Martinsville (1982-1994); Good Shepherd, Lebanon, and St. Therese, St. Paul (1995-2003); and Christ the King, Abingdon, and St. John, Marion (2003-2012).

While serving at Christ the King, Father Maier also served as chaplain at the Jubilee House Retreat Center in Abingdon.

"I always had an interest in retreat work, so that just naturally felt like the place (I should be)," he said.

Father Maier retired from active ministry in 2012. In his free time, he enjoys reading, spectator sports and watching TV.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Father Maier said he will not have a celebration to mark his golden jubilee.

"Fifty years is a good run, a long run," he said.

Faith leaders urge president, AG to halt federal executions

IAN ALVANO
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Over 1,000 religious leaders have signed a joint statement urging President Donald Trump and Attorney General William Barr to stop the executions scheduled to take place in July and August at the Federal Correctional Complex in Terre Haute, Indiana.

"As faith leaders from a diverse range of traditions, we call on President Trump and Attorney General Barr to stop the scheduled federal executions," the group said in the statement released July 7. "As our country grapples with the COVID 19 pandemic, an economic crisis, and systemic racism in the criminal legal system, we should be focused on protecting and preserving life, not carrying out executions."

The four men scheduled to be executed are: Daniel Lee on July 13; Wesley Purkey on July 15; Dustin Honken on July 17; and Keith Nelson on Aug. 28. The men were convicted of killing children in separate crimes.

Among the Catholic leaders signing the statement were: Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky; Bishop William F. Medley of Owensboro, Kentucky; retired Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, who is apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois; Bishop Oscar A. Solis of Salt Lake City; and Bishop Thomas R. Zinkula of Davenport, Iowa.

Barr announced last year the federal

government was reinstating the federal death penalty. At the same time, he said the executions would use a single drug instead of a three-drug protocol carried out in most recent federal executions and by several states.

The planned use of the one-drug method led to a court challenge by some of the federal death-row inmates. The lawsuit made its way to the Supreme Court, but the high court said June 29 it would not hear an appeal by the inmates challenging the method to be used in their upcoming executions, paving the way for the executions to proceed. Barr had announced the execution dates June 15.

"I am moved by the witness of the U.S. Catholic bishops, clergy, men and women religious, and people in the pews who are speaking out against the grievous restart of federal executions," said Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, executive director of Catholic Mobilizing Network, which released the faith leaders' statement.

"Their faithful advocacy sets a powerful example of what it means to be uncompromising in the defense of human dignity and the sanctity of life," she said.

Added Bishop Pates: "The Church believes that just and necessary punishment must never exclude the dimension of hope and the goal of rehabilitation. Executions only perpetuate a deeply flawed and broken system that is counter to the Gospel call to honor the dignity of all human life."

"The Church believes that just and necessary punishment must never exclude the dimension of hope and the goal of rehabilitation. Executions only perpetuate a deeply flawed and broken system that is counter to the Gospel call to honor the dignity of all human life."

— BISHOP RICHARD E. PATES

Court backs Little Sisters, religious schools

Need not provide contraceptive coverage in health care plans

CAROL ZIMMERMANN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — In a 7-2 decision July 8, the Supreme Court upheld regulations by the Trump administration giving employers more ability to opt out of providing contraceptive coverage in their health plans.

The decision, written by Justice Clarence Thomas, said the administration had “the authority to provide exemptions from the regulatory contraceptive requirements for employers with religious and conscientious objections.”

Dissenting votes were by Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor.

“This is a saga that did not need to occur. Contraception is not health care, and the government should never have mandated that employers provide it in the first place,” the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said.

The bishops said they welcomed the decision and hoped it “brings a close to this episode of government discrimination against people of faith. Yet, considering the efforts we have seen to force compliance with this mandate, we must continue to be vigilant for religious freedom,” they said.

The statement was issued by Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee for Religious Liberty, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

The case examined if the expansion of the conscience exemption from the Affordable Care Act’s contraceptive mandate violated the health care law and laws governing federal administrative agencies.

It highlighted — as it has before when the Affordable Care Act’s contraceptive mandate has come before the high court — the Little Sisters of the Poor, the order of women religious who care for the elderly poor. The sisters were represented, as they have been previously, by Becket, a religious liberty law firm.

The oral arguments were the combined cases of Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania and Trump v. Pennsylvania.

According to government estimates, the Trump administration’s rule changes would prevent 70,000 to 126,000 women from having contraception coverage in their employee health insurance.

Ginsburg, who cited these numbers in her dissent, said the court had previously taken a balanced approach in accommodating claims of religious freedom “one that does not allow the religious beliefs of some to overwhelm the rights and interests

of others who do not share those beliefs.” She said that in this decision the court, for the first time, “casts totally aside countervailing rights and interests in its zeal to secure religious rights to the nth degree.”

The U.S. bishops said there had been “multiple opportunities for government officials to do the right thing and exempt conscientious objectors. Time after time, administrators and attorneys refused to respect the rights of the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the Catholic faith they exemplify, to operate in accordance with the truth about sex and the human person. Even after the federal government expanded religious exemptions to the HHS contraceptive mandate, Pennsylvania and other states chose to continue this attack on conscience.”

Thomas, describing the work of the Little Sisters of the Poor and their involvement in this case, wrote: “For over 150 years, the Little Sisters have engaged in faithful service and sacrifice, motivated by a religious calling to surrender all for the sake of their brother ... But for the past seven years, they — like many other religious objectors who have participated in the litigation and rulemakings leading up to today’s decision — have had to fight for the ability to continue in their noble work without violating their sincerely held religious beliefs.”

Mother Loraine Marie Maguire, the order’s U.S. provincial, said the Little Sisters of the Poor were “overjoyed that, once again, the Supreme Court has protected our right to serve the elderly without violating our faith. Our life’s work and great joy is serving the elderly poor and we are so grateful that the contraceptive mandate will no longer steal our attention from our calling.”

A recap of the sisters’ involvement in this case goes back to 2013 when religious groups and houses of worship were granted a religious exemption by the Supreme Court from the government’s mandate to include contraceptive coverage in their employee health plans.

Three years later, religious nonprofit groups challenged the requirement to comply with the mandate and the court sent the cases back to the lower courts with instructions for the federal government and the challengers to try to work out an agreeable solution.

Then in 2017, religious groups were given further protection from the contraceptive mandate through an executive order issued by President Donald Trump requiring the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to write a comprehensive exemption to benefit religious

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‘Ministerial exception’ protects institutions from being sued for job discrimination

CAROL ZIMMERMANN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — In a 7-2 ruling July 8, the Supreme Court said the California Catholic schools sued for job discrimination for firing teachers had acted within their rights in the recent firings.

The decision, written by Justice Samuel Alito, said: “What matters, at bottom, is what an employee does.”

He said that even though the elementary school teachers “were not given the title of ‘minister’ and have less religious training” that the teacher in the previous court case involving the ministerial exception, the court holds that the same rule applies.

“The religious education and formation of students is the very reason for the existence of most private religious schools, and therefore the selection and supervision of the teachers upon whom the schools rely to do this work lie at the core of their mission,” Alito wrote.

Dissenting votes were by Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor.

This case examined if courts can hear employment discrimination claims brought by teachers at Catholic elementary schools. It involved California Catholic school teachers who claimed they had been victims of job discrimination and the schools who fired them who said they were exempt from anti-discrimination laws due to ministerial exception spelled out in a previous Supreme Court case about a fired teacher at a Lutheran school.

The cases before the court were a combination of two cases, St. James School v. Biel and Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berrum, both schools in the Los Angeles Archdiocese.

At St. James School in Torrance, former fifth grade teacher, Kristen Biel, said she was fired after informing school administrators that she had breast cancer and would have to take time off for surgery and chemotherapy. She sued under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Biel died last summer, but her husband is seeking damages. Becket, the nonprofit religious liberty law firm representing the schools, said that in 2015, the school chose not to renew Biel’s one-year contract based on classroom performance.

Our Lady of Guadalupe School in Hermosa Beach did not renew the contract in 2013 for Agnes Morrissey-Berru, who had taught both fifth and sixth grades since 1999, saying she had a problem keeping order in her classroom and meeting expectations under a new reading program. Morrissey-Berru sued, alleging age bias under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967.

In both cases, federal district courts ruled in favor of the schools, citing ministerial exception. But two separate



The female figure called “Contemplation of Justice” is seen at the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington. In a 7-2 ruling July 8, the Court said the California Catholic schools sued for job discrimination for firing teachers had acted within their rights. (CNS photo/ Jonathan Ernst, Reuters)

panels of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit reversed these decisions, saying the limited extent of the employee’s religious duties were insufficient to qualify for a ministerial exception that was more often applied to those with roles of religious leadership.

The 2012 decision these schools were standing on is Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, where a teacher at a Lutheran school in Michigan said she was fired for pursuing an employment discrimination claim based on a disability.

In that ruling, the court said the ministerial exception to anti-discrimination laws meant that religious organizations couldn’t be sued for firing an employee classified as a minister.

Briefs filed by both schools point out that the “scope of the ministerial exception is a vital and recurring question of nationwide importance for thousands of religious organizations and individuals.”

The National Catholic Educational Association, in a friend-of-the-court brief in support of St. James School, stressed instead that Biel, as the school’s only fifth grade teacher, “bore particular responsibility for effectuating — and embodying — the integral formation that is distinct to Catholic schools.”

Richard Garnett, law professor at the University of Notre Dame Law School and director of the university’s Program on Church, State and Society, said at the time of the oral arguments that even though these teachers were not giving theology instruction and were not ordained clergy do “their role is, and is understood as, a ministerial one, and secular courts are not in a good position to second-guess or override religious institutions’ decisions about their ministerial employees’ role.”

He also said the cases were not, “as some have complained, about a supposed right of churches to ‘ignore’ civil-rights laws. Quite the contrary. These cases are about protecting the civil and constitutional rights of religious institutions to decide religious questions for themselves.”



The Good Shepherd, an original design by Ronald Neill Dixon for Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Richmond, was commissioned by the parish's then pastor, Msgr. Walter Barrett, in 2011. (Photo/ Dixon Studio)

Tearing down, lifting up

GUEST COMMENTARY

ANNIE DIXON

Recently a social activist received national attention for targeting images and “stained glass windows of white Jesus and his European mother and their white European friends” as a “gross form of white supremacy” and calling for them to be torn down. While this follows protests demanding the destruction of statuary on display in the public square, it is a separate issue.

Stained glass windows, statuary and other devotional imagery are not paid for with tax dollars nor installed where taxpayers must confront them. Rather, they are funded by voluntary donations of parishioners and are housed within or on the grounds of places of worship which welcome all but cannot force the attendance of any.

A healthy society should engage in civil debate concerning the meaning of imagery and names we must encounter when we must go to school or are summoned to court, or simply want to walk in a publicly funded park or drive down a municipal boulevard.

However, those wishing to avoid “white Jesus” need only sleep late on Sundays. This is not oppression. Neither is it a national or a political issue. This discussion belongs at the intersection of religion and art and is an issue for local parishes which have been addressing it with sincere concern for decades — long before it was “woke.”

Catholic churches in America are the repository of some fine artwork, much of it in the European tradition but also including some handsome portrayals of Jesus, his family, and followers as black, Hispanic, Asian and Jewish.

Most of these are recent works, commissioned by donors and committee members who made an effort to be inclusive; others are older legacies, most of

which offer only supporting roles to people of color, e.g., the Magi or specific saints.

In the Diocese of Richmond, stained glass windows have been commissioned that depict a black Good Shepherd, Our Lady of Lavang from Vietnam, Mexican martyr José Sánchez del Río and African saints Charles Lwanga, Monica and Augustine. However, more relevant to the current debate on removal have been decisions made regarding existing imagery.

A predominantly black parish had the traditional white corpus gilded and installed in the chapel, then commissioned a corpus carved in Africa for the new sanctuary. A black pastor persuaded his predominantly white congregation to order their new crucifix in bronze rather than painted.

Meanwhile, an urban parish with kente cloth altar linens opted to maintain the historic and artistic integrity of its German Gothic windows rather than switch out some apostles for darker versions. In the capital city that is in turmoil over Confederate statues, a parish had its Martin de Porres statue restored, along with updating the inscription from “Blessed” to “Saint” as it has been on display there since before his canonization in 1962.

Religious stained glass and statuary are works of art employed to spread the Gospel. While political activists demand immediate and destructive action on current causes, the faithful are called to carefully and prayerfully consider how best to visually manifest the eternal truths in the teachings of Jesus in order to uplift souls.

This is stewardship, and it is best done lovingly and locally — apart from angry national politics which cannot produce inspiring beauty because, as St. Maximilian Kolbe said, “Hate is not a creative force; love alone creates.”

Annie Dixon is the project manager for Dixon Studio, a national liturgical arts firm in Staunton, which has worked with hundreds of churches to create and restore stained glass windows and statues, including those projects referenced in the Richmond Diocese.

Understand what clericalism is and is not

GUEST COMMENTARY

FATHER PAT APUZZO

Should we confine considerations of clericalism only to the clergy? When we include the laity, do we dodge (disputed) claims that the clerical lifestyle is uniquely defective?

Those questions surfaced from comments and discussions about my commentary on clericalism that appeared in the April 6 Catholic Virginian. They prompted me to revisit clericalism with two aims.

First, I want to put tangents aside to face the injury that clericalism inflicts on good-willed people. Secondly, I want to reduce confusion over what clericalism is and is not.

Consider these two instances of clericalism:

Young parents seek baptism for their child. A parish staff person says, “Check back when you get back to coming to church” — as if even the couple’s stumbling step can’t lead to Jesus.

Then, there’s this:

Pastoral leaders, clergy or lay, avoid troublesome or skeptical youth. They have scruples about offering too much direction and support to adults who can’t find their place with God — not trusting Jesus that it’s righteous to leave the 99 for the one that’s lost.

Clericalism is corruption

Clericalism is not a “baked in” defect. Clericalism is corruption stemming from poorly made choices. It is a choice to wear an “Artisan Baker” nametag and then serve rocks instead of bread.

Clericalism describes a kind of behavior, not the people who fall into that behavior. Clericalism is words or actions, either committed or omitted, that damage our lives as Catholics.

Recently, I posted a brief statement on social media that concerned the crisis over individuals who do not live up to the authentic purposes of policing — to serve, defend and protect. The post said simply this: “Bad police are no police at all.”

There’s a difference between “bad apples” and impostors. That distinction came into play for me 20 years ago. While serving as Bishop Walter Sullivan’s spokesperson during the justified fury over sexually abusive priests, a reporter asked me about priests who were ashamed to wear a collar in public.

I said, “Remember, priests have not become abusers. Abusers have become priests.”

All Catholics — laity, religiously professed and ordained — share the same priestly duties established at baptism. When we stray from the cardinal choice to keep Jesus at the center of all our relating, we are “doing clericalism.”

What clericalism is not

Regarding what clericalism is not, I owe a good part of my convictions to two priests and two laywomen.

See *Clericalism*, Page 7

Mail: The Catholic Virginian Press, 7800 Carousel Ln., Richmond, VA 23294
Phone: (804) 359-5654 • www.catholicvirginian.org
Circulation changes to: acarneal@catholicvirginian.org

Publisher: Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout

Editor: Brian T. Olszewski (804) 622-5225 bolszewski@catholicvirginian.org

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Postmaster: Send address change to The Catholic Virginian, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, VA 23294. The Catholic Virginian ISSN 0008-8404 — Published every other week on Monday by The Catholic Virginian Press, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, VA. Periodical postage paid at Richmond, VA and at additional mailing office. Twenty-five cents per copy, \$12.50 per year

What the Church teaches about purgatory



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. I was raised to be a devout Catholic and have a great interest in works of theology, such as those by Thomas Aquinas. But my Catholic mother doesn't believe in purgatory. She thinks that God loves us so much that there wouldn't be a reason for purgatory. Is there any way I can try to prove it to her? (Charlotte, Michigan)

A. Many Protestants do not believe in purgatory, claiming that this teaching denies the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for our sins. Some point, too, to the fact that the word "purgatory" exists nowhere in the Bible, but that argument lacks force — the words "Trinity" and "Incarnation" do not appear either.

Actually, a belief in a postmortem purification predates Christianity. Shortly before the advent of Christ, in the Old Testament Book of Second Maccabees (12:39-46), Judas Maccabeus was collecting the bodies of fallen comrades when he noticed that some of them had been wearing pagan amulets; so he arranged for an expiatory sacrifice and "made atone-

ment for the dead that they might be absolved from their sin." The implication, of course, is that some sins can be forgiven in the world to come.

That implication is confirmed in the Gospel of Matthew (12:32) where Jesus says, "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."

The Fathers of the Church allude to the standard practice of praying for the dead. In the middle of the third century, St. Cyprian of Carthage told us that prayers for the departed had been said in all the Churches since the time of the apostles.

This belief is codified in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name 'Purgatory' to this final purification of the elect" (No. 1030-1031).

What we don't know, of course, is the exact nature of that purification, how many people undergo it, or whether it might even be instantaneous.

Q. In 1999, I traveled to the

Holy Land, and one of our stops was at the Basilica of the Dormition. We were told that this is the site where the Virgin Mary died. Some years later, I visited Ephesus in Turkey and took a cab out to a little home where, we were told, Mary had lived and died. In 1967, St. Paul VI visited there, and in 1979, St. John Paul II celebrated Mass there. My question is this: On a matter of such historical importance, why hasn't the Church made a decision on the correct place where Mary died? (Georgia)

A. First, I should answer a question you didn't even ask: Did Mary die, as we know death? That question has prompted theological speculation for centuries, and the Church has never answered it in a definitive way.

When, in 1950, Pope Pius XII solemnly defined the dogma of the Assumption, he said "the Immaculate mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory." That seems to leave open the question of whether Mary died first.

Some theologians feel that, since death is a consequence of sin, Mary would not have had to die. But others speculate that, since Jesus himself chose to die, wouldn't it be fitting for

his mother to have shared the same fate?

Moving on to the question you did ask — where Mary spent her final years on earth — there are two strong historical traditions. One is that, following the ascension of Jesus, Mary returned with the apostles to Jerusalem and lived there for the remainder of her earthly years.

But there is other evidence that seems to show that Mary, under the protection of the apostle John, went to a place near Ephesus (modern-day Turkey) and stayed there until she was assumed into heaven.

That second tradition — the Ephesus one — is linked to the 19th century visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich, a bedridden Augustinian nun in Germany. The Church has never pronounced formally on the authenticity of either of these sites.

Actually, there are two different Jerusalem sites: a Church near the Mount of Olives, venerated by the Orthodox Church, and the one you mentioned, the Church of the Dormition, maintained by Benedictine monks.

The final answer to your question is lost in history and unlikely ever to be settled. But this doesn't stop anyone from honoring the Virgin Mary, the mother of God and our mother.

(Questions may be sent to askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.)

Clericalism

Continued from Page 6

Father Kelly came from Ireland. In 1915, he became pastor of St. Francis Church in Fair Haven, Conn. He held a weekly Mass for Italian immigrants in the basement of St. Francis.

Father Kelly soon grew weary of St. Francis parishioners who would not welcome the Italians. He left there to get the Italians their own parish. By 1917, Father Kelly opened St. Donato Church in Fair Haven. My mother was among the first St. Donato parishioners.

Born in 1897 and ordained a priest in 1923, Bishop John Russell lived in a Church era that many romanticize as "conservative and uninvolved in worldly matters." As our bishop from 1958 to 1973, Bishop Russell initiated the Diocesan Commission on Ecumenical Affairs and the Priest and Pastoral Councils.

When desegregation came, he added a racism-flagging interview to our school enrollment process. As localities clung to segregation, he integrated our schools. Bishop Russell also joined in the petition from which the Supreme Court abolished laws against inter-racial marriage.

The two laywomen are my longtime friends. The first's entire career has been to teach, and now direct, programs that prepare people to transform conflicts nonviolently. Her work — to repair broken relationships

and mobilize to build justice-based societies — is rooted in the Church's social justice teachings.

I've collaborated with the second woman in her convictions about religious formation. The Vatican's recently released Directory on Catechesis confirms her belief that the starting point for catechists is trust.

With a confidence that the Holy Spirit is already at work in the men and women of the Church, catechists serve parishes and dioceses as communities of learners and teachers of the faith.

All four of these people demonstrate that there's no instant recipe to help people develop relationships with Jesus and each other. Instead, we must make repeated choices to stay engaged with patience and compassion.

Jesus guides us away from clericalism when he encourages us to keep on trying with those struggling to grow in faith. Even when many tries seem like too many, Jesus tells us to hang in — not just for seven tries — "but for seventy times seven" tries (Mt 18:22).

Father Pat has been a priest in our diocese for 44 years. Before retirement, he served as a pastor for 24 years and as "priest-for" at parishes without a local pastor. He served as priest secretary for the late Bishop Walter Sullivan and in several other positions on the diocesan staff.

Letters

Welcome everyone into Catholic faith

"In reference to "Too early to know impact of LGBT equality ruling on Church" (Catholic Virginian, June 29):

Quoting Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, president of U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: "Every human person is made in the image and likeness of God, without exception, and must be treated with dignity, compassion and respect."

Made in the image and likeness of God, we should warmly welcome all brothers and sisters and their families into our shared Catholic faith. Our faith would be stronger. Our community would be stronger. Our bonds would be stronger.

— **Kathleen M. Sullivan**
Mechanicsville

Where is our Catholic voice?

Where is the Catholic voice of support for the citizens who are marching and speaking out for equity in our country?

When I took up The Catholic Virginian of June 29 and read the

front page, I was deeply disappointed in us. Where is our Catholic support for those unfairly treated? Both accounts on that page were defensive and judgmental until their ends, which were posted on page 10. Motivating and challenging words were quietly sandwiched on page 7 in Barbara Hughes' column "Do serious soul searching this Fourth of July."

Credit goes to St. Therese for their prayer service witnessing outdoors and St. Gregory holding a Mass for Peace, all mentioned at the bottom of the inside cover.

Local Catholic Workers have rallied folks to hold signs on Hampton Blvd. voicing thought-provoking questions to the public who drive by.

I'm sure our diocese's parishioners care, but where is their collective voice? I call on our diocesan leaders to make a public stand. Catholic history in this country is stained with oppressive behaviors. The chance is now to say where we stand and support rectifying the past and present inequities.

— **Maureen Marroni**
Norfolk

Read more letters at www.catholicvirginian.org.

Brown scapular vivid sign of Carmelite spirituality



IN LIGHT OF FAITH

BARBARA HUGHES

The day after I made my first holy Communion, first communicants were all enrolled in the brown scapular. At the time I didn't understand its significance.

What I remember most is that after the ceremony, a group picture was taken followed by the pastor's declaration that there was no school for second-grade students that day. As you can imagine, the cheers that erupted overshadowed any catechesis we may have received, and so it's no surprise that eventually, I stopped wearing it.

As often happens in the absence of proper understanding of a devotion or appreciation for sacramentals, they tend to fall by the wayside or, worse yet, are reduced to superstitious practice. However, since the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is this Thursday, July 16, and many Catholics, including myself, wear the brown scapular, a brief catechesis on the topic seems timely.

As a Secular Carmelite for almost 40 years, the brown scapular is more than an object of devotion for me. It's a habit that defines my spirituality. The brown scapular, a powerful sign of Mary's quiet unfailing love and presence as Mother and intercessor has been an essential part of the Carmelite habit since its inception.

The order was founded in the 13th century by a group of men who decided to live in community on Mount Carmel and were first known as the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel. Dedicating themselves to prayer and service, they vowed to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ in the spirit of Elijah under the patronage of Mary.

However, as the crusades intensified, the brothers fled to Europe where they became known as Carmelites. In 1247, they were recognized by Pope Innocent IV as a religious congregation with a deeply Marian character which eventually included nuns and lay members.

During the 14th century, a time of turbulence within the Carmelite community, the Blessed Mother appeared to a Carmelite priest, St. Simon Stock. Holding the Child Jesus, she handed the priest a miniature version of the Carmelite scapular with the promise that all who remain faithful to the Carmelite vocation until death will be granted the grace of final perseverance. Wishing to extend this privilege beyond the friars, nuns and secular members, Carmelites received the Church's approval of its use as a sacramental for all Catholics.

However, the brown scapular is not a guarantee of heaven. It's a sign of allegiance to Carmelite spirituality which includes frequent participation in Mass and reception of the Eucharist, regular meditation on the Scriptures, praying the rosary or at least part of the Liturgy of the Hours every day, and the practice of Christian virtues in imitation of Mary.

Unfortunately, over the years, well-meaning people have spread the devotion with extravagant claims that have no historical background and are difficult to reconcile with sound Christian doctrine.

The "Sabbatine" privilege that Mary will lead her devotees and wearers of the scapular from purgatory to heaven on the First Saturday of the month following their death is one such legend. In 1613, the Holy See pronounced the alleged appearance of Mary to Pope John XXII regarding the Sabbatine privilege unfounded and admonished the order for preaching the doctrine.

In recent times, Carmelite orders, both the Discalced (OCD) and the Ancient Observance (OCarm) have taken up the mandate to correct misconception by publishing the full catechesis regarding the brown scapular in the booklet, "The Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: Catechesis and Ritual." The joint venture by five Carmelite provincials in the United States identifies principles concerning the Carmelite family, which include:

1. Members of public associations and confraternities of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, i.e., active communities of the Scapular Confraternity.

2. Those who have been invested in the scapular, practice the order's spirituality, and have been granted some association with the order.

3. Those who wear the scapular out of devotion, practice the order's spirituality, but have no formal association with the order.

4. Those who are committed to the Marian character of Carmelite spirituality but use outward forms other than the brown scapular to express this devotion.

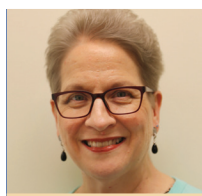
A booklet on the full catechesis is available from ICS Publications www.icspublications.org.

However, whether Catholics are enrolled in the brown scapular or not, all do well to keep in mind the words of the Carmelite doctor of the Church, St. John of the Cross: "Strive to preserve your heart in peace; let no event of this world disturb it; reflect that all must come to an end."

During these troubled times, his message is one we can all take to heart as we strive to follow Mary's example and hold all we may not understand in our heart.

Barbara Hughes is an author, retreat facilitator and spiritual guide. She lives in Virginia Beach and can be reached at brhughes16@gmail.com.

Living according to God, Spirit results in peace



BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY

MELANIE CODDINGTON

Following last week's more familiar parable of the sower, this Sunday's Gospel lands us back on the farm, as Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a field, sown with good seed but plagued with weeds.

His explanation to the disciples identifies the good seed as "children of the kingdom" and the weeds as "children of the evil one." The latter he describes more specifically as "all who cause others to sin and all evildoers."

The reading portrays the final judgment in terms of the harvest, when the weeds will be separated from the wheat, tied into bundles and thrown into the fire.

Here the Gospel evangelist slips in one of his stock images: "... where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth." Those of us who wear a mouth guard to prevent the effects of nighttime gnashing find this language particularly forbidding. Surely, this story conveys a clear warning but also a subtler message of mercy.

When the servants of this week's sower question him about the origin of the botanical invaders, he tells them clearly, "An enemy has done this."

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wis 12:13, 16-19
Ps 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16
Rom 8:26-27
Mt 13:24-43

Eager to address the problem and banish any ambiguity about which plants belong and which do not, the servants ask, "Do you want us to pull them up?"

The sower curbs their enthusiasm, saying, "Let them grow together until harvest."

Perhaps the weeds spring up in such proximity to the wheat plants that in pulling them the servants would risk yanking up the good with the bad. The sower's live-and-let-live approach prevents the tender wheat plants from being uprooted, allowing them to mature and bear fruit, but at the same time, it permits the weeds to complete their life cycle.

Maybe the weeds in this story look enough like wheat in the early stages that efforts to eliminate the invaders might pull up wheat plants by mistake. (The weeds in my garden try very hard to look like perennials, and I wait to pull them until I am sure that they are indeed weeds.)

In this case, allowing the plants to grow side by side would eventually distinguish the fruitful wheat from the unfruitful weeds, though the ongoing presence of the latter might also rob the wheat of nutrients and diminish the good harvest. The sower seems willing to take the risk.

This slant on the story fits the explanation provided by Jesus to the disciples and resonates with the first reading from the Book of Wisdom. Here we find the Lord God teaching the people by example. God demonstrates power most

clearly in his "care of all." Might manifests as justice and mastery as leniency.

The people are expected to emulate the deeds of the Lord, i.e., "those who are just must be kind." God's example gives them "good ground for hope" that this just one will forgive their failures.

This message of mercy gains momentum in the psalm as we hear, once again, language that recalls God's self-description from Exodus 34:6-7: "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity."

What if we apply this parable to our world, our country, our Church, our parish or even our own lives? In each case, we find weeds hidden among the wheat, pockets of unfruitful behavior, sapping resources and impeding the kingdom of God. Yet our merciful God gives us time, opportunity and the help of the Spirit to sort one from the other and find our way to fruitfulness.

Even our prayer can be weedy, reflecting our own agendas rather than God's will for our lives and God's dream for our world. Thankfully, as St. Paul attests, "The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness" and intercedes for us with "inexpressible groanings."

Of course, we need to stop our own stream of words to hear the voice of the Spirit. In prayerful listening, we can find healing and realignment with God's purpose.

Melanie holds a master's in pastoral studies from Loyola University, New Orleans.

Discoveries

Continued from Page 1

site, African American Catholics began attending St. Mary's in 1886 where a portion of the choir loft was reserved for them. Most left when St. Joseph Parish was established in Norfolk in 1889 for black Catholics. St. Joseph Parish merged with the predominantly white St. Mary's in 1961. The parish's congregation is now largely African American.

The parish decided to sponsor an archaeological study on the burials.

"It's important to us to stay connected with our past and honor and respect all of it," Father Curran said. "This is part of our history, and we want to know about it."

Among other events, the early to mid-1800s in the nation saw the Gold Rush, (wagon) travel on the Oregon and California trails, and the beginning of rail travel. CPG reported one-third of St. Patrick's congregation died of yellow fever between 1853 and 1855.

What they found

Marc Wagner, VDHR senior architectural historian, said that studies like this one can give history "a rich texture" because "archaeology has the potential of conveying a story you can't get other ways."

Five burials have been excavated, all of which contained human remains. The other burials will be left undisturbed. Brown speculates that the burials were circa 1800 to 1856.

Three of the five burials were in crypts, meaning the coffin was encased in a brick structure underground rather than buried directly in the ground. An intact adult skeleton in a crypt and another in a grave shared with a child were "remarkable," Brown said.

The archaeology team discovered some of the child's bones, a rare find in that children's bones are not as well formed and are smaller and more fragile than adult bones, Brown said. A family crypt, designed to stack coffins upon each other, had a jumble of bones, possibly

from the same person. A grave through which a tunnel crosses had "dozens" of bones, some from animals which might have used it for a den. The bones of another crypt were too fragile to be exhumed.

Excavation of the burials took longer than expected, three weeks instead of the anticipated five days, partially due to COVID-19 restrictions on social distancing and the limitation of no more than 10 people convened in one place.

The excavation itself had some setbacks. For example, clay was packed harder than expected in some places, and although most of the bodies were buried two to three feet below the ground, one was six feet down.

Determining the exact identity of the people exhumed is "highly improbable," Brown said.

Michael Clem, VDHR eastern regional archaeologist, explained there are no known cemetery maps identifying people in the burials. Ground structures such as tombstones and monuments were moved or destroyed before church construction began.

Individuals might have been given the opportunity to exhume their loved ones and bury them elsewhere at their own expense before church construction. That may have been the case with the excavated family crypt.

A story to tell

Yet much can be learned from the burials and bones.

The study is expected to employ historical research, archaeological analysis, forensic evaluation and, pending public engagement, DNA testing and stable isotope analysis. The combined methods may identify gender, race, ethnicity, lifestyle and family relationships of the people in the burials, experts working on the archaeological project collectively say. It may take as long as two years to complete the study, after which the remains will be reburied at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery on Granby St. in Norfolk.

At press time, archaeologists were reviewing and summarizing field notes in preparation for analyses. The public engagement period for DNA and stable isotope analyses had not yet started.

The brick vaulted tunnels were likely used for water drainage as similar structures in Hampton, Colonial Williamsburg, Robert "King" Carter plantation in Lancaster County and Rosewell Plantation in Gloucester County were used for that purpose in the 18th and 19th centuries, Brown said. The basilica tunnels are about 3 feet wide and 4 feet tall. One measures 40 feet long, and the other is at least 20.

It is unknown whether the tunnels doubled for other purposes like the Underground Railroad, a network of people from the late 18th century to the Civil War who offered shelter and aid to tens of thousands of escaped slaves on the run to non-slave states and Canada. The Underground Railroad was not an actual railroad and for the most part not underground but was so named because its activities were secret. The tunnels under the basilica won't be part of the archaeological study but can be accessed from the outside of the church should a study be undertaken at a later date.

Regardless, the current archaeological investigation has a story to tell.

"Documents don't give you the whole picture. Once you open the ground, the story changes. You can have a lot more answers, but you also wind up with new questions," Clem said. "Studying these remains will help us understand the early stages of the church and the evolution of the congregation over time and the social development in the Norfolk area."

Jeryl Rose Phillips, CPG planning associate, said the investigation may "add another page to the collective history" of the parish and diocese.

"We have an opportunity to understand where we are today, why we are here, how we got here and what was going on at the time," she said.



that danger can best be met. There is no doubt that preparations should be promptly made to meet it. ...

Today, we Americans might well remind ourselves that the only enemies that can destroy the Republic dwell among us, or rather in us—for they are the bad passions of our own hearts. Selfishness, greed, pride, sensuality, cowardice, ingratitude, and ungodliness in general—these are the foes that can ruin our country, if we give them dominion over our thoughts and acts.

Democracy in these days needs mechanized armies to defend it, but all the mechanized armies in the world cannot guarantee democracy. That must live either in the hearts of the people, or not at all. Because democracy is not only an outward form but an inward spirit: the spirit of orderly freedom under just law, of constant respect

for the rights of others, of personal self-sacrifice for the common good. ...

So in this month which marks the one hundred and sixty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, no American could indulge in a better or more needed patriotic exercise than that of examining the genuineness and value of his own Americanism. For if this country be in peril... it will be saved by common sense and common honesty, allied with the readiness of its citizens to put service above self-seeking and patriotism ahead of profiteering.

Most of us are at heart good Americans. If enough of us start acting as such we may be sure that, in Lincoln's words, "this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."



St. Thomas à Becket CATHOLIC CHURCH

St. Thomas à Becket Church, Reston, Va.

Coordinator of Religious Education

Full time position (salaried), some nights and weekends

Undergraduate degree in Religious Education or Education with coursework in Religious Studies

Position Objective:

The Coordinator of Religious Education assists the Director in administering a parish catechetical program for the parish community.

He/she also provides leadership to assist the parish community in building a foundation of catechetical ministry in accordance with the objectives detailed in the 2020 Directory of Catechesis.

Please send applications or inquiries to: b.coffey@stbchurch.com.

For additional information, see catholicjobs.com

Walter Gannon Scholarship recipients named

The following members of the Class of 2020, as determined by the principals of their respective high schools, have each received a \$1,500 Walter Gannon Diocesan Scholarship. The criteria are that students must be deserving of the award because of their high level of scholarship, concern for others and economic need. The scholarships are made possible due to a gift to the diocese from Walter Gannon.

Benedictine College Preparatory

Tony Ibanez. Tony Ibanez is a graduating senior at Benedictine College Preparatory with a cumulative GPA of 4.03. Tony holds the rank of Captain and Sponsoring Officer in the Benedictine Corps of Cadets as Headquarters Company Commander. He was inducted into the National Honor Society this year and participated in the soccer, rugby and tennis athletic programs. Tony was a member of Key Club and Emmaus Club. He will be attending Christopher Newport University and anticipates serving the community as a Bonner Scholar and a member of the President's Leadership Program.



Blessed Sacrament-Huguenot

Haley McCuiston. Haley McCuiston took full advantage of her experience at BSH by being active in numerous activities including cheerleading, student ambassadors, Spanish Club, Art Club, and being stage director and head of hair and make-up for drama. Her understanding nature has allowed Haley to be a confidant for any of her peers who were going through a tough time. It is this type of kindness and never-ending support that caused her peers to award her the "Friendliest" superlative. Additionally, as a scholar, Haley took her understanding of the world and her artistic nature to develop uniquely vivid writing pieces. When Haley writes, she paints a picture for her audience that only someone with her creative mind could. Haley will attend VCU to study in the Arts Foundation Program.



Catholic High School

Sophia Janeiro Martinez. For Sophia Janeiro Martinez, service to others was the hallmark of her time at Catholic High School. A member of four honor societies, Sophia maintained a 3.91 GPA while completing eight Advanced Placement courses over the last three years. Because of her experience tutoring and working with bilingual students, Sophia plans to study speech pathology at Old Dominion University.



Holy Cross Regional Catholic School

Anna Grace Mooney. Anna Grace Mooney came to Holy Cross as a Pre-Kinderergarten student. She represented the best of HC with her scholarship, respectful demeanor and loyalty. Anna played basketball and volleyball in middle school and focused on volleyball her junior and senior year, serving as captain. Anna has been entrusted by parents at HC as a sitter for many years. She will attend Randolph College and will pursue a degree in psychology with the goal of having her own practice.



Peninsula Catholic High School

Isabella Pinedo. Isabella Pinedo was an active PC Knight. She was inducted into the National Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society. As a faith-filled woman of God, she was a committed member of the senior retreat and liturgical teams. She was also involved in the green club, drama club and softball. Leaving Peninsula Catholic with a 3.67 GPA, this first-generation college student hopes to study criminology at VCU.



Roanoke Catholic School

Kristen Russell. Kristen Russell was one of the most well-respected students at Roanoke Catholic. Her service to the school community and her fellow students as secretary for the Junior Class, a cherished member of the student ambassador program, an active member of the Key Club and treasurer of the newly-established RCS Squad Club are some of the ways she dedicated her on-campus volunteer efforts. She was also a fan favorite and talented on the court at volleyball games. She will be pursuing a degree in speech language pathology at James Madison University.



Saint Gertrude High School

Sarah Hess. Sarah Hess was the consummate scholar; she was focused, organized, diligent and dedicated to her academic studies. She took the most rigorous program possible at Saint Gertrude. Sarah's focused, diligent character also served her well in her leadership roles. She was a member of our Honor Council, a student ambassador and a math peer tutor. She also represented our school in the HOBY youth leadership conference as a sophomore. Sarah balanced her rigorous academics with her participation in music programs and soccer and swimming. Sarah will continue her education at The College of William & Mary.



Walsingham Academy School

Martha Page Norsworthy. Martha Page Norsworthy is a "lifer," having been at Walsingham for her entire K-12 education. She achieved a high level of academic success and will continue her education at Virginia Tech. Martha Page demonstrated strong leadership within our student body and acted selflessly on many occasions out of her concern for others. She earned the respect of the faculty and her peers at Walsingham because she was respectful, gracious and kind.



OPPORTUNITIES

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, is recruiting a Bookkeeper II to join its vibrant parish staff. The position will report to the pastor. The position is responsible for maintaining the parish financial records per diocesan standards. Duties include processing and recording income, expenses, payments and payroll. The bookkeeper assists in preparing the annual budget and prepares and clarifies reports for the Parish Finance Council and, as needed, the diocese. Other tasks may be assigned by the pastor. The position requires 25-30 hours per week with the potential for expanded hours. Salary and benefits are competitive. Applicants should have an associate's degree in accounting and three years' experience or the equivalent. Interested parties are asked to send a cover letter and résumé to Father Silvio Kaberia or pastor@bsc-cva.com, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 154 N. Main St., Harrisonburg, VA, 22801.

Benedictine College Preparatory has an opening for a full-time Math Teacher for the 2020-2021 school year. Applications and résumés are being accepted immediately and interviews will be scheduled for competitive candidates on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Essential responsibilities include:

- Enthusiastic support of our school mission: "We will form Cadets as Christian men of conscience, discipline, and achievement."
- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in mathematics and the capability to teach college preparatory math at a high level; this position will likely teach Statistics and Algebra II.

To apply please submit a résumé, a completed application, and an essay titled "My View of America" to the Associate Headmaster, Michael Bussman at mbussman@benedictinecollegeprep.org. A cover letter is optional. The application can be found on our website at: <http://www.benedictinecollegeprep.org/about-bcp/employment>.

Part-Time Music Coordinator: St. Gabriel Catholic Church, a vibrant parish of more than 1,100 families in Chesterfield, seeks to hire a part-time Music Coordinator (20 hours/week) to help create a dynamic and inspiring liturgical experience. Their primary responsibilities include planning the music for all liturgies in coordination with the pastor and liturgical council, inspiring the community to participate musically in the liturgy and empowering the musicians and vocalists to share their musical gifts at the parish. The ideal candidate must be a Catholic in good standing, possess a solid understanding of Catholic liturgy, including holy days, weddings and funerals, know a variety of styles of liturgical music, lead and train cantors, musicians and choir, and work in cooperation with and under the direction of the pastor. The ability to play both keyboard and piano is a plus. A music degree is preferred but not required. Excellent computer skills a must. Salary is in accordance with diocesan scale.

Education and/or Certification: Degree in music performances and composition or equivalent education and experience preferred.

Experience: Two or more years' liturgical music experience. Strong knowledge and appreciation of Catholic liturgy.

To apply: Please send a resume and diocesan application to: Therese Venti, 8901 Winterpock Road, Chesterfield, VA 23832; fax 804-639-6591 or therese.venti@saintgabriel.org.



iStock

One Body

My focus for the Office for Black Catholics changed on May 25, 2020. That day, two incidents exploded across the headlines and once again propelled Americans into a state of racial unrest.

Christian Cooper, a young black man — a birdwatcher — was reported to the police May 25 by Amy Cooper (no relation), a young white woman, who called 911 to say that “an African American man’ was threatening her” in New York’s Central Park, merely because he had the nerve to **ask** her to comply with the park’s posted regulations to leash her dog.

George Floyd, an unarmed 46-year-old African American man, was brutally killed, also on May 25, in Minneapolis by a white police officer who held his knee on Mr. Floyd’s neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, despite restraints, despite the urgent requests of onlookers, despite his repeated desperate pleas: “I can’t breathe.”

Seventeen days later the Office for Black Catholics, along with Bishop Knestout, was holding a service at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart praying for racial healing in this country.

Since that time, I have had Zoom conversations with numerous groups throughout the diocese — youth ministers, campus ministers, social ministers and a parish youth group. I was also asked to preach twice on racial unrest.

The common thread through those conversations has been the question: “What can we do?” My answer is that the fight against pervasive systemic racism is still being waged and there are ways to get involved. However, the much tougher job in regard to race relations in this country is *to change the hearts and minds of individuals*.

As Christians we know that only God can change us. As disciples of Jesus Christ, our job is to help God make a change.

Inwardly, we can do that by first dealing with our own implicit biases. We all have them. We can become aware and resist temptation to passively give in to our own biases.

Another personal step to take would be to spend some time learning about and understanding the history of racism in our country.

Outwardly, we can have the courage to call out the evil when we encounter it. When we hear the racist joke or the derogatory comment about a group of people, say something. Let people know it’s wrong!

With the headlines incessantly blaring at us, pay attention to the message behind the rhetoric and exercise your right to vote accordingly.

We are at a pivotal moment in our culture. I know it may be daunting and intimidating. If persons or groups need help to understand, to enter into the conversation, to persevere in the struggle, please, reach out to the Office for Black Catholics. We have resources to advise, support and teach.

St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17: “Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.”

Sisters and brothers, behaviors injurious to one part of the body destroy the health of the entire body. **We are one body.**

Deacon Charles Williams, Director,
Catholic Diocese of Richmond
Office for Black Catholics

Respuesta Pastoral para la Comunidad Latina

Durante este tiempo de la pandemia, la comunidad latina desde sus hogares ha estado cultivando y alimentando su espíritu a través del programa ofrecido por la diócesis “Unidos en la Fe” y la certificación en “Pastoral del Discípulo Misionero”, facilitada por la universidad de Dayton. Estos dos programas han sido los pilares para promover la formación continua y motivar el sentido de la pastoral familiar doméstica.

Vamos a seguir promoviendo los cursos en línea para la comunidad latina en español ya que los líderes han respondido muy bien y nos motivan a continuar usando este medio con el fin de facilitar una formación más sistemática que responda a los signos de los tiempos. Por tanto, para el próximo curso, proveeremos la capacitación de catequistas y facilitadores de grupos para adultos en línea con el propósito de acompañar y formar a nuevos líderes parroquiales dándoles un tiempo más largo para iniciar y profundizar su camino de discipulado. Para aquellos líderes que desean continuar su formación les estaremos ofreciendo a parte de la certificación actual, una nueva en Pastoral Misionera en conjunto con las demás diócesis de la región episcopal IV para seguir cultivando una cultura de encuentro y misión fomentando así nuestro ser Iglesia en Salida. Junto a esto hay otros programas que seguimos ofreciendo y les invitamos a que visiten nuestra pagina web www.richmond-diocesis.org para seguir los nuevos programas que esta oficina ofrece y bajar programas formativos gratis desde nuestro sitio web para continuar el trabajo apostólico en sus parroquias.

Vatican seeks end to arms production

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Human health, peace, security and progress would be better served with a complete end to the production of weapons worldwide, said members of a Vatican task force.

"Now, more than ever, is the time for nations of the world to shift from national security by military means to human security as the primary concern of policy and international relations," Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, said at a Vatican news conference July 7.

Cardinal Turkson also heads a COVID-19 response commission Pope Francis created in April to analyze the many challenges the world is facing as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and to come up with proposed guidelines and strategies for addressing the many crises.

The commission has five task forces focused on different issues, and the cardinal was one of three speakers at the news conference giving an update on what the working group dedicated to "security" has proposed for building a more peaceful, healthy and secure world.

The pandemic and the many emergency measures in place have sparked a number of problems in some parts of the world, the cardinal said; for example, there is an upsurge in domestic violence, police or military brutality in enforcing lockdowns, "adventurists" taking advantage of social or global disruptions to embark on a new war or seize territories; and the disruption of elections, which could worsen tensions.

"Now is the time for the international community and the church to develop bold and imaginative plans for collective action commensurate with the magnitude of this crisis" caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

"Now is the time to build a world that better reflects a truly integral approach to peace, hu-

man development and ecology," he said.

One concrete proposal endorsed by Pope Francis is the United Nations' call for a global cease-fire, Cardinal Turkson said.

"Now, more than ever, is the time for nations of the world to shift from national security by military means to human security as the primary concern of policy and international relations."

— CARDINAL PETER TURKSON

A complete cessation of hostilities would be necessary for achieving the peace, solidarity and global unity needed for successfully dealing with the pandemic and its effects, he said.

"But one thing is to call or endorse a cease-fire statement, another thing is to implement it" and get it to hold, he said, which means "we need to freeze weapons production and dealing" and end investments in armaments.

Salesian Sister Alessandra Smerilli, a member of the COVID-19 commission and an economic expert, said "we are at a stage in which we must understand where to direct financial resources."

Safety and security are supposed to be about guaranteeing human health and well-being, she said. But arsenals full of weapons do nothing to help stop the spread of the pandemic, she added.

What if instead of engaging in an arms race, she asked, "we 'race' toward food, health and work security? What are citizens asking for right now? Do they need a strong military state or a state that

invests in common goods?"

Nations should ask how their citizens want their money to be spent and if it makes any sense to continue with "massive investments in weapons if human lives cannot be saved because there is no adequate health care system," added Sister Smerilli, who teaches political economy at the Salesians' Pontifical Faculty of Educational Sciences "Auxilium."

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the world's military spending keeps rising, and last year it was estimated to be \$1.9 trillion or about \$250 per person.

Sister Smerilli said this ongoing push for more arms and greater military power is "a vicious circle that never ends, pushing in turn toward a constant increase in military spending, a positional competition that causes irrational expenses."

"We need courageous leaders who can demonstrate that they believe in the common good, who are committed to guaranteeing what is most needed today. We need a collective pact to direct resources for health security and well-being," she said.

Alessio Pecorario, who heads the commission's task force on security, said "choices have to be made. Medical supplies, food security and economic revival focused on social justice and green economy all require resources that can be diverted from the military sector in the context of renewed arms control."

Given the urgency, complexity and intertwined nature of today's challenges, the task force has concluded that "human and financial resources and technology should be used to create and stimulate strategies, alliances and systems to protect lives and the planet and not to kill people and ecosystems," he said.

The Vatican COVID-19 commission publishes weekly newsletters of its work at www.humandevelopment.va/en/vatican-covid-19/newsletter.html.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Gift of a grotto: St. Mary Star of the Sea School has a grotto, thanks to Matthew Van Horn. With help from fellow Scouts and Scout leaders, Matthew, son of Tricia Van Horn, a Pre-K teacher at the school, built the grotto as his Eagle Scout Project. Construction took place on June 20 — the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



Matthew Van Horn

A boost for Petersburg students: A generous benefactor is helping five students return to St. Joseph School, Petersburg, this fall. According to the school, the St. John Paul II Scholarship is a merit award that recognizes and celebrates "Catholic students who have demonstrated a commitment to academic achievement, service to the school, church or community, and Christ-centered values." The scholarship also supports families who don't qualify for tuition assistance, but who may still need help in making Catholic education more accessible.

The recipients and the grades they will be entering are: Michelle Alphonsus, seventh; Anna Martinez, sixth; Sophie Dyke, fourth; Raquel Reisweber, second; and Isabella Campisi, first.

What have you heard? The CV would like to know what you've heard — or read — regarding Catholics in your community receiving honors and awards, as well as achievements, accomplishments and other good stuff. We'll try to publish a selection of submissions in each issue of the CV. Put "What we've heard" in the subject line and email your item to akrebs@catholicvirginian.org. Include your name and phone number in case we need to follow up. Information cannot be taken over the phone.

Correction

The photo of the St. Therese, Chesapeake, prayer vigil in the June 29 Catholic Virginian, was taken by Michael Santomauro.

Contraception

Continued from Page 5

ministries, including the Little Sisters of the Poor, from the contraceptive mandate.

HHS provided this exemption in 2018, but several states challenged it, including California, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, saying HHS didn't have the power to give this exemption.

Pennsylvania and New Jersey obtained a nationwide injunction against the rules protecting religious objectors from the contraceptive mandate; that injunction was then upheld by the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Philadelphia.

This is where the Little Sisters come back because they appealed the circuit court's ruling and asked the Supreme Court to step in.

In one of the two consolidated cases, *Trump v. Pennsylvania*, the administration argued that the exceptions to the contraceptive mandate for religious groups were authorized by the health care law and required by the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act, known as RFRA.

Lawyers for Pennsylvania and New Jersey said the administration lacked statutory authority to issue such regulations and said the government did not follow proper administrative procedures.

The second case examines whether the Little Sisters of the Poor had the standing to appeal the 3rd Circuit ruling since a separate court order had already allowed them to refuse to provide contraceptive coverage in their employee health plans.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops filed a friend-of-the-court brief siding with the Little

Sisters of the Poor, which stressed that the court needs to set the record straight, particularly with its interpretation of RFRA, which says "governments should not substantially burden religious exercise without compelling justification."

The brief said there was a compelling need to review this case not only because the 3rd Circuit Court decision conflicts with other Supreme Court rulings on this topic in *Hobby Lobby* and *Zubik* decisions, but because its ruling "threatens to reduce one of America's leading civil rights laws to virtual impotence," referring to RFRA.

It emphasized that RFRA essentially hangs in the balance because the appeals court "adopted a grudging interpretation of the statute that will, unless reversed, too often deny protection for religious people and institutions."