



The Catholic Virginian



Serving the People of the Diocese of Richmond for 90 years

Vol. 95, No. 23

www.catholicvirginian.org

September 7, 2020

First day of school



Saverio Perrotta walks his daughters, Francesca, a student in the Early Learners program, and Lucia, a junior kindergartener, to their classrooms on the first day of school, Monday, Aug. 24, at St. Matthew Catholic School, Virginia Beach. More photos from the first week of school on Page 5. (Photo/Elizabeth Allen)

Overcoming impact of COVID, annual appeal nearing goal

Support needed for diocesan ministries

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

When the impact of COVID-19 collided with the early weeks of the Annual Diocesan Appeal, including the critical in-pew weekends of solicitation, the latter suffered.

“The pew phase is the core of the appeal,” according to Alex Previterra, director of development and operations for the Catholic Community Foundation, who noted that COVID was on the minds of donors before those weekends — Feb. 29-March 1 and March 7-8.

Once the celebration of public Masses in the diocese was suspended on March 16, and with it the lack of offertory collections, CCF focused its attention and resources on helping parishes maintain support.

“We suspended the April and May appeal mailings in favor of helping parishes get online in order to receive donations from parishioners,” Previterra said. “We devoted all of our team to a parish-centered approach for getting offertory. That’s where we needed to be.”

To assist people in supporting their parishes, the CCF established offertory.richmonddiocese.org. At the time of its launch, fewer than half of the diocese’s 145 parishes offered an online giving option. Now, 98 parishes provide it.

With the help of Prenger Solutions Group, a consultant the diocese enlisted to help with development last November, CCF continues to work toward reaching the annual appeal’s \$3.7 million goal. As The Catholic Virginian went to press, the appeal has raised \$3,553,970.16 — 95.27% of the goal. That amount has come from 12,706 donors with an average gift of \$279.71. Seventy parishes have met or surpassed their goals.

Previterra said CCF will do another annual appeal mailing in October, and he is confident that the response to it will get them to their goal.

“People of our diocese are very generous. The mailing by itself will help us,” he said. “We’re emphasizing that the need for their support is still there.”

Ashley Winans, a vice president at Prenger, concurred.

“We’re doing really well in light of the circumstances,” she said. “There’s still a need, and people understand that.”

If the goal is not met, less money would be returned to the parishes, and various diocesan ministries supported by the appeal would receive less funding, according to Previterra.

“This would also affect the 2021
See Appeal, Page 12

‘Octave of Service’ reflects commitment to the poor

Diocesan-wide bicentennial outreach, Sept. 27-Oct. 4

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

“How pleased Our Lord is with your concern for the relief of his suffering members.”

St. Vincent de Paul
Patron of the Diocese of Richmond

One of the threads that runs throughout the Diocese of Richmond’s 200-year history is care for those in need. In decade

after decade, there are examples of the Catholic community addressing needs of the poor, the uneducated, the hungry, the sick and the imprisoned.

As part of its bicentennial observance, the diocese has designated Sept. 27-Oct. 4 as an Octave of Service.

“Many of our parishes have reached out already and continue to reach out,” said Michael

School, Bicentennial Task Force project manager. “This octave is set aside as a recognition of that foundation of who we have been from the very beginning.”

He said the Octave of Service provides focus on another aspect of Catholic life in the diocese.

“We’ve had a chance to do that during our
See Service, Page 12

Inside This Edition

Danville Mass of Atonement for racist actions
Page 3

Pope: ‘Creation is groaning!’
Page 7

Seminarians’ pastoral year is parish life experience
Pages 8-9

The Catholic Virginian
7800 Carousell Lane
Richmond, VA 23294

In time of uncertainty, look for blessings we receive



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

The uncertainties we have been experiencing since the onset of COVID-19 and its effects did not take a vacation this summer. Instead of a free and easy summer, many of us experienced a strong desire for and recognized a need to get away, to decompress somewhere. Unfortunately, that didn't always happen as vacations were canceled, limited or altered. Mine was the latter.

Every summer, between mid-July and mid-August, I like to take a few weeks off and spend time with family members and get to the beach. While technically not a staycation, this year I stayed in my brother's apartment in the Washington area. I did get to visit Mom at the nursing home where she resides, but, as for so many families with relatives in nursing facilities, those visits were by phone, with us separated by glass.

As I reflected upon this summer, I acknowledge that things didn't go as in the past, while noting the positives that came from them, like spending time with my brother and getting to visit Mom, even with COVID-19 restrictions.

As you know, we had to postpone ordinations scheduled for May and June, and we couldn't have a full cathedral for our 200th anniversary Mass, but consider what we did have: a "mini-Triduum," if you will, that included our Christ Mass, the ordinations and the observance of our diocese's founding all within

less than 24 hours. We celebrated our Church — its past, present and future — and that's what mattered.

Most people who were able to take a vacation similar to their practice in previous years had their time away overshadowed by caution and concern about the pandemic. This time for rest and relaxation was not as complete or as substantial as we would have liked. We can bemoan what happened or we can change our perspective and look at it with gratitude.

We might not think of this as an opportunity for expressing our thanks to God, but it is necessary to give thanks to God even — or we should say especially — in the midst of challenges. Even when things don't go as planned, be they diocesan celebrations or family vacations, we can always see the blessings, the grace of our faith and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are needed more than ever during this time.

What were you able to do as a result of not doing what you had planned?

I have heard from some people that it meant more family time. For others, it meant intentionally connecting via Zoom and Facetime with family and friends who do not live close by. Some used it for physical and spiritual exercise — the latter in the form of prayer and reading.

One man told me, "I got a chance to get to know my neighbors because we were all home."

An often-heard word since March has been "adapt." Individuals, families, workplaces, parishes and schools have adapted to the circumstances with which we live.

Our weekend worship does not exactly sound like or look like it did pre-COVID, but the

fact that we are able to come together and celebrate Mass is what is more important because we are nourished by the Eucharist.

Our Catholic schools have resumed in-person instruction. This took a concerted effort by administrators, teachers, staff and families to create safe environments for our children. At the same time, a back-up plan is in place in case we need to adapt to that method of education again.

While we continue to live in a time of uncertainty, we must continue to look for the blessings we are receiving, like the work done by our parishes and schools, and to offer God thanksgiving for them.

As we are concerned about the duration of the pandemic and its effects, like the loss of employment and the impact that has on our families, we are reminded to pray as the psalmist did: "Cast your care upon the Lord, who will give you support. He will never allow the righteous to stumble" (Ps 55:23).

CLERGY APPOINTMENT

The Most Rev. Barry C. Knestout, bishop of the Diocese of Richmond, has announced the following appointment, effective Friday, Aug. 21, 2020:

OFFICIAL

Father Kesner Joseph, a priest of the Diocese of Hinche in Haiti, has been assigned as a parochial vicar to St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen. The Diocese of Hinche is the sister diocese of the Richmond Diocese.

FIRST MISSIONARIES

1820  2020

THE CATHOLIC FAITH REACHES VIRGINIA—IN BLOOD

Throughout the 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 Diocese of Richmond's Bicentennial Task Force.

It may come as a surprise that the origins of Christianity in Virginia are Catholic and Spanish-speaking, not Protestant and English-speaking. The first permanent English settlement in North America was founded at Jamestown in 1607. However, 37 years earlier, Spanish Jesuits had already come to the same land (1570). Their missionary expedition, launched 450 years ago this month, brought the Catholic faith to the territory that became Virginia.

At the time of the Jesuits' arrival, the European colonization of what became the continental United States was up for grabs. Spain, France and England vied to establish profitable colonies in North America and to spread their religion (Catholic or Protestant). Spain arrived first, calling that territory *la Florida* because it was discovered during the "flowering" of Easter (1513).

Spanish colonists established various settlements along the east coast of North America, including the first permanent European one at St. Augustine, Florida (1565). Around this time, the Huguenots (French Protestants) sought, unsuccessfully, to plant colonies for themselves in the same territory, and occasionally clashed with the Spanish there (1562–1565).

After the Huguenot colonists abandoned their settlement at Charlesfort (1562–1563), located on present-day Parris Island, South Carolina, the Spanish founded Santa Elena (St. Helena) on the same site (1566).

Spain became interested in settling the land north of Santa Elena, which the indigenous inhabitants called "Ajacán" (as it sounded in Spanish). This territory eventually became Virginia. The Jesuit expedition to Ajacán left Santa Elena on August 5, 1570.

There were nine missionaries. The two priests were Father Juan Baptista de Segura, Jesuit vice provincial of *la Florida* and leader of the expedition, and Father Luis Francisco de Quirós. There were also three Jesuit brothers: Gabriel Gómez, Sancho de Zaballos and a novice, Pedro Mingot Linares.

In addition, four catechists were part of the group: Cristóbal Redondo, Gabriel de Solís,

Juan Baptista Méndez and Alonso de Olmos, the youngest member who was also an altar boy.

Significantly, at Father Segura's insistence there was no military component to the expedition. Although this was contrary to Spanish practice, Father Segura did not want soldiers to accompany the missionaries because they were known to abuse indigenous people, and in that way to thwart conversions.

The Jesuits' guide was a member of the Chiskiack tribe of Ajacán: Don Luis de Velasco (formerly Paquiquineo). Although he belonged to a ruling family, he had willingly joined a Spanish fleet a decade earlier (ca. 1561). Subsequently baptized, he took the name of his godfather, the viceroy of New Spain.

Don Luis then crossed the Atlantic to Spain, where he was educated and where he met King Philip II. He returned to North America and eventually guided the Jesuit missionaries to his homeland.

On Sept. 10, 1570, Don Luis and the Jesuits disembarked near present-day Williamsburg. The missionaries built a shelter further inland, and for the next five months they struggled to subsist — the area was gripped by famine — while trying to convert the local inhabitants.

See Time Capsule, Page 14

Priest calls for 'better Catholic witness' to combat racism

Mass of Atonement celebrated at Sacred Heart, Danville

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

On Friday, Aug. 28, the 57th anniversary of the March on Washington, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Danville, celebrated a Mass of Atonement for racist actions committed by city leaders and residents over the past centuries at its daily 12:10 p.m. Mass.

That same evening, a "Unity Matters" rally was held in Danville to mark the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and the march.

The faithful were invited to attend the Mass of Atonement in person while following COVID-19 safety protocol or via livestream on the parish Facebook page.

Father Jonathan Goertz, pastor, began Mass by explaining why the Mass of Atonement was celebrated:

"Dear brothers and sisters, as far as I know, on the entire planet, there is one single city that bills itself as the last capital of the Confederacy. And in that city, I know this for certain, there is one single Catholic Church.

"And so it is incumbent on us, on this community, to offer this Mass as eucharistic sacrifice of atonement, seeking God's forgiveness for sins, especially against respect for the dignity of all people and unity committed in the context of our city's story."

According to a press release from the parish, Danville "played a significant role in supplying Confederate forces" during the American Civil War and provided a brief refuge for Jefferson Davis and the Confederate cabinet as they fled advancing Union forces.

The press release also stated that unjust actions a century later were not isolated incidents. On June 10, 1963, 38 people protesting segregation laws were jailed and dozens attending a prayer vigil on the courthouse steps were attacked



At the conclusion of the Mass of Atonement for racist actions on Friday, Aug. 28, Father Jonathan Goertz, pastor of Sacred Heart, Danville, sprinkled those present with holy water to "remind them of their baptismal mandate to work for justice, unity and respect for all people, which are constitutive elements of the Kingdom of God." (Photo/Cecilia Yeager)

by police.

In his homily, Father Goertz illustrated the Christian understanding of authentic love by quoting St. Augustine of Hippo, the renowned theologian and doctor of the Church whose feast is celebrated on August 28, and called him "one of our most important saints 'of color.'"

Quoting St. Augustine, the priest said, "What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of (others). That is what love looks like."

He said that authentic love "doesn't just stay at home and keep to itself" because "the more love is shared with others, the more it actually exists."

Father Goertz said that Jesus provided detailed instructions on how Christians should love one another, but that Christians often "just don't do what Jesus calls us to do" and "fail to be who Jesus calls us to be."

He said St. Augustine's teaching that "God intended us to have dominion over creation, not over one another" was sometimes ignored by Church leaders who "seemed to make excuses for their

own slave ownership and theologians (who) tried to make distinctions between just and unjust slavery" despite Church teachings that have, for centuries, been centered around Gospel values.

"Fortunately, this convoluted history led the Church to increasingly affirm the reality that to enslave another human is to undermine the inherent human dignity," Father Goertz said.

He noted that the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, promulgated by Pope Paul VI at the Second Vatican Council, condemned all forms of discrimination because it goes against God's intentions.

"Catholics around the world bear some guilt for not fully adhering to this essential teaching," the priest said.

Father Goertz said that despite Church teachings and numerous documents written by the U.S. bishops condemning racism as a sin, most recently in 2018 with "Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love, A Pastoral Letter Against Racism," it continues to be present in society.

Sacred Heart, Father Goertz said, is a majority non-white congregation whose clergy, religious and parishioners have faced "hate,

racism and exclusion," and sometimes the Church leaders did not uphold the "value of inclusion."

For example, Father Goertz recalled a time when Danville Catholics were not allowed to participate in civil rights demonstrations.

The priest said that today, "we need to do better in our Catholic witness" and "look critically at our political, economic, social, legal and educational structures" as well as at our own attitudes to combat racism.

"So we have a lot to think about, a lot to pray for, and a lot to do," Father Goertz said. "We pray, as a local, national and international Church, for the grace and courage to serve in the Body of Christ as the hands to help others, the feet to hasten to the poor and needy, the eyes to see misery and want, the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of (others), and the vessels which transmit the saving love which flows out from the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

At the conclusion of Mass, Father Goertz sprinkled those physically in attendance with holy water to "remind them of their baptismal mandate to work for justice, unity and respect for all people, which are constitutive elements of the Kingdom of God."

'Pivotal juncture' in racial justice struggle, archbishop says

RICHARD SZCZEPANOWSKI
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Celebrating an Aug. 28 Mass to mark the 57th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King's historic March on Washington, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory urged Catholics to continue the dream of the late civil rights leader and to work for reconciliation and unity building.

"Ours is the task and the privilege of advancing the goals that were so eloquently expressed 57 years ago by such distinguished voices on that day," Archbishop Gregory said. "Men and women, young and old, people of every racial and ethnic background are needed in this effort."

The Mass of Peace and Justice was celebrated at and livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington in honor of

the 1963 March on Washington. It was organized by the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach and the archdiocesan Secretariat for Pastoral Ministry and Social Concerns.

"We are at a pivotal juncture in our country's struggle for racial justice and national harmony," he said. "Believers and nonbelievers, sports stars and corporate giants, small town residents and urban dwellers must all engage in the work of reconciliation and unity building so that our common future will be better and more secure than the past."

To that end, Archbishop Gregory announced during the Mass an archdiocesan initiative to "fight against racial injustice everywhere." The initiative was outlined on a scroll presented to the archbishop by archdiocesan Catholics, in-

cluding Betty Wright, a parishioner at St. Martin of Tours Parish in Washington, who participated in the 1963 March on Washington.

The initiative will include a wide range of pastoral activities and outreach, including prayer, listening sessions, faith formation opportunities and social justice work.

Archbishop Gregory called the historic March on Washington "a moral and religious event." He also noted that he was celebrating the Mass in the cathedral where then-Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle had invited people to pray before the march. Archbishop O'Boyle also delivered an opening prayer on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial that day.

Calling that march "a deeply faith-inspired

Food, fellowship highlights of priest's cooking classes

Father Goldsmith shares his love for preparing food via Zoom

JENNIFER NEVILLE
Special to The Catholic Virginian

In a culture of “fast food” and meals on the run, virtual interactive cooking classes are helping young adults in the diocese experience the joy of cooking, the delight of “slow food” and the cultivation of relationships through a meal together.

Father Joe Goldsmith, administrator of cluster parishes in Dinwiddie, Hopewell and Prince George, is sharing his love for cooking via a monthly Zoom class where young adults make the featured recipe at home as he demonstrates how to do so. The priest has conducted classes on how to make Italian risotto, carrot soup, steak and stuffed pork tenderloin. Next up will be baked fish, crispy Brussels sprouts and balsamic reduction, 6 p.m., Friday, Sept. 25.

Katie Yankoski, diocesan associate director of youth and young adults, said the Office for Evangelization created the cooking classes due to the popularity of cooking shows and because more people are cooking and eating at home due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The classes are targeted to Catholic adults ages 21 to 35 in the diocese, but young adults from other areas may join as well. Individuals don't have to participate in every class.

Father Goldsmith emphasizes



This screenshot shows Father Joseph Goldsmith and some of the participants and their work during a recent cooking class that the priest teaches once a month via Zoom.

es that sharing a meal together is the “summit” of Catholic faith as Christ initiated the Eucharist at the Last Supper.

“Eating together is the context where we build connections with each other,” he said.

During the classes, Father Goldsmith explains that many Americans rely on “fast foods” — foods that are prepared quickly and consumed quickly — so the individual can get somewhere else or do something else swiftly. In some countries, he explained, food preparation and dining can be “an event rather than just a way to fulfill a hunger pang” and can give

the diners an opportunity to build relationships. Thus, the priest emphasizes the importance of “slow food” — making recipes that take time to prepare and then taking time to dine together.

“Togetherness is what is important,” Father Goldsmith said. “It's like magic when people cook and eat together. Something amazing happens.”

The message resonated with Victoria Cartaya, parishioner of St. Benedict, Richmond.

“He changed my perspective about cooking and eating,” Cartaya said. “It opened my mind to how cooking can be more spiritual...”

When we eat and break this bread together, it brings us in communion with each other and with the church.”

David Zaronas, parishioner of Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, said that in addition to acquiring cooking skills, “fellowship is definitely a motivation to do the cooking classes.”


Maggie and Joe Curtis of Church of the Epiphany, North Chesterfield, said they enjoy the classes so much they make it a date night.

“Joe and I have two kids under four, so it is a really nice break to get away from the everyday chaos of life to do something as a couple,” she said.

Father Goldsmith shares tips such like how different flavors meld, which wine pairs well with a particular dish and how to use kitchen equipment. He shares cooking techniques which have included how to make roasted garlic, puree soup and cut an onion while staying dry-eyed. He also demonstrated two ways of cooking steak: searing it and then cooking it in the oven or the “reverse sear.”

On a more whimsical note, during the soup class, he tasted a teaspoon each of two brands of olive oil to see which one tasted better, and he ate a piece of fresh ginger, which inspired Rebecca

See *Cooking*, Page 13




Visit richmonddiocese.org/Haiti2020 to learn more and donate!

2020 HOPE FOR HAITI CAMPAIGN

Choose which campaign you'd like to donate to:

Food
 Diocese of Hinche Support Fund
 Education

*All proceeds will go directly to support the people of our twinned Diocese of Hinche

You have a gift.

Now there's time to share it.



You have a busy life. We understand. Introducing online classes for Catechist certification. Our support, your success. It's never been easier to share your gift of faith and leadership. Visit: <http://learn.richmonddiocese.org> to learn more.

Pathways: *Delivered*





Solimar Rodriguez, Spanish teacher and sixth grade assistant, takes the temperatures of Theodore and Liam Hughes, a kindergartner and fourth grader, respectively, during morning drop-off on Wednesday, Aug. 26, at St. Matthew Catholic School, Virginia Beach. (Photo/Elizabeth Allen)



Wearing masks and remaining a minimum of 6 feet apart, third graders at St. Mary School, Richmond, use the playground equipment on their first day of school, Tuesday, Aug. 25. With detailed guidelines in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, all diocesan schools opened the week of Aug. 24. (Photo/Katie Botha)



Dominican Sister Mary Augustine, fifth grade teacher at St. Mary Star of the Sea School, Hampton, goes over the face-covering policy with her students, including Mary Micha, Ryker Bratton, Marshall Mahn and Jencarlos Coreas Amaya. (Photo/Maritza Davila)

Above: Second grade teacher Annette Mashburn takes a photo of Ari Somorin on the first day of school, Monday, Aug. 24, at Roanoke Catholic. (Photo/Michael Hemphill)

Right: First grader Isabella Mercado walks to her class at St. Matthew Catholic School, Virginia Beach, as second grade teacher Michelle Powell goes over the classroom break procedure with second grader Jordynn Cargill on the first day of school, Monday, Aug. 24. (Photo/Elizabeth Allen)



Father Raner O. Lucila, chaplain at St. Mary Star of the Sea, Hampton, celebrates the first Mass of the school year. It was livestreamed to the classrooms on Monday, Aug. 24. (Photo/Maritza Davila)

COVID-19 has given us new perspective

This pandemic has been a time of uncertainty and sadness for those sickened by its effects, and for those who lost their life to it. Many of us have found ourselves working from our basements, trying to teach our children and attend to the needs of others in lockdown, praying not to fall victim to the virus or, worse, unknowingly give it to someone else.

It has been odd to become so focused on staying well, crowding out the “normalcy” of life with its frenetic running around with work, school, after school activities, the gym, housework and church on Sundays.

It took me a while to realize that as awful as this virus has been, it has had the effect of humbling us and giving us perspective. Perhaps we are not as in control of our lives as we thought. Maybe we have spent too much time filling our days with the good things of life instead of filling our lives and our hearts with the gifts that last.

We have been forced to slow down, to stay home with our families and to do and think about things differently, adopting a new balance in our lives. Having Mass on YouTube has satisfied a hunger within, and yet, we do not need Wi-Fi for God to be part of our lives — we have only to ask.

Ultimately, I found that spending time in prayer with my community of faith was my true longing — and all the normalcy that it brings. Being away from others may keep us from getting sick, but for me, only God and life in community can keep us well.

— **Patti Peters**
Roanoke

Focus on your heavenly destination

“The world is thy ship, not thy home” — words of the Little Flower, St. Therese of Lisieux, have been on my mind.

In recent months, we have experienced mass death from infectious disease the likes of which have not been seen in generations. We have seen our churches close, and though they are open again, life is far from normal.

We have seen communities torn asunder by political division and violence. We have seen fear grip the hearts of millions around the world. And we have seen increasing rancor between our fellow Catholics in social media, in our parishes and even in these pages of The Catholic Virginian.

Truly, the enemy is on the march.

The pandemic is no light matter, and political quietism is not something for which Catholics can advocate. Yet I cannot help but think that many of our troubles are caused by excess attachment to things of this world and our constant “need” to react to the latest news bulletin, COVID count or outrage-sparking video.

Holy Mother Church has provided us many ways to order our lives so we can focus more on our heavenly destination and less on whatever storms may assail us during our short time on Earth.

She has marked out great feast days and appointed days of penance. She has given us the Divine Office and the thrice-daily Angelus to provide many opportunities for prayer.

Perhaps by becoming more in tune with “Catholic time” on earth and the life to come with our Lord, we may have a better perspective toward our journey and a greater understanding of how to address troubles in this world.

— **Matt Blumenfeld**
Charlottesville

Put blame for gun violence where it belongs

This is in response to the article: “Bishop: Gun violence should not be ‘new normal’” (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 24).

The bishops’ “commonsense” solutions to stem “gun violence” cited in the article would have no effect and would put a burden on law abiding gun owners.

Between 80 to 90% of all gun related murders are committed in the inner cities between rival gangs fighting over drug turf. Virtually all of these involve black market handguns. Yes, over the past few months, this violence has increased for good reason.

With the recent calls to defund police, mayors of large cities such as Chicago, New York and DC have eliminated the law enforcement units that had stemmed such violence; further, the mayors have allowed the revolving door justice system to perpetuate. Criminals now shoot each other with virtual impunity.

The bishops say they are for “commonsense” gun control such as banning the ownership of military style firearms. If they would consider that of the 18 million of these firearms owned by

Americans, less than 0.0006% of them are ever used in a nefarious manner. Further, such a ban has been tried before with absolutely no measurable effect. Thus, this solution does not sound so “commonsense” to me.

It would be refreshing for the bishops to lay the blame for gun violence where it belongs: on the criminal; point out those who allow the violence to perpetuate: the mayors; and stop echoing the talking points of the liberal left.

— **Don Barnett**
Salem

Credits BLM for increasing awareness of injustices

In response to the anti-Black Lives Matter letters (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 24):

Rose LaTulipe implies that BLM divides Americans by destroying “their monuments, their history and their constitution...”

The reality is that the Constitution, with its original three-fifths clause, the “lost cause” monuments, and the true history of the United States — including slavery, Jim Crow, lynchings, mass incarceration and voter suppression — are what have divided the country. BLM seeks to erase those divisions and bring equal justice regardless of skin color.

Timothy Richardt declares, “You should not... portray BLM as ... good for our nation, for our society, for our state ...” I wonder who the “our” is in that statement, because it certainly doesn’t include people of color. BLM seeks justice for the victims of systemic oppression present since the founding of this nation, society and state.

Delia Laux encourages blacks to “improve their own lives by encouraging marriage and strong families” while ignoring the “alleged” racism within society. Would having a wife or stronger family ties have removed the deadly knee from George Floyd’s neck for even one of the 466 seconds it took to kill him? Systemic racism killed George Floyd and BLM seeks to eliminate that racism.

I, too, am appalled by the violence at some protests. But violence by some doesn’t negate the good that comes from this movement. BLM has made me aware of injustices I didn’t know existed. And through resources provided by my parish,

Letters

lots of challenging reading, many online resources such as the “21 Day Racial Justice Challenge” and much prayer, I become more aware every day.

— **Jim Triplett**
Midlothian

Other voices of black leaders offer solutions

I am writing in reference to the vigorous viewpoints expressed by readers regarding Black Lives Matter and Catholic associations with this organization (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 24). I believe all of the writers are committed to the struggles of our brothers and sisters in Christ and especially the ongoing plight of many black Americans.

I also share the concerns about BLM as a group. Yet concerns about Black Lives Matter does not mean, as Delia Laux pointed out, that black lives do not matter. That false dichotomy needs to be avoided.

Are there alternatives? Yes. I would commend to readers the perspectives of several vibrant African American voices. They include Coleman Hughes, Carol Swain and Ian Rowe. In addition, Robert Woodson’s “1776 Unites” project and his incredible work on Violence Free Zones are outstanding examples of positive directions and sustainable change.

In the last election, there were several organizations purportedly based on Catholic Social Teaching that were unfortunately fronts for political agendas. They abused the gracious hearts (and wallets) of many Catholics. I would

again caution my sisters and brothers in Christ to avoid those who would use our faith to further their political agendas.

The challenges facing the black community are many. I personally see value in these other voices of black leadership who offer solutions to the fundamental issues and hard questions from a black American perspective.

— **Kurt Elward**
Charlottesville

Don’t write hurtful letters

I am a 76-year old, Virginia born, black Roman Catholic. I was in grade six of a segregated school when 14-year-old Emmett Till was murdered in Mississippi for allegedly talking fresh to a white woman. Till was two years older than me.

During my long lifetime I have repeatedly read about senseless murders of blacks, and now I read letters in my diocesan newspaper that denigrate the Black Lives Matter organization and condemn it as Marxist or Communist in order to label it as something evil.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the NAACP was branded a communist organization, and the Civil Rights Movement a communist conspiracy. Some years later, Martin Luther King was dubbed a communist as a means of demonstrating why his birthday should not be a national holiday.

Given the current political polarization in the United States, why should I expect anything less for the Black Lives Matter organization?

See Letters, Page 7

CV letters policy

The Catholic Virginian welcomes signed letters to the editor that can be considered for publication *and/or* posting on The Catholic Virginian website. Submissions should be no more than 270 words and include the writer’s name, address or email, and phone number as all submissions are acknowledged. At the editor’s discretion, submitter’s name may be withheld from publication/posting. Letters should address topics reported in the CV or other topics relevant to Catholics. Personal attacks are not published. Letters may be edited for style, length or content. Opinions expressed by letter writers do not necessarily reflect those of The Catholic Virginian or the Diocese of Richmond.

How to reach us

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

Publisher: Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout

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

Creative Director: Stephen Previtera (804) 622-5229 sprevitera@catholicvirginian.org

Circulation/Database Spec.: Ashly Cameal (804) 622-5226 acameal@catholicvirginian.org

Eastern Correspondents: Wendy Klesch and Jennifer Neville

Western Correspondents: Karen Adams, Nanette Levin and Joseph Staniunas

Central Correspondents: Kristen L. Byrd, Mary Howell, Victoria Kearney and Rosemarie Morrisette

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

'Creation is groaning!'

Pope: 'Stop pushing planet beyond limits'

JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The exploitation and plundering of the Earth's resources at the expense of the poor and vulnerable cry out for justice and the forgiveness of debts, Pope Francis said.

In his message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation Sept. 1 and the Season of Creation, which runs through Oct. 4, the pope said the observance is a time to renew, repair and restore humanity's broken relationship with God and his creation.

"It is a time for restorative justice. In this context, I repeat my call for the cancellation of the debt of the most vulnerable countries, in recognition of the severe impacts of the medical, social and economic crises they face as a result of COVID-19," he wrote.

Since 2020 included the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the ecumenical team organizing the Season of Creation chose "Jubilee for the Earth" as this year's theme.

In the Bible, the pope noted, a jubilee was a "sacred time to remember, return, rest, restore, and rejoice."

As a time of remembrance, he said, the day of prayer and the Season of Creation should call to

mind "creation's original vocation to exist and flourish as a community of love."

"We exist only in relationships: with God the creator, with our brothers and sisters as members of a common family and with all of God's creatures within our common home," the pope wrote.

The call for a jubilee for the Earth, he said, is a call for repentance and for restoring harmony with God by taking care "our fellow human beings, especially the poor and the most vulnerable."

"We have broken the bonds of our relationship with the Creator, with our fellow human beings, and with the rest of creation," the pope wrote in his message.

He also said it was time to "heal the damaged relationships that are essential to supporting us and the entire fabric of life."

"A jubilee is a time for setting free the oppressed and all those shackled in the fetters of various forms of modern slavery, including trafficking in persons and child labor," he said.

Creation itself, he added, admonishes humankind "to return to our rightful place" as members and not masters of "this interconnected web of life."

"The disintegration of bio-

See Creation, Page 16

15 deacon candidates adapt to virtual formation

Fifteen candidates for the permanent diaconate are entering their last year of their formation that began in 2016. Their formation program began with informational meetings, interviews, testing and application.

The next four years of discernment consist of pastoral, spiritual and intellectual formation as a candidate for holy orders. St. Leo University has been providing the academic portion of formation with most candidates earning a master's degree.

During the years of candidacy, candidates have met Friday nights and Saturdays each month and met as regional groups for prayer, discussion and reflection. They have also spent time with a spiritual director and been guided and advised by deacon mentors.

Since January, the formation program has been virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Classes, Liturgy of the Hours, meetings and training are being conducted remotely trying to keep the candidates safe and on schedule for ordination in September 2021. This November, the cohort is scheduled to be installed in the ministry of lector, the first step toward permanent diaconate.

According to Deacon John Kren, the diocese's Deacon Director, "The most disappointing thing during the COVID pandemic on this period of discernment is the inability for the deacons and wives to be together as a community to pray and share their journey as they had done for their first three years."

He noted, however, what he termed an "an unexpected positive" occurred during the shutdown.

"Using the latest in meeting technology required the pace of group prayer to be slowed, allowing everyone time to focus and reflect on their prayer time together," Deacon Kren said.

For more information on the permanent diaconate contact Deacon Kren at 804-622-5183 or jkren@richmonddiocese.org.

Catholic suffragette honored



Deacon Charles Williams, interim director of the Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics, blesses the marker on the grave of Nora Houston in Shockoe Hill Cemetery on Tuesday, Aug. 18 — the 100th anniversary of ratification of the 19th Amendment. Houston, a member of St. Peter Parish, Richmond, was a founding member of the Equal Suffrage League of Virginia and the Virginia League of Women Voters, and a past president of the Catholic Woman's Club of Richmond which helped pay for the marker. A video of the ceremony can be seen at <https://youtu.be/xKTsK4EYm9c>. (Photo/Mark Zanchelli)

Letters

Continued from Page 6

Why should this vitriol be in the diocesan newspaper where I hope to read about love and people coming together?

Come on folks! Rather than write hurtful letters, read a good book. As a starter, I recommend historian Patricia Sullivan's "Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement."

— Ted DeLaney
Lexington

of fight against racism" is worth reading.

The millions of citizens, including many Catholics, supporting Black Lives Matter see it as a social justice movement to end racism and promote equality. I say Black Lives Matter because sadly there are those among us who don't agree.

— Colleen Hernandez
Salem

Accept sacrifice to protect neighbors from disease

Regarding Liz Wetzel's letter (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 24): As I read her statement, she is concerned that the Church's attendance restrictions, such as wearing a mask, are sending people away from the Lord. On the basis of that understanding, I have two observations in response.

Although the Church is the sacred temple of the Holy Spirit, it is simultaneously a human institution, and therefore, the Church always welcomes its members within a certain political and social situation. It must abide by the laws of the earthly city (provided that does not conflict with life in the Spirit), in this case CDC and other governmental recommendations.

More importantly, Christians are called to make sacrifices for the wellbeing of our neighbors. I do miss having such ready access to communion with our Lord through the Eucharist, but is it not better to sacrifice that privilege for a time to show love for our brothers and sisters?

I gladly accept these sacrifices to protect my neighbors from a potentially devastating disease. Therefore, these restrictions can be practiced as an expression of love and compassion for our neighbor, and surely Christ is present in that.

Moreover, I suspect that in the future, when we are again able to fill our churches, I will be less prone to take communal participation in the Mass for granted, and more deeply savor the riches bestowed by liturgy.

— Eric Gleason
Waynesboro

Words of pilgrims didn't sound Marxist

After reading the opinion letters in the Aug. 24 Catholic Virginian, I was confused. Several letters mentioned either BLM Global Network Foundation or the BLM movement and its relationship to Marxism. Confused because the article they refer to in the Aug. 10 issue spoke about a prayer pilgrimage focusing on black lives and racial equality. The Aug. 24 letters focused on hidden agendas, destroying monuments and violence.

Rereading the original article, I found nothing supporting these things. Instead I read about a working group formed by "Catholics and Friends for Black Lives and Racial Equality" for a day of "reflection, remembrance and healing." The pilgrimage started with prayer "in the memory of the peacemaker we follow." As stated by Abby Causey, it was to be a day where members of the black community could tell their stories while others listened.

The speakers who followed did tell stories of their personal experiences with racism. The article ends with one of the organizers speaking to the need to keep the momentum inspired by the pilgrimage going "to be moved by our faith into action."

None of this sounds Marxist to me. In the same Aug. 10 issue, the guest commentary by Richard Doerflinger titled "Why Catholics should be in the forefront

Experiencing the re

Seminarians' pastoral year an im

KAREN ADAMS

Special to The Catholic Virginian

When seminarians are sent to parishes across the diocese for a “pastoral year,” they learn what life is like for a priest, even in the midst of a global pandemic. Despite the change they experienced, going from scheduled days to quiet isolation amid many questions, four Diocese of Richmond seminarians — Dillon Bruce, Armando Herrera, Alex Jimenez and Joe Kauflin — gained deep understanding of parish life this past year and drew closer to God as a result.

“The goal is to help prepare a man to engage in parish life and be fully informed about the kind of life he’s going to live as a priest,” said Father Brian Capuano, the diocese’s vicar for vocations.

Father Capuano oversees the placement of seminarians in parishes for their pastoral year experiences, which may be more or less than a calendar year, usually from June until the following August. It is a formal aspect of formation, recommended by Vatican II, held between the seminarians’ second and third years of theology studies.

Matches are carefully considered, Father Capuano explained, and placement depends upon parishes that can house and support an additional person for a year. A quiet person may be placed in a large, busy parish, for example, or an outgoing person may be placed at a smaller church; the purpose is to gain and expand skills and experiences.

He recalled an important moment in his own pastoral year, when his priest was away, and he was called one evening to the hospital bedside of a dying patient.

“I couldn’t give the sacraments, but I could sit there and pray with them,” he said.

The year also educates the seminarians’ families as well, Father Capuano said.

“Parents learn, ‘What does it mean



Alex Jimenez gives a blessing to Lauren Lee on Sunday, Feb. 2, in anticipation of the Feast of St. Blaise, which was the next day. Jimenez, a seminarian at the Theological College, served his pastoral year at St. Ann, Colonial Heights. (Photo/Karin Mitchell)

Dillon Bruce, a seminarian at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, teaches a fifth grade religion class at St. Bridget School, Richmond. He served his pastoral year at St. Bridget Parish. (Photo/Colleen Blaszak)



for my son to be a priest?” he said, noting that they may not see their sons much, or at all, over holidays, for example. “Seminarians learn you’re not living your own life so much anymore but are living in service for the sake of others.”

Although they served at different parishes for their pastoral years, Bruce, Herrera, Jimenez and Kauflin supported each other and became friends. Before the pandemic, they visited in person when they could, to hike, share meals and compare stories. During the pandemic they have kept in touch, including through a book study via Zoom.

“This year made us brothers,” said Bruce.

‘No matter what, Christ is Lord’

During his pastoral year at St. Bridget, Richmond, Dillon Bruce spent a lot of time with the students at the parish’s school and grew to be their friend.

“I loved being with the kids,” he said. “They would ask me: ‘Why do bad things happen? How does God work in our lives? Am I enough?’ Kids and adults alike all have the same questions, and I always told them, ‘God loves you no matter what.’”

Bruce, 27, from Stuarts Draft, attends the Pontifical North American College in Rome. His pre-pandemic duties at St. Bridget included serving at Masses, helping with the Catholic Heart work camp and assisting with other ministries.

He liked visiting the Little Sisters of the Poor, a congregation of nuns serving the elderly and dying poor at Saint Jo-

seph’s Home for the Aged. His weekly visits with the nuns and residents showed him that personal presence is important.

“I gained confidence that the Lord is going to work through me if I just show up to be with people,” he said.

When the pandemic hit, Bruce witnessed his pastor, Msgr. William Carr, leading his staff during the crisis.

“It was awesome to watch how a pastor reacts during a crisis, and how he builds confidence and maintains the joyful proclamation of the Gospel,” he said, adding that Msgr. Carr and Father Tochi Iwujii embodied “God’s love and protection; they showed us that, no matter what, Christ is Lord.”

Livestreaming of Mass, although different, still focused on growing in holiness and commitment to the Lord, Bruce said. “I learned that if you give to God, he just gives more.”

‘I’ve grown in the heart’

“It’s a whole new perspective,” said Alex Jimenez, 26, about his pastoral year at St. Ann, Colonial Heights. “You’re dealing with real people, with real pain and suffering, not just theories in seminary. To encounter that called me to love more deeply. I’m so grateful for that.”

The Woodbridge native, who attends Theological College in Washington, was touched by the generosity of the parish. At St. Ann, he said, parishioners look after each other — and that care also included Jimenez, who was showered with food and kindness. “And baked goods,” he said.

Before the shutdown, Jimenez’s

duties included serving at Masses, teaching religious education. In November, he attended the Catholic Youth Conference in Roanoke with high school students.

One of his favorite memories was taking Communion to the homebound parishioners.

“I love visiting people and learning about their lives. And I got to bring them the Eucharist.”

When everything changed, he was impressed by the parish’s response. He noted that his pastor, Father Danny Ramirez, making a plan, was transparent and were alright emotionally and spiritually.

“What an incredible experience. I learned so much from them. It was something like that.”

The year also showed him that God is strong and where I am.

“I feel like I’ve grown in my faith,” Jimenez said. “I’ve grown in my love for God and for his people.”

‘I’ll follow

After busy days of his pastoral year at St. Benedict’s, he received the pastoral guidance of Fr. David Ramsey, Armand’s pastor. He pointed and “kind of surprised” during the pandemic shut every-

“I prayed, ‘Lord, give me more time with the priest.’” He often found himself at the desk as a “porter” to help when he came to the church.

“But it was a huge experience. I learned a lot about ministry in the priesthood. I was available to God in a different way.”

He ended up having a great experience with parishioners as well, and he learned that it’s not just to be there and pray, but to be there and pray with them.

“You allow people to share their pain, and you give it to them. He pours his love and grace on them,” Herrera said.

One day, a man who was possibly homeless, came to the church in a black shirt, explaining that he wanted to offer it for someone. Herrera said he was agitated, and after he left, Herrera heard that the man had come to him.

Herrera ran down to see him, and said, “God is with you.”

“He started breaking bread with me. I prayed right there on the spot,” Herrera said, adding that he feels better after hearing God’s love, and he was able to have random encounters with people who just be available to be there.

A student at Theological College, Roanoke native, 26, s

Qualities of parish life

Integral part of priestly formation

ing at Masses and education on Sunday. ended the National Conference in Indianapolis. students.

te ministries was to homebound pa-

people in their homes their lives," he said. "I'm our Lord."

g closed, Jimenez was parish staff's ability to that the first thing the y Cogut, did, before o make sure they ally, psychologically

ible staff. I learned about responding to" Jimenez said.

owed him where he he might grow. "own in the heart," "rown to a deeper love people."

'You, Lord'

early in his pastoral Richmond, under e of Father John Da- o Herrera felt disap- "cheated" when the ything down.

I was hoping to have parish," he said.

himself sitting at a monitor people who

re blessing, and I ministry and the ailable to people and way," Herrera said. "ing many, what he ble encounters" well as strangers, it was important to y with them.

le to give you their to the Lord, and d mercy on them,"

ne'd never seen, ame in holding a ng that he wanted ne who might need t the man was clearly e gave the shirt and e Lord prompt, "Go

n the street, stopped loves you!"

king down as we n the sidewalk,"

that he seemed to era reassured him of alked away. "Those have taught me to e used by God."

ological College, the said he's also been

blessed by his fellow seminarians.

"I always wondered if priests have friends," he said. "I'm so grateful for Alex, Dillon and Joe. We've spent a lot of time together."

His call to the priesthood fills him with peace and hope, he said. "I've learned to say, 'I'll follow you, Lord.'"

'He is always with us'

When the pandemic hit during Joe Kaufflin's pastoral year at St. Andrew, Roanoke, he relied on his experience as a missionary in Honduras, where big changes could happen any moment.

"It was a crash course in how we don't know what's down the road," said Kaufflin, 31, a Virginia Beach native who attends Theological College. "This situation can be used to help us grow and mature in the faith."

He had been enjoying his time at the parish, "soaking it all in" and learning about the rhythm of parish life. His involvement with Masses, adoration, youth group activities, catechism, visits to Our Lady of the Valley nursing home, hospital visits, funerals, weddings and more – such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, which helps anyone in need – kept him busy. Then everything changed.

He was grateful for and comforted by the response he witnessed from the priests at St. Andrew, Fathers Kevin Segerblom and John Christian, as well as the staff and volunteers.

"I found a lot of hope in seeing how the folks around me responded to it," he said.

Sometimes one's prayer life can be

In fall 2019, Armando Herrera gives a high-five to then-first grade student Jack Bauer as classes let out at St. Benedict School, Richmond. A seminarian at the Theological College, Herrera served his pastoral year at St. Benedict Parish. (Photo courtesy of St. Benedict School)



dry, he noted, especially when everything is turned upside down. He was reminded that sometimes one must wait, even if one has a spiritual goal in mind.

"I learned the importance of just staying with the Lord," he said.

Witnessing parish life, in good times and bad, affirmed an important truth for him.

"In the chaos, in times of sorrow and joy, God is present in the midst of all life," Kaufflin said. "He is always with us."



Joe Kaufflin, left, speaks to the confirmation class of St. Andrew, Roanoke, during their retreat last fall at Camp Bethel in Fincastle. Kaufflin, who is receiving his seminary formation at the Theological College, served his pastoral year at the parish. (Photo courtesy of Joe Kaufflin)

What to say when friend is in same-sex relationship



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. One of my close friends, whom I met through the Church, is a parish youth worker. The girl she lives with is a lesbian, although I believe that they do not share sexual relations. Lately, though, my friend has told me that she is pursuing same-sex relationships.

How I am supposed to react to this situation? I like her very much and want to maintain my friendship with her, but I do not condone same-sex relations as they are against Catholic teaching. What is my duty to her as a Catholic and a friend? (I am growing increasingly concerned about the state of her soul.) (Cincinnati)

A. Your responsibility — as a Catholic and a friend — is to look for a chance to speak with your friend and to disclose to her in a non-threatening way that you are uncomfortable with her choice of sexual partners. Explain to her that the Church — the community of faith in which you and she believe — does not approve same-sex relationships, based both on the Scriptures and on the centuries-old teaching of the Church's moral leaders.

Assure her that, despite your discomfort, she still means very much to you and that you want to maintain her friendship. It occurs to me, too, that you may have one further responsibility. Since she is, as you mention, a parish youth worker, she witnesses to others in a public manner the beliefs of the Catholic Church. If there is a way for you — with the assurance, of course, of confidentiality and anonymity — to share your concern with one of the priests in your parish, perhaps that priest could then speak with your friend.

Q. I know that missing Mass on Sunday without a legitimate reason is considered a serious enough sin that it requires going to confession. But I also know that among the "legitimate reasons" are sickness or the lack of an available Mass. Why, then, was it necessary during the COVID-19 crisis for the bishops to grant a dispensation from Mass attendance? Weren't Catholics already dispensed? (South Amboy, New Jersey)

A. In March 2020, when the coronavirus began to take hold of the United States, virtually every diocese suspended all public Masses. The reason, of course, was that it was a serious health risk for crowds to gather in close proximity.

As you point out, if no Masses were being offered, Catholics could certainly not be obligated to be present. You are also correct in observing that Catholics can dispense themselves from the Mass requirement — and should do so — if they are too sick to attend. However, many Catholics need the comfort of knowing that, in such situations, the Sunday Mass obligation is officially and formally lifted.

As I write this (in late August 2020), most Catholic parishes across the U.S. have begun once again to offer public Masses — though often on a more limited schedule. But every diocese of which I'm aware, including the Diocese of Richmond, is continuing for the time being to dispense Catholics from the obligation to attend — realizing that many, particularly the elderly, still feel the risk of exposing themselves to COVID-19. This policy is a wise one on the Church's part — not only because of public health concerns, but also to ease the consciences of many Catholics.

Q. A few years back, Pope Francis set up a commission to study the feasibility of permitting women to become permanent deacons. Has that commission made a recommendation to the pope, and where does the matter stand? (Albany, New York)

A. In 2016, Pope Francis, with the encouragement of the International Union of Superiors General of religious orders of women, created a commission to study the historical facts about women referred to as deaconesses in the New Testament and the role of women deacons in the early Church. That group reached varying points of view and came to no definitive conclusion as to whether women had ever been ordained sacramentally.

Speaking with journalists on the papal plane returning to Rome from Bulgaria in May 2019, Pope Francis indicated the issue would need further study. In April 2020, Pope Francis established a new "Study Commission on the Female Diaconate," prompted in part by the 2019 Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, which had suggested that the question of women deacons be revisited, given the shortage of priests in the region.

Deacons perform many of the functions of priests — including presiding at weddings, baptisms and funerals — though they are not permitted to celebrate Mass. This new commission does not appear to be limited to an examination of the early Church, as was the 2016 study group.

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

Save the Date

1820-2020

BICENTENNIAL

REGIONAL MASS


Celebrated by Bishop Barry C. Knestout

SAINT ANDREW CATHOLIC CHURCH
ROANOKE

Saturday, September 26, 2020 10:30 a.m.

Join Us Via Livestream • Richmonddiocese.org/livestream

*Celebrating the Catholic Presence in the
Western Vicariate and the Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul*


Catholic Diocese of Richmond
1820 Bicentennial 2020



Staying spiritually connected is a matter of survival



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

The ping of my cell phone has become a familiar sound, but since there's no way to distinguish advertisements and nuisance texts from important messages, I rarely respond to those pings immediately. Attempting to limit electronic messaging as much as possible, I also don't do Facebook.

Family and friends have my phone number so texting on a regular basis, often accompanied by photos with family updates, has become an easy go-to form of communication. Among my favorites are photos of 6-year-old Audrey displaying a toothless smile after losing yet another tooth, Andrew and Callie settling into their college dorm rooms or Natalie claiming ownership of the family's new puppy.

Not all photos chronicle hallmark events. There's the selfie of 16-year-old Olivia hanging out with her mom, a picture of Stephanie's family attending Mass on their patio when their parish church was closed, beach outings, basketball games and, well, you get the picture.

There's no denying it: the digital age has brought families, separated by miles, together in ways generations ago could never fathom. Today, sending messages and photos across the country in a matter of seconds has become commonplace.

To the digitally challenged — to which I claim a longstanding membership — modern technology is nothing short of a miracle. It keeps us connected despite being socially distant, and for

families who are scattered across the country, it's a saving grace.

As a columnist, I'm always in awe of the number of emails I receive from readers who share their faith journey with me or seek answers to age-old questions. It's a reminder that our spiritual connection is also enhanced by the digital age. Like the internet, our spiritual thoughts, prayers and needs are transmitted to the throne of God, sometimes directly, other times through intermediaries like Mary or the saints who pray for us.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux, a 12th century Cistercian monk, wrote that angels are messengers, whose work is service, sent to help heirs of salvation to bear our prayers to God in heaven and return to us laden with graces.

Centuries before the internet was invented, prayer connected people to God through multiple servers. Like a magnetic field that draws us, our deepest need for happiness and wholeness seeks a connection to the divine source in whose image we have been created. Every message that interferes with or obstructs that relationship with God should be deleted from the inbox of our mind without wasting time to explore it.

The world is filled with advertisements trying to allure us with false promises, which is why we need to stay connected to all that is good and life-giving. The media bombard us with negative messages, but there is an antidote. Turn off the television, hit delete or unsubscribe to what is of no value. I'm not suggesting we bury our heads in the sand, but striking a balance is essential to maintaining proper mental, emotional and spiritual health.

A few weeks ago, I wrote about swimming in the mud, and it was one of those columns that hit home and drew comments from numerous readers. It seems a lot of people feel as if they're

swimming in the mud, which makes staying spiritually connected a matter of survival.

There's never been a time when the world hasn't experienced one crisis or another. The difference today is that the pandemic has brought a global crisis close to home, making it more personal.

While the world waits for a medical breakthrough, we need to arm ourselves with spiritual PPE, and there's no better personal protective equipment than prayer followed by Godly wisdom to inform our actions.

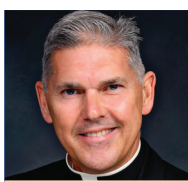
Due to COVID-19, many parish adult education programs have been put on hold, but happily, the wisdom of theologians and spiritual mentors is only a click away. Through programs sponsored by Word of Fire, Center for Action and Contemplation, FORMED and the Carmelite Institute of Studies, to name a few, we can remain virtually connected to our faith. Through the internet, we even have access to the weekly audiences of Pope Francis.

For bookworms like me, who prefer prayerful reflection with an actual book in hand, underlining and commenting in the margins, purchasing books without having to leave home is a blessing.

We can curse the darkness or light a candle. Jesus said we are the light of the world. These days we may have to light the world electronically. Whether through donations to charitable causes, supporting friends and family or growing in our faith, staying connected spiritually is not an option; it's a matter of survival, and there's no time like the present, and it's never been easier.

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

We must become agents of God's forgiveness



BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY
MSGR. TIMOTHY KEENEY

Chapter 18 of Matthew's Gospel is a series of discourses on how we are to conduct ourselves as members of the Church as we await the definite coming of Christ. They have been called the ecclesiastical discourses.

The chapter is divided into meditations on 1) who is the greatest in the Kingdom, 2) avoiding causing scandal, 3) the Parable of the Lost Sheep, 4) how to treat a brother who has sinned, and 5) the parable of the Unforgiving Servant — our Gospel for today.

It is a good thing to remember and bring to prayer that Jesus knew that being a member of the Church did not mean that the Church would immediately be a community of saints. Rather we need to continually pray how we are living out Jesus' instruction to us that moves us along the way.

One of the great ways of praying the Scripture is to imagine yourself to be in the Scripture you are reading. You can imagine yourself to be in the scene interacting with the characters of the story, or you can imagine yourself being one of the characters. In doing so, you can allow

the Scripture to affect you in a way that it might never do by simply reading it.

The parable of the two servants is one that I often invite others to enter through the gate of their imagination. Image yourself so drowning in debt that there is no conceivable way out. You are trapped, overwhelmed, with no options in sight.

Now, image if your creditor simply erased that debt. That incredible weight simply lifted off your shoulders.

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sir 27:30-28:7

Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12

Rom 14:7-9

Mt 18:21-35

This parable involves such a debt. The original Greek of "a huge amount" is literally translated a myriad of talents. A myriad was a word used to designate 10,000, the largest number used by the Greeks.

A talent was the largest denomination of money and was equal to 6,000 denarii. A single denarius was a day's wage. It would have taken the man 164,383 years and six months for the man to pay back this debt. It was truly impossible to repay.

The amount owed by the fellow servant also has an exact amount, 600 days' wages. A sizeable amount, but an amount most of us think is not unreasonable when we take out a home mortgage.

I usually ask people to play with this parable in their imagination when they are struggling with forgiving someone in their lives or are torn up by anger at another — sometimes someone they don't even know personally, like

a politician or someone they have seen on the news.

Why this parable? Because every sin we commit against an all loving God is an infinite offense. It is an offense against which no action of ours could ever cancel or satisfy. Yet this is precisely the debt that is utterly lifted off us by the free gift of our redemption in Jesus Christ. This is the life transforming gift that should leave a mark upon us.

By contrast, every offense against us by another can only appear pale in comparison. Jesus means for us to be transformed by forgiveness into his own image of the forgiving king.

Look at the Our Father: "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." Look at the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."

The gift of God's forgiveness is free, but it is not without cost. The cost is that we must become the agents of God's forgiveness in the world.

This is not something optional. It is not something to say, "Wouldn't it be nice if someday I could live like this?" It is the consequence of being given true freedom in Jesus Christ.

To live in the world as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ is to allow ourselves to be transformed for the sake of the world that radically needs the release of the burden which each of us and all of us carry.

Msgr. Timothy Keeney is pastor of Incarnation, Charlottesville.

Service

Continued from Page 1

liturgical celebrations throughout the year, we'll have a chance to do that as well during our Eucharistic Congress in November," he said. "But this particular moment is a moment in time which we can celebrate the presence of the Catholic community for the past 200 years by sharing that charism of charity that St. Vincent de Paul exemplified and inspired in us to our local community."

The Bicentennial Task Force has provided parishes with a planning guide to help them in determining its service projects and recruiting participants. Parishes, schools, campus ministries and families are encouraged to partner with each other or with community organizations to assist neighbors, undertake beautification projects, serve at food pantries, and write cards of encouragement to the imprisoned, to name a few of the ideas listed in the planning guide.

Those participating in the Octave of Service need not carry out service every day, according to the planning guide. It suggests designating one day on which everyone participates, one day with different groups at various sites in the community, or multiple days with different groups doing different projects.

The planning guide also provides participating entities with prayers and encourages participants to pray together before and after they have served. Another option is scheduling a rosary or prayer service for vulnerable populations.

School noted that the corporal and spiritual works of mercy are the basis "for how we can practically be the hands and feet of Christ," adding that the diocese's bishops "have really seen

"This octave is set aside as a recognition of that foundation of who we have been from the very beginning."

- MICHAEL SCHOOL

works of charity as essential to their mission."

"It's part of our DNA, part of who we are. When we celebrate the bicentennial, we look at everything that makes us who we are, and we celebrate those things and we celebrate them together," he said.

School termed the Octave of Service "unifying."

"One of our bicentennial themes is communion — that we are united with one another in this work," he said. "In particular we're united as we're sent forth, we're united in that mission."

Lest the Octave of Service be seen as an end in itself, the planning guide states:

"The Catholic Diocese of Richmond's commitment to walking with those in our communities who are most in need should, and must, continue long after the projects have concluded. Consider this week not as a one-time event, but as an opportunity for your parish/school/campus ministry to kickstart a growing effort of outreach and justice."

Editor's note: For further information about the Octave of Service, contact your parish.

Appeal

Continued from Page 1

goal and what we can return to people," he said.

Challenges

Long before COVID's impact, the diocese faced another challenge.

"We are having to raise more money from fewer donors," Previtera said. "We started seeing that last year when we had fewer donors but saw the average gift was higher."

Winans noted that this is not unique to the Richmond Diocese.

"We've been seeing the decrease in number of donors and the increase in gifts across the board. They're trying to retain donors but also trying to find new donors as well," she said of dioceses with which Prenger consults. "Our strategy is to try to move more gifts online, and in that way it's more consistent across the board."

Previtera said the diocese's annual appeal has more than 500 people who are sustaining donors.

"That takes time to build. When you look at our pledge card, that's a big focus," he said. "We're trying to get more people to do that, to go online and set up recurring gifts."

Preparing for 2021

As they conclude the current appeal and look to 2021,

Previtera and Winans are concerned about the in-pew aspect of the appeal.

"What we're trying to figure out right now for in-pew weekend is: Are people really going to be in the pews then, and how are we going to address that?" she said. "Because in-pew is the one way you're going to acquire new donors. That's the overarching question right now in what we're trying to make our way through, which we've never had to do before."

Despite the challenges and unknowns, Previtera is upbeat about the appeal.

"I feel very optimistic about what is going to be happening in the future. I know our parishes are going to come together to support us," he said. "Our pastors have been such great leaders on the appeal and our donors have shown they're very generous even in tough times; they're willing to support their parish as well as the larger Church."

With planning for the 2021 appeal already underway, Previtera added, "Going into next year, hopefully we'll be in a different place with COVID and everything will bounce back."

Editor's note: For further information about the Annual Diocesan Appeal, call Alex Previtera at 804-622-5127 or email aprevitera@richmonddiocese.org.



PENINSULA CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE!

SEPTEMBER, 15 2020

5:00 - 6:00 PM

On-Campus Instruction

OR

Knights Virtual Learning Academy




Last Chance to Enroll 20-21

For questions, please contact **Alyson LeMaster** at alemaster@peninsulacatholic.org






Justice

Continued from Page 3

event,” Archbishop Gregory said, “it was less about achieving something than about becoming something — becoming a single family of justice, unity and harmony.”

“Surely those goals are noble and more than desirable even today — perhaps especially today,” the archbishop said. “Death has silenced most of the great voices of Aug. 28, 1963 — Dr. King, John Lewis, A. Philip Randolph, Mahalia Jackson and Marian Anderson to mention only a few — nevertheless the intensity, determination and the energy of their spoken and sung words echo still today.”

“The vast majority of the oratory of the day highlighted social and civil concerns but always with an undeniable touch of religious faith,” Archbishop Gregory said. “People from a wide variety of religious traditions were unit-

ed in a prayerful moment for our nation. The existing social order was clearly challenged by people of faith. That is exactly what we need today.”

Many local Catholics were among the estimated 250,000 to 300,000 participants at the 1963 march.

“The spirit that they shared on that remarkable day was unmistakably sacred,” Archbishop Gregory said. “With that spirit they were ready to change the world. It gave them a clear vision of what our nation was called to be — what we must become, as it was described so eloquently in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.”

Noting that the Gospel reading for the Mass was taken from St. Matthew’s account of the Sermon on the Mount, Archbishop Gregory said the beatitudes “fit the commemorative observance perfectly as they highlight the virtues and the spiritual vision that are necessary

for society’s renewal.”

The beatitudes, he said, “all point to a society of harmony and justice which were the desired end of that march 57 years ago.”

“Dr. King spoke movingly about what our nation was destined to and must become — he no doubt must have reflected often on the beatitudes,” Archbishop Gregory said.

He noted that the Mass was being celebrated during the COVID-19 pandemic and at a time of nationwide protests for racial justice following highly publicized police shootings of unarmed Black men and women.

He urged the faithful not to become discouraged in their fight to end racism. “We must take heart and not be dissuaded or intimidated by the voices that seek division and hatred because ‘We shall overcome,’” the archbishop said as he concluded his homily, quoting a gospel song that became an anthem for the civil rights movement.

Cooking

Continued from Page 4

Sargeant, St. Benedict Parish, Richmond, to do so as well. After experiencing the jolt of the spice, she jested that rather than consuming caffeine it could be used to keep a driver awake.

The classes give the participants an opportunity to put their own creative twist on the dishes they make. They have options for some ingredients such as choosing cream or coconut milk for the

carrot soup or marinating steak in crushed pineapple or a salt bath before cooking to tenderize it.

Participants said they enjoy the hands-on format because cookbooks can tell you to do something and televised and online cooking classes can show you how, but an interactive lesson like this provides the opportunity for Father Goldsmith to observe, comment and suggest. Participants can ask him questions about the meal preparation, and they can chat with him and fellow participants as they

cook. He also sprinkles in theology.

For some, the classes give the young adults the skills and confidence to make recipes that seem daunting. That was true for Sargeant who said she particularly enjoyed the stuffed pork tenderloin class where she learned how to cut the pork, fill it, wrap it back up and secure it with twine.

“It was something I wouldn’t have tried to make on my own, so it was nice to have someone take me through it step by step,” Sargeant said.

At the end of each class, participants have a “show and tell” in which they present their dishes complete with garnishes and “describe their final outcome because all of the dishes will look different at the end.”

For Sargeant, that’s a high point of the class.

“I like to see the creative and artsy ways other people plate their food,” Sargeant said.

Register for each class at kyankoski@richmonddiocese.org.

Read additional Catholic news and information daily at www.catholicvirginian.org.

TOM HEGNA PRESENTS: DON'T WORRY, RETIRE HAPPY!

We Will Cover:

1. Have a PLAN for Retirement
2. Maximize Social Security Benefits
3. Consider a Hybrid Retirement
4. Protect your Savings from Inflation
5. Secure More Retirement Income
6. Have a Plan for Long Term Care
7. Use your Home Equity Wisely



Sponsored by:
Knights of Columbus



The Abbate Agency

AS SEEN ON: CNN Forbes The New York Times FOX BUSINESS THE WALL STREET JOURNAL THE HUFFINGTON POST PBS AMERICA YAHOO! Finance

Live Webinar: Tuesday, September 22nd at 7 p.m.

Registration is free, but required.
Reserve your spot at abbatekofc.com/hegna



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

THE ABBATE AGENCY

www.abbatekofc.com

Questions? 757-495-1492 AbbateAgencyMail@kofc.org

In this presentation, Tom Hegna will simplify the retirement journey with his seven steps to retirement security. Learn how to make a trouble-free plan for retirement with a solid foundation to build on for future generations. Avoid living a just-in-case retirement and enjoy the fruits of your labor! Whether you are a late starter with your retirement planning or you have significant savings, this presentation outlines how to make the most from the least with the smallest amount of risk.



OPPORTUNITIES

The Peninsula Cluster of Catholic Parishes seeks a part-time Facilities Maintenance Coordinator (20 hours per week); responsible for maintaining, renovating and restoring the parish buildings and grounds. The Facilities Maintenance Coordinator performs and supervises tasks related to HVAC, electrical, plumbing, security, environmental, safety, custodial and event coordination. This position requires a team player with excellent project coordination/organizational skills, excellent interpersonal and communication skills and attention to detail. The Facilities Maintenance Coordinator must be able to collaborate with and support the Pastor, Business Manager, parish staff and parishioners and have a clear understanding of acceptable business practices. For a complete job description contact Paul DeFluri, Manager, Peninsula Cluster Parishes. Phone: (757) 851-8800; email: pdefluri@gmail.com To apply for this position, please send a cover letter, résumé and diocesan application to: Paul DeFluri, Manager, Peninsula Cluster Parishes. Fax: (757) 851-1875; email: pdefluri@gmail.com

SHORTTAKES

“What does politics have to do with my faith?” Zoom, 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 17, presented by the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. Jeff Caruso, founding director of the Virginia Catholic Conference, established to advance the mutual public policy interests of the Commonwealth’s Catholic bishops and their dioceses, will speak about faith and politics with time for questions and discussion. Space is limited to 100 participants so please register for this Zoom meeting. Contact Joy Weir for the registration link at jweir@richmondcathedral.org.

Come read Dante’s “Inferno” and other classics — online! “Treasures of the Tradition” is a program of reading groups that grew out of the Christian Formation program at Holy Comforter Catholic Church, Charlottesville. This fall the program offers a group on Dante’s “Divine Comedy,” starting with the “Inferno,” and another on “Salvation and Community” — writings about the relationship of the two, from Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite to Julian of Norwich. All groups meet online, once a week or less, and take the texts at a slow, easy pace; an expert facilitator guides discussion. A per-session fee starting at \$15 applies, but a sliding scale is available. Groups begin in mid-September, so please contact organizer John Bugbee bugbee@thetrea.sures.org, or visit the website, preferably by Sept. 13, www.thetreasures.org.



There is one recorded baptism: that of Don Luis’ younger brother. Three of the catechists also made their Jesuit professions while in Ajacán.

Within a few months, Don Luis deserted the Jesuits and betrayed them. Between Feb. 4 and 10, 1571, he led members of his tribe in killing the Jesuits. Only Alonso de Olmos was spared. He lived with his captors for over a year before a Spanish military expedition rescued him (1572). The soldiers killed members of the Chiskiack tribe in retaliation for the massacre of the Jesuits, although Don Luis was never captured.

Spain gave up trying to settle Ajacán, and in the following decades it abandoned most of North America (except for the Florida peninsula), choosing to focus instead on the more lucrative lands of Central and South America.

England then began its advance upon North America, beginning with the failed settlement of Roanoke Island off the coast of present-day North Carolina (1585, 1587), and then successfully at Jamestown (1607).

Clues about the earlier Spanish presence lingered in the territory that England called “Virginia” and circulated among the Jamestown colonists. There is plausible speculation that Don Luis was the same person as Opechancanough, a tribal chief and the brother or cousin of Powhatan, another tribal chief whose daughter, Pocahontas, married John Rolfe of Jamestown. Opechancanough led two attacks against the Jamestown settlers (1622, 1644) before they captured and killed him.

The memory of the eight Jesuit martyrs of Virginia has endured. In 2002, Walter F. Sullivan, the 11th bishop of Richmond (1974–2003), initiated the cause of their canonization. This cause was later transferred to the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, which is seeking the canonization of all the martyrs of *la Florida*.



Martyrdom of Father Juan Baptista de Segura and Brothers Cristóbal Redondo, Pedro Mingot Linares, Gabriel Gómez and Sancho de Zaballos on Feb. 9 or 10, 1571. (Engravings by Melchior Küssel, in Mathias Tanner, *Societas Jesu usque ad sanguinis et vitae profusionem militans, in Europa, Africa, Asia, et America, contra gentiles, Mahometanos, Judaeos, haereticos, impios, pro Deo, fide, Ecclesia, pietate*) (Prague: Typis Universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae per Joannem Nicolaum Hampel factorem, 1675). (St. Louis University Libraries Special Collections. Material in the public domain.)

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.

Rosary in the rain



Deacon Andy Cirimo prays the Hail, Holy Queen with members of St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, during the parish’s Living Rosary, Saturday morning, Aug. 29. Members of various parish organizations and ministries volunteered at the in-person and livestreamed event on the parish grounds. (Photo/ Mary Sue McClintock)

La hermana Inma deja los Ministerios Étnicos para trabajar en Roma

Trabajó para “romper las barreras del miedo”, y capacitar a líderes parroquiales.

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Después de casi una década de servir a la Diócesis de Richmond en varias capacidades, la Hermana Misionera Comboniana Inma Cuesta, directora de la Oficina de Ministerios Étnicos, se trasladará a Roma para trabajar con la Administración General de su congregación en septiembre.



Sister Inma Cuesta

La Hermana Inma se convirtió en consultora de la Oficina del Ministerio Hispano en 2009. De 2009 a 2010, participó en el diseño de la formación de catequistas en español y en la creación del plan de estudios para la formación de líderes parroquiales en español.

Diseñó la Iniciativa Educativa Segura para Niños, un programa creado para proporcionar una educación de calidad en las escuelas católicas para las familias latinoamericanas de la Diócesis de Richmond.

“Yo fui la que llegó a incluir a las familias latinas para que se unieran a las escuelas católicas, y seguí con este proyecto”, dijo la Hermana Inma.

En 2011, la hermana Inma fue contratada por la diócesis como directora de educación católica hispana.

“Cuando empecé, hice toda la educación religiosa en español, además de la Iniciativa Segura para los Niños”, dijo.

La Hna. Inma diseñó junto con su equipo el currículo del programa de certificación del Ministerio de Discipulado Misionero para líderes parroquiales que se ofrece a través de la Universidad de Dayton, uno de cuyos cursos es la interculturalidad.

Creando visibilidad

Mientras trabajaba con el Ministerio Hispano, la hermana Inma se dio cuenta de la necesidad de que todos los ministerios étnicos de la diócesis fueran más visibles.

En 2019, organizó la oficina de los Ministerios Étnicos para incluir los ministerios hispanos, asiáticos e indígenas americanos y la Oficina para los agro-americanos.

La hermana Inma explicó que la oficina se diseñó como un espacio para que los diferentes ministerios étnicos se conocieran entre sí y para ofrecer una oportunidad a otras personas de la diócesis de conocer y desarrollar la propia competencia intercultural.

“Creo que este es el papel clave de la Oficina de Ministerios Étnicos. Es crear un espacio de encuentro entre las diferentes culturas que forman parte de nuestra diócesis”, dijo.

La hermana Inma dijo que la oficina de los Ministerios Étnicos ha traído más interculturalidad a la diócesis, lo que significa que los diferentes ministerios étnicos se comunican y se mezclan más entre sí, en lugar de interactuar sólo con su propio grupo.

“Y la cosa es que tenemos miedo de la persona que es diversa de nosotros. Y en cambio, ahora, por ejemplo, durante este COVID-19, estamos aprendiendo que no somos tan diversos”, dijo.

“Todos nosotros, somos vulnerables al mismo nivel. Ricos y pobres, gente de América Latina,

gente de África, gente de Asia. Así que todos nosotros, somos iguales. Así que esta vulnerabilidad es lo que más nos aúnan.”

Según la hermana Inma, la oficina de los Ministerios Étnicos se ha propuesto organizar eventos en los que los miembros de la diferentes comunidades étnicas puedan aprender unos de otros. Los eventos no son exclusivos sólo para las comunidades hispanas, asiáticas, nativas americanas o afro

americana. Están abiertos a todos para que todos los miembros de la diócesis tengan la oportunidad de participar en la cultura del encuentro y en la interculturalidad.

“Creo que la belleza de trabajar en la Oficina de los Ministerios Étnicos es aprender de las diferentes culturas y tener la posibilidad de conocer y encontrar a diferentes personas de diferentes culturas y países y simplemente descubrir cómo se puede abordar la misma situación de muchas maneras diferentes. No hay una sola manera”, dijo.



Sister Inma was a tireless advocate for Migrant Ministry

Modelo para las parroquias

Según la Hermana Inma, la Oficina de Ministerios Étnicos debía ser un modelo para que las parroquias construyeran su propio espacio de encuentro.

“Es también como podemos construir un solo cuerpo, como Iglesia dentro de su diversidad. Así es como podemos trabajar juntos a pesar de la barrera crea nuestros idiomas. Cómo podemos interactuar entre nosotros de nuevas maneras en proyectos de la comunidad parroquial. Eso es lo que la Oficina de Ministerios Étnicos intenta animar a la comunidad para hacer a nivel parroquial”, explicó.

La hermana Inma también señaló que el espacio de encuentro ha sido una oportunidad para que todos los ministerios étnicos se den cuenta de que hay las cosas puedes ser gestionadas en diferentes maneras a las propias y así “dar más espacio a los demás.”

“Creo que es un gran desafío, y a veces es necesario mediar y ayudar a las parroquias y sacerdotes a entender esto. Está mejorando, pero sigue siendo algo en lo que tenemos que crecer más”, dijo.

La Hermana Inma dijo que la oficina de los Ministerios Étnicos está en sus etapas iniciales, por lo que su sucesor tiene una base sólida sobre la que construir y ampliar su misión.

“Uno de mis deseos es cómo podemos ayudar a que el ministerio pastoral en español este más presente en las diferentes oficinas del Centro

Pastoral”, dijo, y tener más personal bilingüe en las diferentes oficinas diocesanas, esto sería de gran ayuda en muchas de las oficinas que interactúan con diferentes grupos étnicos.

“Rompiendo barreras”

Además de los programas que ella estableció en la diócesis, la hermana Inma está agradecida de haber sido capaz de reunir a personas de diversos orígenes ayudando a “romper las barreras del miedo (del otro)” y a capacitar a los líderes parroquiales.

Dijo que está lista para las nuevas experiencias y desafíos que Roma le traerá.

“Creo que es un privilegio, y creo que también es una oportunidad”, dijo. “Y así se abrirá un nuevo capítulo en mi vida, y también aprenderé de esa experiencia”.

Aunque la Hermana Inma tuvo su formación inicial en Italia, dijo que volver allí para trabajar será diferente.

“Creo que será un mundo nuevo para mí, especialmente trabajando a nivel macro para toda la congregación, estamos dispersas en 35 países. Así que no será sólo la realidad de Roma,

sino que será la realidad de África, Asia, Oriente Medio, América Latina y Europa. Es diferente”, dijo.

La hermana Inma dijo que el tiempo que ha servido en la Diócesis de Richmond ha sido una bendición porque le ha permitido crecer como persona, como profesional y como mujer religiosa.

“Aprendí mucho en la forma de hacer las cosas y cómo integrar esas formas en mi vida personal y todas estas cosas en la misión de la Iglesia de ciertas maneras”, dijo.

La hermana Inma dijo que lo que más echará de menos de la Diócesis de Richmond será el estar en contacto con las personas de los diferentes ministerios étnicos y ayudarles a crecer y a sentirse capacitados. “Eso es algo que creo que he traído a la diócesis”, dijo.

En una conversación reciente con miembros de la comunidad filipina en la que la hermana Inma les dijo que pensaba que estaban listos para organizarse, una persona le dio las gracias por empoderarnos y creer en ellos. “Y eso es algo que está bien, para animar a otros a que lo hagan. Desde la diócesis les proporcionamos las herramientas, pero creo que ellos pueden hacerlo. Y eso es importante. Creo que ha sido lo que más he aprendido, a creer en otras personas, en su potencial”, dijo.



As Director of Ethnic Ministries, Sr. Inma worked closely with the Office of Black Catholics

Attorney enshrines basilica in Legos

JOSEPHINE VON DOHLEN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — For John Davisson, the past few months of the pandemic in Washington gave him more time to return to a hobby that began during his childhood: making Lego designs.

He started with a few pre-made kits but decided to dip into his own creations — first a replication of his home and then a model of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Davisson and his wife, Amanda Erickson, live near the basilica, so the building has a special place in his life.

“I’ve always thought it was a really remarkable building,” he said. “When you come over the horizon of a hill in D.C., you see the basilica. Especially at night, it’s a really cool sight.”

Fascinated with the building, Davisson said the idea to replicate the basilica with Legos quickly came to fruition when he realized what an interesting project it would be.

“There’s so much detail in the building; it’s such a remarkable structure,” he told the Catholic Standard, archdiocesan newspaper of Washington.

In April, Davisson took several pictures of the exterior of the basilica and used a 3D tour on the basilica’s website to plan as much detail as possible. He used a Lego design software program, Studio, which includes a “full catalog of all the bricks and all of the colors that Lego has ever produced and you can use



John Davisson poses for a photo with a Lego replica of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (CNS photo/courtesy Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception via Catholic Standard)

that as you would architectural design software to come up with the designs and order the pieces,” he said.

“I had done this with our house and really enjoyed the process of designing and building the model,” Davisson said.

Designing the basilica took about one month on the computer program, Davisson said. Figuring out the scale of the replica and choosing what pieces Lego has made in the past that were available — were just some of the challenges that he said he faced, including making sure that the model would be stable.

The Lego creation is modular, so the roof

can be removed to view an interior replication.

“You can separate it into individual segments,” Davisson said. “Part of the challenge was making sure that would all work out.”

The dome of the basilica presented challenges in itself as well, mostly because of its shape in contrast with the average Lego shape.

“The dome was especially hard because Lego is mostly a rectangular medium, and when you’re building an odd shape, that presents a lot of challenges,” he said. “That took several days of work off and on.”

But even though the dome was one of the most difficult parts, Davisson said it ended up being one of his favorites.

“The dome was really complicated,” he said. “The rose windows in particular also took quite a while to puzzle through and were delicate to assemble because they use strange connections to position Lego pieces in a radial fashion, but I think they came out really well, and they look really good in the final project.”

Davisson, who is a full-time attorney, said that he welcomed the project as a good creative outlet during a time when the social aspect of life was much quieter.

“I recommend Lego design to anyone looking for a hobby these days,” he said. “I enjoy the fact that it is a medium that has rules and limitations, and you have to work within those rules and limitations but also within that universe, there are endless creative possibilities.”

Solidarity antidote to selfishness, exploitation, pope says

CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The pleasure of seeing other people face to face and not “screen to screen” as COVID-19 restrictions ease clearly demonstrates that people are social beings and need one another, Pope Francis said.

After six months of livestreamed general audiences, more than 600 people gathered in the San Damaso courtyard of the Apostolic Palace to see Pope Francis in person and listen to his audience talk about the virtue of solidarity.

“The current pandemic has highlighted our interdependence: we are all linked to each other for better or for worse,” he said. “Therefore, to come out of this crisis better than before, we must do so together, all of us, in solidarity. Together, not alone.”

“As a human family, we have our common origin in God; we dwell in a common home, the garden-planet where God placed us; and we have a common destination in Christ,” the pope said.

But when people forget that, he said, interdependence is ignored and inequality and marginalization increase, the social fabric weakens, and the environment deteriorates.

“In an interconnected world, we experience what it means to live in the same ‘global village.’ It’s a beautiful expression — the world is nothing other than a global village because everything is interconnected,” the pope said.

“However, this interdependence does not always transform into solidarity,” he said. “On the contrary,

selfishness — individual, national and by power groups — and ideological rigidity increase structures of sin.”

Solidarity, on the other hand, is rooted in the truth that God created all human beings and created the earth as well, the pope said. Solidarity not only treats both with respect but acts to help when one is in peril. “We build towers and skyscrapers, but we destroy communities,” he said. “We want to be lords of the earth, but we ruin biodiversity and the ecological balance.”

For Christians, he said, the source of true solidarity is the Holy Spirit.

At Pentecost, the Spirit descended upon the disciples and created a community united by faith, “united in diversity and in solidarity,” the pope said. “Diversity and solidarity joined in harmony. This is the path. A diversity with solidarity has the ‘antibodies’ necessary so that each person’s individuality — which is a unique and unrepeatable gift — does not get sick with individualism, selfishness.”

“In the midst of crises,” he said, “a solidarity guided by faith enables us to translate the love of God in our globalized culture, not by building towers or walls — and how many walls are being built today that divide, but then collapse — but by interweaving communities and sustaining processes of growth that are truly human and solid.”

Pilgrims and visitors who wanted to attend the audience could do so without tickets as long as they wore a face mask and had their temperatures checked by members of the Knights of Malta standing under the colonnade around St. Peter’s Square.

Creation

Continued from Page 7

diversity, spiraling climate disasters and unjust impact of the current pandemic on the poor and vulnerable: all these are a wake-up call in the face of our rampant greed and consumption,” the pope said.

Humanity, he said, must stop excessively consuming the Earth’s resources and “pushing the planet beyond its limits.”

“Our constant demand for growth and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting the natural world,” the pope said. “Forests are leached, topsoil erodes, fields fail, deserts advance, seas acidify and storms intensify. Creation is groaning!”

The coronavirus pandemic, he added, “has given us a chance to develop new ways of living” and “has led us to rediscover simpler and sustainable lifestyles.”

Citing St. John Paul II’s assertion that corporate misconduct is a “new version of colonialism,” Pope Francis called for the protection of indigenous communities from business practices which “shamefully exploit poorer countries and communities desperately seeking economic development.”

“We must use this decisive moment to end our superfluous and destructive goals and activities, and to cultivate values, connections and activities that are life-giving,” the pope said.

Follow Arocho on Twitter: @arochoju