



Bicentennial 'new springtime of faith'

Bishop links past, future at Mass for 200th anniversary

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

Saturday, July 11, was the 200th anniversary of the day on which the Diocese of Richmond was founded — one of the first seven dioceses in the United States. That alone was to be celebrated this day with representatives from the diocese's 138 parishes.

But COVID-19, as it has done for more than four months, changed plans. It necessitated the postponement of the June 6 ordination Mass of two priests, Anthony Ferguson for the Diocese of Richmond, and Julio Reyes for the Diocese of Zacatecoluca, El Salvador, and the May 23 ordination Mass for a transitional deacon, Thomas Lawrence, for the Diocese of Richmond.

They were included in the celebration of the bicentennial Mass, which was livestreamed. Streamed across the diocese's Facebook, Twitter and YouTube platforms, the Mass reached 13,942 people as of Tuesday, July 21.

Bishop Knestout ordained Father Reyes on behalf of Bishop Elías Bolaños, bishop of Zacatecoluca. He has been sponsored by the Diocese of Richmond for his seminary formation and will serve the diocese for the first years of his priestly ministry.

While ordinations and historic diocesan events usually fill the cathedral with nearly 1,000 worshipers, state-imposed limits on the size of gatherings resulted in a congregation of 230 people, including 44 priests. All wore masks and were seated at least 6 feet apart.

Bishop Barry C. Knestout began his homily by noting that the first drafts of William Butler Yeats' poem "The Second Coming" were originally titled "The Second Birth."

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Above: Following their election as candidates for priesthood, Anthony Ferguson and Juilo Reyes are acknowledged by the congregation at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, during the Mass at which they were ordained, Saturday, July 11. Father Ferguson was ordained for the Diocese of Richmond, Va.; Father Reyes for the Diocese of Zacatecoluca, El Salvador. The Mass also marked the 200th anniversary of the Diocese of Richmond. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, worshipers observed social distancing and wore masks during the liturgy. Left: Sister Bethany and Sister Magdalena, Daughters of St. Paul, take a selfie with Father Anthony Ferguson. More photos, Page 3.

(Photos/Vy Barto)

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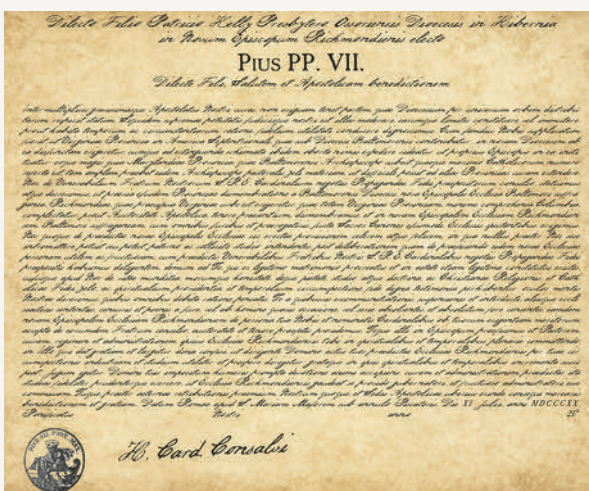
TRANSLATION OF THE APOSTOLIC BRIEF FOUNDING THE DIOCESE OF RICHMOND

To Our Beloved Son Patrick Kelly, Priest of the Diocese of Ossory in Ireland, elected as the New Bishop of Richmond

Pope Pius VII

Beloved Son, Greeting and Apostolic blessing

Among the multiple and weightiest responsibilities of Our Apostolate, that which concerns the status of Dioceses spread throughout the whole world holds no small part. For indeed it pertains to our supreme power and judgment to regulate them and to set or change their boundaries as We determine leads to the benefit of the faithful, taking into account the times and circumstances. Since now for a long time it has been implored of Us that the State of Virginia in North America, which was enclosed in the Diocese of Baltimore, be erected into a new Diocese separated from it, and since it seems to be very expedient for the extinction of the schisms which have arisen in it that a Bishop of its own be established in it; even more because the State of Maryland, which is subject to the Archbishop of Baltimore and which is filled with a very large number of Catholics, furnishes the same Archbishop with such ample matter for pastoral zeal that he can with difficulty extend his care to other States, We, upon the advice of Our Venerable Brothers the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church set over the affairs of the Propagation of the Faith, have established and decreed that, after the separation of the said State from the Diocese of Baltimore, a new Episcopal Church, suffragan of Baltimore, should be erected at Richmond, which is the capital city of Virginia, and that it should embrace the whole State of Virginia, not including [the District of] Columbia, as by Apostolic Authority and the tenor of the present decree We separate and erect it as a new Episcopal Church of Richmond, suffragan of Baltimore, with all the rights and prerogatives belonging to these kinds of Churches according



to the Sacred Canons.

We also, intending with paternal and solicitous zeal, in which no one besides Ourselves could or can inject himself, to provide quickly and felicitously for the aforesaid new Episcopal Church thus erected, after a diligent and fruitful deliberation that We have had with Our aforesaid Venerable Brothers the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church in charge of the affairs of the Propagation of the Faith about appointing a person for the same new Church, have directed the eyes of Our mind at last to You, who have been procreated from a legitimate matrimony and are also of legitimate age and of whose purity of life, probity of conduct, as well as piety, assiduity, and learning and zeal for the Christian Religion and the Catholic Faith, and foresight in spiritual matters and caution in temporal matters trustworthy testimonies are furnished, all these things having been considered with due reflection, absolving you and believing that you will be absolved from any sentences of excommunication, suspension, or interdict, and from any other ecclesiastical sentences, censures, and penalties imposed by law, or by man on any occasion, or serially, We provide this same new Episcopal Church of Richmond with your person acceptable to Us and the named Cardinals because of the claim of

your merits. And by the advice of the same Brothers, by the afore-mentioned authority and tenor, We set you over it as Bishop and Pastor, fully committing to you the care, government, and administration of the Church of Richmond in spiritual and temporal matters, trusting in Him, who gives grace and bestows gifts, that as the Lord guides your actions the aforesaid Church of Richmond will be beneficially and prosperously directed though your diligence of foresight and zeal and will experience pleasing increases in spiritual and temporal matters. Accepting therefore with ready devotion of spirit the Lord's yoke laid on your shoulders, may you so faithfully and prudently carry out the aforesaid care and administration that the Church of Richmond may rejoice that it has been committed to a prudent governor and productive administrator. And may you, besides the reward of eternal retribution, more copiously merit to attain therefrom also Our and the Apostolic See's blessing and favor.

Given at Rome at St. Mary Major under the ring of the Fisherman, the Eleventh Day of July in the year 1820, the twenty-first of Our Pontificate.

H. Card. Consalvi

Writer's note: The signature on this document, H. Card. Consalvi, is the Latin abbreviation for Hercules Cardinalis Consalvi. The name refers to Ercole (Latin: Hercules) Consalvi, a deacon and cardinal of the Church. At the time the Diocese of Richmond was founded, he was the Vatican secretary of state (1814–1823), and became the pro-prefect (1822–1824) and then prefect (1824) of Propaganda Fidei, the Vatican department in charge of overseas missions. Cardinal Francesco Fontana was the prefect of Propaganda Fidei (1818–1822) when the Diocese of Richmond was founded.

The translation of this document was done by Msgr. Robert Trisco, professor emeritus of Church history at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

DOUBLE JUBILEE

1820 TIME CAPSULE 2020

IN 1995, DIOCESE CELEBRATED A DOUBLE JUBILEE

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.

In 1995, the Diocese of Richmond marked the 175th anniversary of its founding (1820), and Walter F. Sullivan, the tenth bishop of Richmond (1974–2003), celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination as bishop (1970).

The diocesan jubilee was a yearlong event. Each month, Bishop Sullivan celebrated Mass in a historic church in one region of the diocese. An interfaith celebration with the Jewish community (Temple Beth Ahava) and an ecumenical (Christian) prayer service were also held in Richmond.

There were two diocesan pilgrimages that year: one to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, and another to Rome, which included a private audience



175th Diocesan Anniversary Mass. (Photo/Diocese Archives)

with Pope St. John Paul II (reigned 1978–2005).

The anniversary year concluded with a diocesan-wide Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, on Saturday, Dec. 2. In addition to many priests and lay people, numerous bishops from surrounding dioceses participated, along with the apostolic pro-nuncio (Vatican ambassador).

Bishop Sullivan, who led the diocesan jubilee, and who was celebrating a significant anniversary of his own, was ordained a priest for the Diocese

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CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

Bishop Knestout's column is scheduled to return in the Sept. 7 issue of The Catholic Virginian.



Above: As cantor Lauren Clay Tomkins (red choir robe) chants the Litany of the Saints, the elect lie prostrate in an act of humble prayer and surrender to God. The congregation did not sing during the Mass due to COVID-19 restrictions. (Photo/Vy Barto) Right: Bishop Barry C. Knestout lays hands on Anthony Ferguson signifying the conferral of the Holy Spirit. (Photo/Whitten Cluff)



Friends of Father Julio Reyes — Wayne and Cindy Parent from St. Mary, Lovingson; Camilo Tejada from Our Lady of Lourdes, Richmond; and Manuel and Guadalupe Tejada from St. Augustine, Chesterfield — pray the Lord’s Prayer during the Mass. (Photo/Whitten Cluff)



Deacon Bob Giovenco from St. Bridget, Richmond, vests Tom Lawrence during the Mass at which the latter was ordained a transitional deacon. St. Bridget is Deacon Lawrence’s home parish. (Photo/Whitten Cluff)



Far left: Julio Reyes joins hands with Bishop Knestout as a sign of fidelity and obedience to the bishop and his successors. Bishop Knestout ordained him on behalf of Bishop Elías Bolaños, bishop of Zacatecoluca. Father Reyes has been sponsored by the Diocese of Richmond for his seminary formation and will serve the diocese for the first years of his priestly ministry. (Photo/Whitten Cluff) Left: Priests from throughout the diocese concelebrate the Mass. (Photo/Vy Barto)

Book offers appreciation of ‘Church perseverance’

Bicentennial publication highlights people who formed diocese

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

The 391 pages of “Shine Like Stars,” the Diocese of Richmond’s bicentennial coffee table book, have been in the making for 200 years. It goes back even longer if one begins with the arrival of the Jesuit martyrs in 1570, according to Father Anthony Marques, chair of the Bicentennial Task Force.

A plan for the book began to take shape in 2017 when the late Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo was preparing to retire.

A group met with the publisher, Dr. Claude-Bernard Costecalde, to discuss implementing a plan, and parishes and schools were asked to provide a summary of their respective histories.

Diocesan archivist Edie Jeter and her staff person, Katie Lemza, began organizing the histories and photographs.

According to Anne Edwards, special assistant and advisor to the bishop, much of the material came from Jesuit Father Gerald Fogarty, who wrote “Commonwealth Catholicism: A History of the Catholic

Church in Virginia,” published in 2001.

“I couldn’t possibly not give him some credit for this dream that he planted in my soul many years ago to have a museum and an archival repository, and eventually this book was born out of that,” Edwards said.

For the next few years, a team consisting of Edwards, Father Marques, Jeter, Ann Niermeyer and Michael School steered the direction of “Shine Like Stars.”

While helping to compile the book, Edwards said she was fascinated by “all these men and women who made the Catholic experience in Virginia what it is.”

Father Marques noted he felt he had gotten to know the people about whom he read.

“I just found that I had a sense of their character, their personality even. So, for me, the takeaway was I feel that I am truly part of this family that has many, many generations going back, and it’s hard to describe what that is, but it’s a privilege,” he said.

During his ad limina visit to Rome in December 2019, Bishop Barry C. Knestout gave the first

copy of “Shine Like Stars” to Pope Francis.

“I don’t know if he’ll read it, but that doesn’t matter. I know that book will find its way into the archives, and somebody will,” said Edwards. “And now, as they say, it’s in the book for the ages.”

Father Marques hopes that those who peruse “Shine Like Stars” will develop an appreciation for the “perseverance of the Church” and “all of the contributions that made that possible.”

“The diocese is the institution, but it’s there because there are people who live in a certain place and have certain needs and are trying to live out their faith,” said Father Marques. “We’re here because other men and women sacrificed for their faith.”

Edwards said she has a “natural passion and love” for the history of the Church.

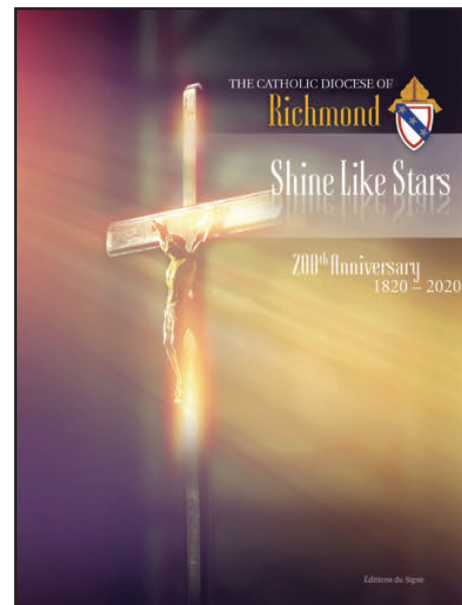
“Whenever we can do something that imparts that knowledge to the world, it just is another step on our journey. I feel personally responsible to uphold the memory of the people who have gone before us. So, to me, it was such a great privilege to

be able to do that,” she said.

While COVID-19 caused some of the diocese’s bicentennial plans to be modified, “Shine Like Stars” was published and distributed before the pandemic.

“This is another way for people to be a part of the celebration, even with COVID,” said Father Marques.

Editor’s note: To purchase a copy of “Shine Like Stars,” please contact your parish.



Mass

Continued from Page 1

“The phrase ‘second coming’ sounds very apocalyptic and foreboding, but the phrase ‘second birth’ sounds hopeful and scriptural,” he said. “For our bicentennial we ask God to grace us with a new birth, a new springtime of faith.”

Noting that in the first line of the poem Yeats wrote “the center cannot hold,” the bishop said that it is used to describe how the political center is lost due to polarization.

“As we celebrate 200 years as a diocese, amid a time of crisis and pandemic, we are reminded as bishop, priests, deacons, consecrated and the entire people of God, that we are called to be a people always centered on Christ,” Bishop Knestout said. “We are called to be people holding the center — seeking union and communion with God and one another.”

There is no place for self-centeredness, nor for centeredness focused on ideas, ideology, movements and activities, the bishop said.

“We can only find and hold the center when we are centered on Christ,” he said. “Our local Church of Richmond has a long, significant and fruitful history, as it is centered in Christ.”

Bishop Knestout provided a brief explanation of the diocese’s early days, noting it had always been “on the periphery, not the center.”

“Our parishes have for most of our history been small, far flung and poor,” he said. “But this, oddly enough, without a large influential Catholic culture and Catholic population, has allowed us — has required of us — to place Christ and his Church very much at our center.”

Catholics persevered in faith, according to the bishop, despite chronic challenges from shortage of priests, insufficient funds, Civil War and the

“social ills of racism and religious bigotry.”

“In good times or bad, God has never abandoned us,” Bishop Knestout said. “Moved by this conviction, Catholics respond to the needs

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- BISHOP BARRY C. KNESTOUT

around us by making sacrifices for the sake of the Church, for the poor and for the common good by seeking ways to alleviate the pain of others. As we grapple with the pandemic and political and cultural turmoil, we are strengthened to serve others and give witness to our faith.”

The bishop reiterated the diocese’s bicentennial theme of communion and mission as he spoke about those to be ordained.

“As we celebrate our communion centered in Christ and strengthened by this communion

to go out on mission to the peripheries in charity, service and evangelization, it is fitting that we also ordain those who will serve this Church as deacons and priests,” Bishop Knestout said.

He noted that communion and mission were central to the ministry of the ordained.

“By these two inspirations and focuses, the people of God and the people of Virginia are led to a new birth, a new springtime of faith. This new birth begins in labor, in challenges, in suffering,” Bishop Knestout said. “It begins in the suffering and messiness of struggle and want, battered and tempted by the allure of isolating independence. And seeking grace to overcome temptations toward rebellious passions, we always return to the center, to Christ, to communion.”

During the Mass, relics of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Katharine Drexel and St. John Neumann were on display, as was a replica of the apostolic brief founding the Diocese of Richmond.

Bishop Knestout used the crozier of Bishop Walter F. Sullivan, 11th bishop of the diocese. The chalice used during Mass belonged to Bishop Augustine van de Vyver, sixth bishop of the diocese.

The night before the bicentennial ordination Mass, Bishop Knestout celebrated the Chrism Mass which was originally scheduled for April 6, Monday in Holy Week. According to the diocesan Office of Worship, the congregation was composed of 60 priests, seven deacons, 46 members of the laity and 24 seminarians.

The livestream of the Chrism Mass — during which the bishop blessed the oil of the sick and the oil of the catechumens, and consecrated the sacred chrism — was broadcast on the diocesan Facebook, Twitter and YouTube platforms and has reached 5,193 people as of July 21.

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

Technology vital to parishes in midst of COVID-19

Livestreaming, new ways of using social media keep parishioners connected

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

"Necessity is the mother of invention."
- PLATO

For parishes in the Diocese of Richmond, one of the "inventions" to surface as a result of COVID-19 was the use of technology in order to stay connected with parishioners once Bishop Barry C. Knestout suspended the celebration of public Masses on March 16.

Since March, the Catholic Community Foundation has been with parishes "every step of the way," according to Alex Previtera, director of development and operations, in helping them get comfortable with technology and in utilizing social media.

"We wanted to show parishes how to connect with parishioners at this time," he said. "We helped them with offertory support, but it was more than offertory. It was really important to have livestreaming of Masses and utilization of social media to connect with people through live Sunday Mass. Getting people to feel connected has been our big focus."

According to executive director Margaret Keightley, CCF knew prior to COVID-19 that it was "vital that we get more digitally savvy" in parishes and the diocese.

"This just made it more important and set up the timeline, and it probably made people who were leery of the need or their ability to optimize their digital tools," she said. "It made them have to use it."

Previtera added, "COVID has forced us to use technology more effectively. Many parishes will be utilizing social media more in the future now that they have more



Vera Mercalde, 98, grandmother of Father Anthony Ferguson, watches the livestream of his ordination Mass from her nursing home on Saturday, July 11. The Mass also commemorated the bicentennial of the founding of the Diocese of Richmond. The livestream reached 13,942 people through Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. (Photo provided)

comfort with it."

'Extremely positive' response

Livestreaming Sunday Masses was among the first projects the diocese and its parishes undertook when the public celebration of Masses was suspended.

Beginning Sunday, March 22, the Mass during which Bishop Knestout consecrated the Diocese of Richmond to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was livestreamed from the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. It received 6,304 views on YouTube.

Bishop Knestout's livestreamed Holy Week liturgies — including Palm Sunday and the Sacred Triduum — and Easter Sunday reached a combined 37,435 screens across Facebook and YouTube. The diocese has since begun streaming via Twitter as well. A virtual Holy Week

mission, April 6-8, combined to reach nearly 24,000 screens.

Livestreaming Masses — one in English, one in Spanish — at Sacred Heart, Danville, elicited an "extremely positive" response from parishioners, according to Father Jonathan Goertz, pastor.

"It meant a lot to folks in the midst of so much uncertainty to know that they could still — on Sunday morning, at the same time — go to Mass in their own church," he said. "(It was) a little bit of a different experience in pajamas in your kitchen, but still, to know that Father is there, he's celebrating Mass, blood and wine are becoming Jesus Christ, and I know that other people are participating in that, too."

Each of the Masses gets 250 views, according to Cecilia Yeager, parish communications coordinator.

Masses livestreamed on Tuesday-Friday get 100 views each.

Father Goertz was pleased with something he hadn't anticipated.

"Sometimes folks would offer a Mass intention, maybe for a relative who had passed away, and all the other family members from wherever they are could come and log in to that Mass together," he said. "So even folks who are scattered all over the country could in a sense worship together in a Mass offered for their late grandmother."

'We can do this'

At Star of the Sea, Virginia Beach, with 600-800 active families, Father Esteban "Steve" DeLeon credits Jessica Kwiatkowski, business manager, and Grace Jones, secretary, for encouraging him to use technology.

He recalled that when they learned celebration of Masses was suspended, "They said, 'Father, we can do it.' 'What can we do?' 'We can livestream Mass.' And we did — just on an iPhone."

Although some parishioners have returned to the celebration of Mass in church, Father DeLeon continues to livestream Mass.

"People are starting to come back, but some are still being very careful," he said. "They say, 'Please continue to do this, Father. We are not ready to go back.'"

The Sunday Mass gets 200-250 live views, according to the priest, but when it is posted to YouTube, there are as many as 800 views. Daily Mass has 300-350 views.

'All over the place'

In planning the livestream of Mass at St. Thomas More, Lynchburg, Msgr. Michael McCarron, pastor, and the staff wanted to "try to do

See Technology, Page 11

Parishioners respond generously via online giving

Despite suspension of Masses, some parishes see steady income

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

When the celebration of public Masses stopped on March 16, so, too, did the traditional Sunday collection. No congregations. No baskets to pass. No in-person contributions.

For parishes that did not have a system for online giving, the Catholic Community Foundation established offertory.richmonddiocese.org so parishioners could still contribute to their respective parishes.

According to Margaret Keightley, executive director of the CCF, when the site was launched, fewer than half of the 138 parishes offered an online giving option. Now, 98 parishes provide it.

Keightley said pastors "got out-

side their comfort zone" during the suspension as they learned a different way of asking people for money.

"They reminded people that the lights had to stay on and ministries needed to continue," she said. "People have responded to supporting ministry during the shutdown."

Noting that CCF was "100% focused" on helping pastors with the offertory, Keightley said, "Offertory is only down 5% as a whole. Some are up. Some are down more than that. This compares very favorably nationally as many dioceses are reporting 20-30% down."

Alex Previtera, CCF's director of development and operations, credited a "tremendous spirit of goodwill built between the diocese, CCF, the pastors and parishes" for people contributing.

'Not a suggestion; an obligation'

According to Father Esteban "Steve" DeLeon, pastor of Star of the Sea, Virginia Beach, his parish established e-giving the week before Masses were suspended.

"We worked hard, and we were able to set it up, and it's working very well," he said. "People are still very generous. We have not increased significantly, but I am very happy about it."

Most of the time, whether it was at a livestreamed Mass or on one of the other video projects he undertook, Father Nick Redmond, parochial vicar at St. Joseph, Petersburg, encouraged viewers to give.

"I remind them to give because giving is something that God has

asked them to do," he said, noting giving "is not a suggestion, but an obligation."

"The work of the Church is essential for the salvation of souls. And if we want the salvation of souls, then the Church has to be supported," Father Redmond said. "So I have no problem telling that to people."

He said St. Joseph parishioners have been "very, very generous."

"My understanding is that our numbers are holding steady, if not going up in some cases," Father Redmond said. "A lot of people have shifted to online giving, and especially recurring giving, and that's really helpful because it allows us to plan and to be assured of the continued financial support."

See Giving, Page 12

Hiroshima anniversary reminder: Abolish nuclear arms

GUEST COMMENTARY
DEACON CHRIS BARRETT

Thursday, Aug. 6, marks the 75th anniversary of the bombing of civilian men, women and children in Hiroshima, Japan. This is not an occasion to judge President Truman or even debate his decision, which caused the deaths of about 150,000 people — equivalent to killing every citizen of Newport News.

Now is the time to acknowledge, accept and act upon Catholic Church teaching on this matter of faith and morals.

“The threat of the use of nuclear weapons, as well as their very possession, is to be firmly condemned,” Pope Francis said in 2017.

The popes have been consistent and clear on this, going back to St. Pope John XXIII’s 1963 encyclical “Pacem In Terris,” St. Pope Paul VI’s address to the United Nations in 1965 and St. John Paul II’s speech in 1981 at Hiroshima itself. They “see the big picture” and are not beholden to any government, political parties or corporations.

The Vatican was the first nation to sign and ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017, which has 81 signatories. The United States has not signed, but the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in its 1993 statement “The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace,” put it plainly: “The moral task is to abolish these weapons entirely.”

The citizens of the nine nuclear weapons nations have been fed euphemisms to conceal the abomination of indiscriminately targeting babies in their playpens, kids in their classrooms, teens on their phones, grannies in their rockers, pregnant women and their unborn children.

We’ve been told these weapons are necessary for “deterrence,” that it’s noble and just to threaten the incineration of every human being in targeted cities. Could this possibly be from the mind of Christ? Weapons of “mass destruction” are truly weapons of mass murder.

According to a 2019 report from the Arms Control Association, there are nearly 14,000 nuclear warheads — almost all of them American and Russian. We don’t

have to live this way. We can’t go on living this way. So, what can I, one person, do?

- Add nuclear disarmament to my own discipleship agenda.
- Ask my parish, campus ministry and school leaders to make it a priority for prayer, study and action.
- Join one of the many agencies of change, e.g., the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons or Pax Christi, a Catholic peace movement.
- Frequently visit www.usccb.org and the bishops’ Issues and Actions page, and their menu of Human Life and Dignity topics, for action alerts, e.g., the urgency of extending the START Treaty.
- Add this to the pro-life issues upon which I cast my votes. Witness for peace in our diocese, especially in Hampton Roads, where 12 Columbia class submarines are scheduled for production by Newport

News Shipbuilding and are slated to be in use until 2085(!) at a total cost of over \$350 billion.

■ Each sub will carry 16 missiles, with the combined explosive power of 1,565 Hiroshima-sized bombs, according to the Federation of American Scientists, 2020. To be a voice for nuclear disarmament in Tidewater, contact the Norfolk Catholic Worker at williamsbaggarly@gmail.com.

Nuclear weapons’ design, production, stockpiling, deployment, targeting, threatening, “detering” and the “theft from the poor” (Dwight Eisenhower) which those expenditures constitute surely are social sins for which all of us, as voters and taxpayers, share responsibility.

Nuclear Disarmament Day will be a great day, every anniversary of which will be a happy anniversary.

Deacon Chris Barrett serves at St. Elizabeth, Richmond.

Pius XI’s words echo today

The bicentennial time capsule “A Civic Examination of Conscience on the Eve of War” (Catholic Virginian, July 15) reminded me of Pope Pius XI’s 1937 encyclical “Mit Brennender Sorge.”

Our present circumstances are different from those Pius addressed, but we, too, are filled with “deep anxiety and growing surprise” as we watch “hard and unpleasant” events unfold. Pius’ teaching on human dignity, the foundations of a just society and the Christians vocation echo in our day:

“Man as a person possesses rights he holds from God, and which any collectivity must protect against denial, suppression or neglect.... Whoever exalts race, or the people, or the State, or a particular form of State, or the depositories of power, or any other fundamental value of the human community... whoever raises these notions above their standard value and divinizes them to an idolatrous level, distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God....

“This God, this Sovereign Master, has issued commandments whose value is independent of time and space, country and race. As God’s sun shines on every human

face so His law knows neither privilege nor exception. Rulers and subjects, crowned and uncrowned, rich and poor are equally subject to His word.... The commandments of God... are the necessary foundation of all private life and public morality...

“Every true and lasting reform has ultimately sprung from the sanctity of men who were driven by the love of God and of men. Generous, ready to stand to attention to any call from God, yet confident in themselves because confident in their vocation, they grew to the size of beacons and reformers.”

— Aaron Linderman
Ruckersville

Don’t censor letters

I found Monica Carley-Spencer’s demand for censorship of letters appearing in the June 15 Catholic Virginian misguided. The Catholic Virginian already has a strong editorial policy, and it works just fine.

I went back to the Oct. 7, 2019 and March 23, 2020 issues and read the submissions that so offended her because I demand the right to judge these letters for myself.

The Catholic Virginian trusts its readers. I have

been a Roman Catholic for 68 years, attended parochial school, have served as a catechist and as a lector. I doubt very much anything I read in this paper is going to cause me to put on black-face or don Klan robes.

Stay the course and do not give in to the passions of the day.

— Jack Harris
Smithfield

BLM incompatible with Catholicism

Re: Barbara Hughes’ column, “Do serious soul searching this Fourth of July,” (Catholic Virginian, June 29):

Hughes seems to admire the “clear-eyed vision of justice and equality” of today’s young social justice warriors. However, their vision includes destruction of private and public property, attempting to erase history, bullying those who hold opposing views, violence against police officers, and mob rule with the stated end goal to abolish capitalism.

The extreme leftist movement is incompatible with Catholicism and our American rights: it strips us of personal liberty, religious liberty and freedom of self-determination.

Letters

Patrisse Cullors, a co-founder of the Black Lives Matter organization, stated in a July 23, 2015, interview with The Real News, “We actually do have an ideological frame. Myself, and [co-founder] Alicia [Garza], in particular, are trained organizers. We are trained Marxists.”

Maya Angelou once said, “When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.” The extreme leftist leaders of the BLM organization have shown us who they and their followers are. Believe them.

— Mary Miele
Virginia Beach

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.

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Jubilant 'knew this was where I was going to be'

Msgr. Lehman reflects on 40 years of priesthood

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Msgr. Joseph Lehman III has been a part of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond for his entire life. His calling to the priesthood has been part of him for nearly that long as well.

"I was in grade school at St. Mary Star of the Sea here in the diocese, and I kind of grew up thinking I wanted to be a priest," he said.

According to Msgr. Lehman, his mother said that at some time "early on," between him being in second to fourth grade, he mentioned to her that he wanted to be a priest.

Because of his mother's work in the parish and his father helping at the early morning Mass at the Veterans Administration Center, Msgr. Lehman said priests visited their home often.

"I got to know them as real people, and I said, 'This is something I want to do.' It was nothing earth-shattering, no palm on the ground moment. I just knew this was where I was going to be," he said.

After attending St. John Vianney Seminary High School in Richmond, Msgr. Lehman attended St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in Indiana, graduating with a bachelor's degree in biology in 1976.

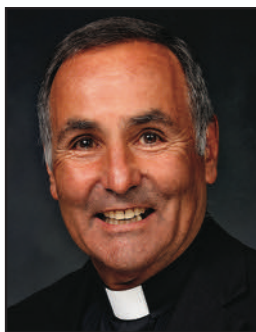
Bishop Walter F. Sullivan asked him to continue his priestly formation at the North American College in Rome to join Msgr. Charlie Kelly, who served on the NAC faculty, so there would be two men from Richmond at the school.

"I did not want to go there," said Msgr. Lehman. "I wanted to go Louvain in Belgium. He said, 'Nope.' I said, 'How about somewhere in New England?' 'Nope.' 'How about sending me back to St. Meinrad?' 'Nope.'"

Msgr. Lehman finally agreed to go to Rome.

The priest said he had not heard good things about community life at the NAC, which was a part of his high school and undergraduate experiences that he greatly valued.

"I ended up going, and our class helped to



Msgr. Joseph Lehman III

bring about community life there. If we don't find it, we make it," he said. "It was a wonderful experience, and I wouldn't trade it for the world now."

Ecumenical work

After completing formation, Msgr. Lehman was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond on Aug. 16, 1980.

Ecumenical work through the Virginia LARCUM Committee, on which he serves as ecumenical and inter-religious officer, and the Virginia Council of Churches has been an integral part of his ministry.

"I've really been doing that for a long time," he said. "Bringing other Christian people an awareness of the Latin Catholic faith – that's been a real joy."

In 2002, when Bishop Sullivan was preparing to retire, then-Father Lehman was named a monsignor.

"It was a great surprise," said the priest.

He explained that Bishop Sullivan had recognized priests and laypeople "who were representing different faces of his ministry as bishop" of the Diocese of Richmond.

Because of the bishop's interest in ecumenical and interfaith work, he recommended to Pope John Paul II that Msgr. Lehman be given that honor.

Joy in parish ministry

In addition to his ecumenical work, Msgr. Lehman has found happiness in celebrating the Eucharist, being with people in the parish, working with couples preparing for marriage and keeping up with them, and being with people as they transition from this life to the next.

"Recently a number of people have died when we were praying, and it's been a really beautiful grace moment for me," he said.

About six months ago, the priest came across a quote from Thomas Merton that "just really resonated."

According to Msgr. Lehman, the message expressed by Merton was that in his photography, Merton did not want to rearrange a picture, but find the beauty within the existing image.

"So, I think that's what has been the key to being a happy priest. To always find the beauty in the moment and not try to rearrange the scene because it's God's scene and not my own," he explained. "There's beauty everywhere, and I think optimism is also part of my nature, so I think those kinds of things help."

Msgr. Lehman said that "all those prayers," the Eucharist and being among the people in their vulnerability and joys have also helped him "feel fulfilled and feel like there's a place (for his ministry)."

He currently serves as pastor of St. Bede, Williamsburg. Effective August 17, he will also serve as rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Williamsburg.

Beauty amid ugliness

Previous assignments include serving as pastor of Holy Cross, Lynchburg (1980-1984); Resurrection, Moneta (1984-1988 and 2005-2009); Holy Name of Mary, Bedford (1984-1988); Christ the King, Norfolk (1988-1997); Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke (1997-2019); and St. Francis of Assisi, Rocky Mount (2005-2009).

He also served as associate director of St. Francis of Assisi, Rocky Mount, and Resurrection, Moneta (2005-2009); and as administrator of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem (2016).

Msgr. Lehman said that priesthood has been what he expected it to be even in the midst of the challenging times the Church has experienced.

"Even in all the ugliness, there is still some beauty," he said. "It's challenging, but it does bring forth creativity, and I like that."

Rather than on Aug. 16, Msgr. Lehman said he plans to celebrate his 40th anniversary "very quietly later" because "every day is a celebration."

In the meantime?

"Onward to 50, God willing," he said.

Report urges reforms to forestall Church financial crisis

DENNIS SADOWSKI
Catholic News Service

CLEVELAND — Broad reforms that would contribute to greater accountability and transparency regarding Church finances are needed to address the financial crisis the Church faces and is intensifying because of the coronavirus pandemic, said a report emerging from a winter summit of lay, religious and clergy leaders.

The report assembled by the Leadership Roundtable from February's 2020 Catholic Partnership Summit called for the Vatican and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to "create structures and laws for ethical financial leadership."

The document, "We Are the Body of Christ: Creating a Culture of Co-Responsible Leadership," also offered recommendations that emerged from three other sessions during the two-day summit.

Recommendations focused on the development of plans for co-responsible governance of the Church by laity and bishops, transforming relationships within the Church to build a "new culture of leadership," and welcoming young people into Church leadership roles to allow their voices to be heard.

However, it is the summit's proposals regarding financial reform that garnered the highest priority from the Leadership Roundtable.

Follow pope's directive

The report suggested the structure for financial reform would be patterned on the call by Pope Francis in his 2019 "motu proprio" "Vos Estis Lux Mundi" ("You are the light of the world") and the steps the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops took in 2002 to adopt the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People."

The pope's "motu proprio" emerged from a gathering of the leaders of bishops' conferences around the world to address the Church's response to the clergy sexual abuse crisis. It details procedures for reporting complaints of sexual abuse of minors or of vulnerable persons by clerics and it holds bishops accountable for actions or omissions relating to the handling of such reports.

The charter outlined diocesan procedures in response to clergy abuse and establishing an audit mechanism to ensure compliance with the it.

Michael Brough, deputy director of the Leadership Roundtable, said the summit of 260 Church leaders from 64 dioceses, including prelates, theologians, canon lawyers, philanthropists and young adults, recommended that similar steps were necessary regarding Church

financial reporting.

From such a gathering a "motu proprio" — meaning on the pope's initiative — would emerge offering "the whole Church ethical financial practices and a mechanism for implementing that consistently around the world," Brough told Catholic News Service July 17.

'Looming crisis'

Summit participants, he said, "believe the Church is facing this looming financial crisis."

Having definitive financial auditing and reporting standards would serve notice that Church officials were serious about handling monetary resources from parishioners and donors responsibly, Brough explained.

The reforms could be extended to all Catholic institutions including religious congregations, colleges and universities, national organizations

See Reform, Page 14

SOWING FAITH IN A CATHOLIC FRONTIER: A CONDENSED HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF RICHMOND

Editor's note: Throughout the Catholic Diocese of Richmond's bicentennial year, The Catholic Virginian will publish the history of the diocese in the Shine Like Stars in the World section that will appear in the last issue of each month. The content of this section is provided by the Bicentennial Task Force.

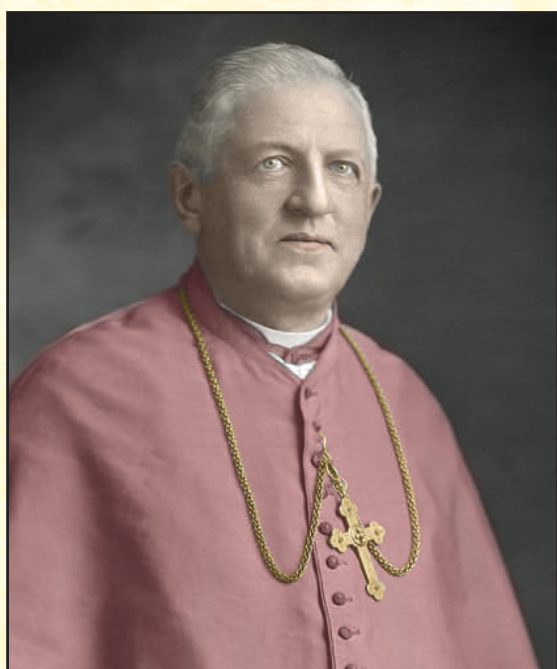
FATHER ANTHONY E. MARQUES
Chair, Catholic Diocese of Richmond
Bicentennial Task Force

Girding Fruit:

A Centennial Diocese (1888–1934)

There were signs of growth and maturity as the diocese reached its centenary (1920): immigrants arrived from Europe and Lebanon (Maronites), expanding the Catholic population in Virginia; evangelization of African Americans continued; a diocesan seminarian, Frank Parater (1897–1920), bequeathed a legacy of holiness; and the entry of the United States into World War I (1917), coupled with advances in transportation, brought development to some regions of the commonwealth.

*Bishop Augustine van de Vyver:
Outreach to African Americans and a
New Cathedral (1889–1911)*



Bishop Augustine van de Vyver

Augustine van de Vyver (1844–1911) succeeded John J. Keane as the sixth bishop of Richmond in 1889. He was born in Belgium and educated at the American College in Louvain, a seminary that trained numerous priests for service in the Richmond Diocese. After his ordination, Van de Vyver came to America and worked in the western reaches of Virginia. He later became vicar general and then diocesan administrator. Two notable benefactions were made to the diocese during Van

de Vyver's time as bishop.

First, St. Katharine Drexel (1858–1955) of Philadelphia, and her half-sister, Louise Morrell, opened two schools in Rock Castle (Powhatan County) for black youth: St. Emma's Industrial and Agricultural College for boys (1895), and St. Francis de Sales School for girls (1899).

The Drexels used the fortune they inherited to fund charitable causes; in Katharine's case, this included the work of the religious order she founded (Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament) to care for African Americans and Native Americans.

Mother Drexel herself visited the schools in Rock Castle (1900), which provided vocational training, secondary education and religious instruction to generations of African Americans. Katharine Drexel was the second native-born American to be canonized (2000).

A second philanthropic gift received during Van de Vyver's episcopate became a monument to the Catholic presence in Virginia: a new cathedral in Richmond. Thomas Fortune Ryan (1851–1928) and his wife, Ida Mary Barry (1854–1917), financed the construction of the edifice. It was said that Ryan, who was from Nelson County, decided to become a Catholic after a long discussion with a conductor on a train ride to Baltimore. True to his middle name, Ryan subsequently made his fortune in tobacco, insurance and transportation. He gave generously to the Catholic Church in New York and Virginia.

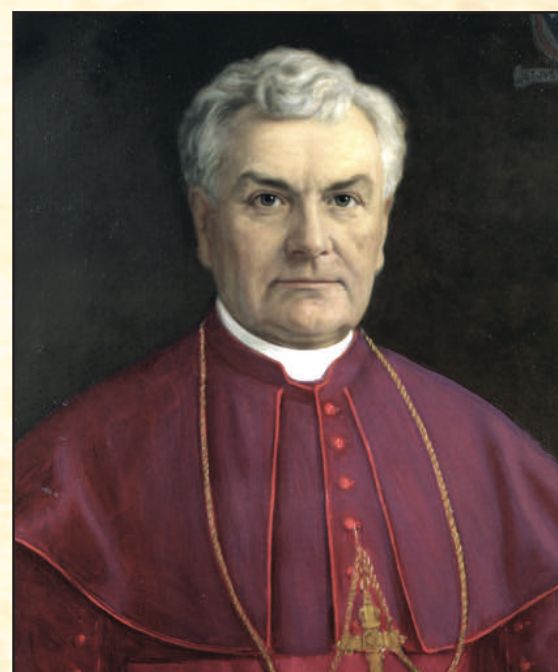
The papal representative to the American hierarchy, Archbishop Diomed Falconio, dedicated the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on Thanksgiving Day, 1906. This event recognized the growth of the Church in Virginia and symbolized the compatibility of the Catholic faith and American society.

Overall, Van de Vyver's tenure witnessed steady growth in the diocese. By the end of his episcopate, the Catholic population numbered 30,000, and there were 60 priests (diocesan and religious), 35 parishes with a resident priest, 48 missions and 40 schools.

There was also a concerted effort to reach out to African Americans, not only by the sisters associated with Katharine Drexel, but also by other religious orders working in new parishes and schools located in cities. Van de Vyver twice sought to resign, but partly at the urging of his priests he remained in office until he died (1911).

*Bishop Denis J. O'Connell:
Americanism, World War I and Post-war Growth
(1912–1926)*

Denis J. O'Connell (1849–1927) was the third native Irishman and the second of three Richmond priests to become diocesan bishop. He returned to the diocese after 30 years away. O'Connell's tenure marked a turning point in the history of the diocese as Tidewater and northern Virginia experienced



Bishop Denis J. O'Connell

their first stage of rapid growth.

O'Connell was a significant figure in the American Church prior to becoming bishop of Richmond. Earlier in his career, he played a leading role in the "Americanism" controversy (1895–1899) that dealt with the question of the Church's identity in the United States. Significantly, the historical experience of the Diocese of Richmond became a point of reference in this dispute.

Americanism sought to adapt Catholicism to the American way of life. Its leaders included James Gibbons and John J. Keane, former bishops of Richmond, and O'Connell, who was the movement's intellectual architect.

O'Connell was a close aide to Gibbons, his mentor and patron, going back to Gibbons' time in North Carolina and Virginia (1868–1877). O'Connell had also been the rector of the North American College seminary in Rome (1885–1895), where he functioned as a liaison between U.S. bishops and the Vatican.

Americanist bishops held that constitutional norms such as religious freedom and the separation of church and state were beneficial to the Catholic Church. They also saw the value of ecumenical collaboration in overcoming ignorance of Catholicism and in reducing anti-Catholic bigotry.

Opponents argued that this program risked obscuring Catholicism's status as the true faith, and that the spirit of American independence would weaken the Church's unity. The Americanist perspective was based on the experience of bishops like Keane and Gibbons as leaders of a religious minority in the Diocese of Richmond.

When Pope Leo XIII condemned some aspects of Americanism (1899), Gibbons denied having ever held such views. The Americanist position on religious liberty was eventually vindicated at Vatican Council II, which declared the freedom of religion to be a human right (1965).

While O'Connell was bishop of Richmond,



Cathedral of the Sacred Heart circa 1906 (Photo/Cook Collection, Valentine Museum)

the death of a seminarian in Rome inscribed a witness of heroic sacrifice in the annals of the diocese. Francis (Frank) J. Parater (b. 1897), a Richmonder and student at the North American College, died unexpectedly at the age of 22 (1920). He courageously offered his life and sufferings “for the spread and success of the Catholic Church in Virginia.” The cause for Frank Parater’s canonization was introduced in 2001.

At the time of Parater’s death, the Richmond Diocese was in the midst of a growth spurt. It began when the United States entered World War I (1917). Catholics, as they had done during the Civil War for either the Union or Confederacy, once more demonstrated their patriotism, this time by supporting the national war effort. In the meantime, a naval base opened in Norfolk that quickly brought thousands of people to the area.

After the war (1918), even as the military demobilized, Norfolk, Hampton Roads and Virginia Beach continued to grow. The invention of the trolley, as well as the construction of new rail lines, fueled this expansion.

Further north, the opening of the Key Bridge (1923) enabled trolley cars to cross the Potomac River, a pivotal development that made northern Virginia a suburb of Washington, D.C. Parishes were opened to accommodate the growing Catholic population in northern Virginia and Tidewater. In several cases, lay persons took the lead in developing existing missions into these new parishes.

O’Connell’s tenure also included the founding of a bureau of Catholic Charities in Richmond (1922), one of the first in the country. This institution evolved from a long tradition of charitable work done by religious sisters and parishes, especially the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the St. Vincent de Paul Auxiliary. By employing professional social workers, Catholic Charities enabled the Richmond Diocese to provide more systematic assistance to the poor for housing, placement in orphanages and legal matters.

Bishop O’Connell resigned in January 1926 due to illness. He was named administrator of the diocese and an honorary archbishop — one year before he died (1927).

CHRONOLOGY OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND – 1889-1926

1889 October 20 Augustine van de Vyver, a priest of Richmond, is ordained the sixth bishop of the diocese.

1895~1899 The “Americanism” controversy over the identity of the Catholic Church in the United States: Cardinal James Gibbons, Archbishop John J. Keane — both former bishops of Richmond — and Msgr. Denis J. O’Connell — a future bishop of the diocese — play a role in the dispute.

1900 St. Katharine Drexel visits Rock Castle, where she and her half-sister, Louise Morrell, founded two schools for African Americans: St. Emma’s (1895) and St. Francis de Sales (1899).

1906 November 29 Archbishop Diomed Falconio, the papal representative to the American hierarchy, dedicates the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Richmond on Thanksgiving Day, highlighting the compatibility of Catholicism and American society.

1912 March 19 Denis J. O’Connell, a priest of Richmond, is installed as the seventh bishop of the diocese.

1914~1918 World War I

1917 April 6 The United States enters World War I by declaring war on Germany; Catholics support the national war effort.

Ca. 1917 Tidewater and northern Virginia experience their initial stage of suburban growth, which results from the United States’ entry into World War I and developments in transportation.

1920 February 7 Frank J. Parater, a Richmond seminarian, dies in Rome. The candidate for canonization (2001) offered his life and sufferings “for the spread and success of the Catholic Church in Virginia.”

1920 July 11 The Diocese of Richmond reaches its centenary.

1922 October 22 A local bureau of Catholic Charities, which provides systematic charitable services to the poor, is founded in Richmond.

1926 April 3 Denis J. O’Connell, having resigned as bishop of Richmond due to illness (January 26) and having served as diocesan administrator, is relieved of his duties.

Why the Church opposes the death penalty



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. My home state recently decided to go forward with the executions of several inmates on death row. As a Catholic, I do not understand the idea of returning death for death, and I see executions as being more about revenge than any kind of justice.

Surely life in prison would suffice, and perhaps the inmate might be rehabilitated at some point and even ask forgiveness from the victim's family. As Catholics, aren't we called to more than this — called to be advocates for peace, love and life? (Southern Indiana)

A. You make the case against the death penalty with cogency and eloquence. I agree with you completely — and more importantly, Pope Francis does, too. In fact, in August 2018, the pope directed that the wording of the Catechism of the Catholic Church be changed to reflect the fact that, in the Church's view, the death penalty is now no longer admissible under any circumstances.

Previous to that, the catechism did not exclude use of the death penalty in "very rare, if not practically nonexistent" cases (No. 2267). That earlier text said this: "Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, the traditional teaching of the

Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor."

But in the new wording, at Pope Francis' direction, the catechism now universally opposes the use of capital punishment. Explaining the change, the new text states:

"Today, however, there is an increasing awareness that the dignity of the person is not lost even after the commission of very serious crimes. In addition, a new understanding has emerged of the significance of penal sanctions imposed by the state. Lastly, more effective systems of detention have been developed, which ensure the due protection of citizens but, at the same time, do not definitively deprive the guilty of the possibility of redemption."

Q. A friend and his wife, along with their daughter, were recently confirmed into the Catholic Church after being Methodists their entire lives, including getting married within the Methodist Church. They were told by some parish officials (laymen) that their marriage is not recognized by the Catholic Church and that they must be "remarried" within the Catholic Church.

That does not sound right to me, but I can't find any specific ruling or teaching on this. The same lay leaders also claimed that their Methodist baptism was not acceptable by the Catholic Church, but I have found letters from bishops stating specifically

that baptisms in the United Methodist Church are recognized by the Catholic Church. (Iloilo City, Philippines)

A. Your instincts are right on target. A marriage between two Protestants, in a Protestant ceremony, is normally recognized by the Catholic Church as a valid marriage, and many Catholic dioceses state this explicitly in their written guidelines. The Diocese of Venice in Florida, for example, says this on its website:

"The Catholic Church recognizes and upholds the validity of marriages of a non-Catholic man and a non-Catholic woman who marry with no impediments, such as the bond of a previous marriage ... and who enter marriage through a form accepted by their Church or ecclesial community and the civil government."

So your friend and his wife would certainly not have to be "remarried" upon their entrance into the Catholic Church. (You are correct, too, about baptism. The vast majority of Protestant baptisms, including those done in the Methodist religion, are recognized as valid by the Catholic Church, and that sacrament does not have to be repeated when a Protestant chooses to become a Catholic.)

Q. I don't understand why, over the last couple of years, I don't see folks bowing at the name of Jesus. It doesn't seem to matter whether they are parishioners, priests or nuns. Is there some new rule on this, or am I just too old-school Catholic? (Lacey, Washington)

A. The custom of bowing at the name of Jesus is a worthy one, and it has a long tradition in the Church. It takes its origin from St. Paul, who wrote in his Letter to the Philippians (2:9-10): "God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every other name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend ... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

The practice was reinforced at the Second Council of Lyons, convened in 1274 by Pope Gregory X, which highlighted the special honor due the sacred name and noted that "whenever that glorious name is recalled, especially during the sacred mysteries of the Mass, everyone should bow the knees of his heart, which he can do even by a bow of his head."

Pope Gregory followed up with a letter to the Dominican Order, which became the foremost promoters of devotion to the Holy Name. In that letter, Pope Gregory said, "We wish that at the pronouncing of that name, chiefly at the holy sacrifice (of Mass), everyone would bow his head in token that interiorly he bends the knee of his heart."

I agree with our letter-writer that, over the past several decades, this practice is followed less widely. I also agree that more people should observe it; it serves as an important reminder of the reverence we owe the divine and reflects an interior desire to honor Jesus, who died on the cross to redeem us.

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

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Personal stories powerful in coronavirus narrative



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

I keep hearing, “These are unprecedented times,” which motivated me to do a little research. Armed with the understanding that history repeats itself, I Googled: Pandemic of 1918, and images of people wearing face masks were among the first to pop up. Some were of medical personnel, but others were street shots of people in the United States.

The photos immediately triggered another popular phrase, “We’ve seen this movie before.” The implication here is that we know how this is going to end. Yet, regarding this pandemic, nothing could be further from the truth. COVID-19 is referred to as the novel virus because of its unpredictability, baffling scientists and challenging previous misconceptions.

Not only has its etiology shifted over the months, but questions remain. Who is susceptible, how is it transmitted and do victims of the virus experience permanent damage after they no longer test positive?

Problems with balance, speech and memory impairment, organ damage and muscle weakness are a few of the symptoms that have surfaced, indicating there is much to be learned about this virus.

Despite the high number of deaths from COVID-19, medical advances over the past century have led to far fewer deaths than occurred during previous pandemics. By contrast, the pandemic of 1918, the deadliest in history, infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide and killed

675,000 Americans. Yet, news reports about it were scant, a stark difference from the way the virus is being reported today.

While the media is often criticized for its seeming obsession with the personal lives of people, it has managed to do something right that was missing from other pandemics. They’ve been shining a light on victims of the virus, their families and people who are at risk, working in the front lines, helping others.

In reading several accounts about the pandemic of 1918, the absence of personal stories was lamented in almost every report. People were seemingly reduced to numbers. Therefore, once the pandemic was over, no one talked about it. It was a disease without a face or human story, which may account for its diminished role in history and the reason lessons learned were quickly forgotten.

The human face is what makes history memorable and life-giving. It connects humans beyond the boundaries of cultures and times, but more importantly human stories touch hearts and change lives.

Storytelling is the most effective and universal means of communicating human experience, educating and grounding people in their common humanity. In an article about religious experience, Salesian Father Joseph F. Chorpennig, who holds a doctorate in historical theology, posited that theology takes as its starting point human experience because people are essentially story listening and storytelling human beings.

No one understood this better than Jesus. His use of parables was the mainstay of his preaching, making them as relevant today as they were 2,000 years ago. It’s been said that the best stories are the ones told after the storyteller stops speaking,

which makes Scripture the greatest story ever told.

Through the ages, Scripture has been proclaimed from the pulpit, studied by both scholars and ordinary people, and prayed over by the young and old, the rich and poor, believers and non-believers.

Scripture never gets old because the Word of God is always relevant, for within every story are multiple stories, including our own. We don’t need to be a farmer to understand the parable of the sower, a doctor to appreciate the story of the Good Samaritan, nor be homeless to be touched by the story of the Prodigal Son.

Whether we’re sharing stories about faith, family, travel or the pandemic, people listen. Over the years, I’ve learned that if eyes begin to glaze over when I’m giving a presentation, the moment I begin telling a story the audience comes alive. Stories invite people to change without lecturing or intimidating. Every movement has its genesis in a story — Black Lives Matter being the most recent example.

No one knows how or when the story of the coronavirus will end, but when people look back, I hope the human stories will continue to be told because that’s where the dying and rising of Christ becomes real. It’s how we learn what it means to love our neighbor, to see Christ in the sick and the poor, the homebound and the marginalized.

Today’s tears are dewfall that can water the soil of hearts for generations to come. In telling stories about the saints, the Church has been making the world fertile and fruitful. May the tradition continue, for we never know whose story will be among the stories about the saints of tomorrow.

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

Challenge yourself to be renewed at Mass



**BELIEVE AS
YOU PRAY**
MSGR. TIMOTHY KEENEY

My niece Bridget is celebrating her wedding this September. Initially, the wedding was going to be a large family celebration with family and friends coming from all over the United States. They all wanted to be together to celebrate with her and her fiancé, Kage.

You probably can see where this is going. With COVID-19, the wedding will now be an intimate family affair with only a handful of us in attendance.

Everyone remains happy for them, but it is a little bittersweet for those who would have been there and now cannot.

Isaiah invites us, on behalf of God who is the groom, to a wedding banquet. It is a meal by which God renews his covenant with his people. This wedding banquet is a prophecy of the wedding between God and his people at the end of time, but it is also foreshadowed in the Eucharist we share each Sunday. We are all invited to the wedding feast of the King without cost, to drink of fine wines and rich fare that delights.

But like my niece’s wedding, there is something bittersweet about the invitation. We are all invited, and indeed some will be able to attend. Like those who would have been invited to my niece’s wedding but for present circumstances

and now cannot come, there are others who still long to come to the Lord’s banquet but cannot at this time. There are still others who sadly have grown weary and no longer listen for the invitation.

Several weeks ago in this column, I wrote about spiritual Communion and how to make participation in the Mass online come alive by an active sense of spiritual Communion when real Communion is not possible. In order to encourage those of you who may have grown weary of livestream Mass or all of the precautions we need to undertake even if we are attending live, I want to offer another truth about our participation in the Mass that might draw us back to what is the core of our worship.

The third Eucharistic Prayer says, “Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church and, recognizing the sacrificial Victim by whose death you willed to reconcile us to yourself, grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ.”

That word, oblation, is a word that might not be very much part of our everyday conversation. It means to make a solemn offering to God, and in his passion and death, and sacramentally in the Eucharist, Jesus make a solemn self-offering of himself to the Father. It is therefore a perfect gift, because Jesus, as the God-man, is the only one capable of making such a perfect gift to God.

That is not the end of what our Eucharistic Prayer prays. It also asks that by our communion we become one body, one spirit in Christ. It is an

invitation for us to make of ourselves a self-oblation to the Father, and here and only here, in this wedding banquet of the Eucharist, we can make a perfect offering to the Father.

That is because Jesus is offering his whole self, head and members, to the Father. The Mass allows us to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to the Father by our union with Jesus.

But why does the Father need our offering? Jesus’ offering of himself is perfect. What can we add? This is the same attitude of the disciples when Jesus asked them to give the people something to eat. “We have nothing here... but five loaves and a couple of fish.”

Jesus chooses to need our little bit. Yes, his sacrifice is perfect, but he asks us to offer our own lives in a real self-oblation, in a real self-sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving united with him on the cross.

We attend Mass to receive the Lord in the Eucharist, by our spiritual Communion or by our real Communion with his Body and Blood. We enter into communion with him so that we can also be one with Jesus in his self-oblation to the Father and thereby make a gift of our own lives.

Challenge yourself to be renewed at Mass not only by making your spiritual Communion, but by offering yourself to your bridegroom Jesus. He can truly make your self-oblation one with his gift of self to the Father. He will bless, break and give your gift to the Father as perfect praise and for the life of the world.

Msgr. Timothy Keeney is pastor of Incarnation, Charlottesville.

**Eighteenth Sunday in
Ordinary Time
Is 55:1-3
Ps 145:8-9, 15-16, 17-18
Rom 8:35, 37-39
Mt 14:13-21**

Nothing's sacred: Parishes targets of hate crimes

Vandalized statues, graffiti, fires among incidents

MIAMI (CNS) — The beheading of a statue of Christ at a Catholic church in the Miami Archdiocese has saddened the parish community of Good Shepherd Church and prompted Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski to call on law enforcement to investigate the incident as a hate crime.

On July 15, the statue at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Southwest Miami-Dade was found with its head chopped off and knocked from its pedestal.

"It is too soon to arrive to any conclusion, but we have seen other churches vandalized around the country. We totally 'condemn' this action. We invite our community to pray for peace," parish officials said in a statement.

"The statue, located outside the church, was on private and sacred property," said Mary Ross Agosta, director of communications for the Archdiocese of Miami. She told the local Fox News affiliate Archbishop Wenski requested investigators consider the vandalism "a hate crime."

The Department of Homeland Security is among the agencies investigating the case.

In recent weeks around the country, angry mobs have toppled statues of figures such as St. Junipero Serra, a Franciscan priest from Spain who founded several



A decapitated statue of Jesus is seen at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Miami, July 15, 2020. (CNS photo/courtesy Florida Catholic)

missions in California.

A wave of recent attacks on Catholic statues includes an unidentified person using red paint to deface a statue of Mary in front of St. Mary's Cathedral in downtown Colorado Springs, Colorado, July 15.

"It does look like a graffiti tag more than anything else," Father David Price, the cathedral's rector,

told local reporters. "I'm not sure there was any sense or meaning behind it."

In the Diocese of Knoxville, Tennessee, Father Manuel Perez, pastor of St. Stephen, Chattanooga, found a statue of Mary on the parish grounds knocked over and beheaded. News reports said the 5-foot-tall statue was worth \$2,000. The missing head has not been found.

As in Florida, the Department of Homeland Security is looking into the incident as a possible hate crime.

"Anytime something like this happens it is disappointing and concerning," said Diocese of Knoxville diocesan spokesman Jim Wogan in a statement. "We don't know if this was the targeted desecration of a sacred statue, or some kind of misguided prank, but it hurts."

A statue of Mary was found defaced July 10 on the grounds of Cathedral Prep School and Seminary in the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York.

Father James Kuroly, Cathedral Prep's rector and president, called the incident "an act of hatred."

"Obviously, this tragedy saddens us deeply," he said in a statement, "but it also renews our hope and faith in the Lord as he has shown his goodness in the many people who have already reached

out to us." He urged prayers "for those who committed this act of vandalism and hatred toward Our Lady and the church."

Police in Boston were likewise investigating a fire that damaged a statue of Mary outside St. Peter Church the evening of July 11. News reports said flowers in Mary's hands were set on fire, causing damage from her arms up to her face.

Fire also claimed much of two Catholic churches, one in Florida and one in California.


In the Diocese of Orlando, Florida, a man crashed his van through the doors of Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in Ocala early in the morning July 11. Once inside, he set the interior of the church ablaze. There were no injuries reported.

Police later apprehended the suspect who had fled the scene, identified as Anthony Steven Shields, 24, who was charged with several felonies, including attempted second-degree murder, arson to a structure and felony fleeing or attempting to elude.

In Los Angeles, a fire ravaged Mission San Gabriel Arcángel Church in the predawn hours of July 11. Investigators have not yet determined what started the blaze that gutted the 230-year-old church.



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Technology

Continued from Page 5

the Mass as we would do the Mass.”

“We intentionally set up in the nave because it was familiar to most people rather than the small chapel,” he said. “We intentionally used parishioners who aren’t actually staff people, but they’re people that people know, to do the readings and things like that.”

Msgr. McCarron wanted the video to be as similar as possible to what worshipers would experience in-person.

“I addressed the issue homiletically, and that helped because it was on a livestream. And that began to spread,” he said. “We get about, by the time it’s all over, up to 1,000 hits on our Mass at given times and days from all over the place.”

He learned where “all over the place” was when he mentioned that the parish wanted to continue livestreaming but that it needed help in buying equipment.

“We got donations from California, Missouri, New Hampshire and all sorts of places,” Msgr. McCarron said. “I was very grateful. We now have the cameras mounted in the nave and we’ll have another one mounted in the chapel later on.”

Doing what is possible

While more than 90% of the parishes are livestreaming Masses, according to Keightley, some are using the technology in ways they hadn’t prior to COVID-19 and the suspension of public Masses.

Father Nick Redmond, parochial vicar at St. Joseph, Petersburg, looked at the disconnection between parishioners and the parish caused by the coronavirus and asked, “What can we do to keep them connected? We can’t be physically connected, but what can we do? My mindset is always, ‘What is possible?’”

He was on his own at the parish from mid-March to mid-May while the pastor, Father Brian Capuano, the diocesan vicar for vocations, was providing formation to seminarians at a retreat center.

In addition to livestreaming daily and Sunday Masses, Father Redmond did a series called “Exploring St. Joseph.” In one segment of the series, he spoke about the church’s bell tower as he climbed steps and a ladder to get into it right around noon.

“As soon as that bell rang, I started praying the Angelus,” he said. “So it was kind of an adventure with a prayerful element. I don’t want adventure for adventure’s sake. I want it to prayerful or theological. The goal is not just to draw people together like we’re just another community organization, but rather to draw people together so we can then be drawn closer to God.”

With help from a parish histo-

rian, he did other series about the church’s stained glass windows, St. Joseph Cemetery and the garden he planted behind the rectory.

Although the primary focus of anything the parish posted to social media, e.g., Father Capuano’s Sunday catechesis, was St. Joseph parishioners and staying connected with them, Father Redmond recognized the potential for evangelization — “reaching outside of our community.”

“On Good Friday I realized our views were in the thousands. I don’t know how many, maybe 4,000. I was like, ‘Wow.’ We’d been getting at most maybe 1,000, at most 500 or 1000, and now all of a sudden, we have like 4,000,” he said. “And I realized we had a bunch of viewers in Brazil! People had shared it, and that’s the nice thing about it, it can be an exponential expansion. But if people in Brazil are watching it, then we can be pretty sure that people in Petersburg are also watching it, and Richmond and around the country. ... And to me, that’s really, really cool.”

Despite the opportunities technology offers, Father Redmond sees a greater need.

“While all this technology is helpful and we make the best of it and we see what’s possible, at the end of the day, we need each other, and we need to be with each other,” he said. “We need Christ in us, and so there’s something of a hole in our heart until we can be back together again.”

Parishioners speak about faith

In looking for “new opportunities” to use social media, Father Goertz and his staff developed “A Few Minutes of Faith” in which he recorded Zoom interviews with parishioners about the importance of faith and how it helped them during the pandemic.

“It became something very special for folks to be able to see other folks speaking about their faith. We really don’t have a forum for that in a lot of other places — society and even kind of the practice of the Church is not really built for folks to share that sort of testimony,” he said. “That meant a lot for folks just to see one another. First of all, to see a familiar face, and then to hear something about their own faith journey and own experience of faith.”

With the technology, according to Father Goertz, the parish “could take advantage of some things that we wouldn’t have been able to do otherwise.”

Among them was livestreaming its May crowning and a novena to Our Lady of Fatima, as well as an online vacation Bible school that involved children talking about specific saints and which included an at-home activity.

“We really got people involved in a way that could have been hard,

with people’s schedules, to do otherwise,” he said.

Staying connected

Thanks to Zoom meetings, parishioners at Star of the Sea have remained connected through faith-sharing groups, the mothers’ prayer group, and parish and finance council meetings, according to Father DeLeon. They also did a virtual vacation Bible school.

“It was amazing! The kids and their parents loved it. It was really amazing. They were able to pull it through,” he said. “Nancy (Liette, religious education coordinator) had this wonderful group of volunteers, teenagers, because she is also the one in charge of Life Team, and she got this very good, active group of volunteers. They did video, they set up the whole thing.”

On Wednesday afternoons, Father DeLeon does a Facebook “check-in” with parishioners to bring them up to date on guidelines from the diocese, things happening in the parish, etc.

“That’s how we got connected with the parishioners,” he said.

Msgr. Joseph Lehman III, pastor of St. Bede, Williamsburg, and Fathers John Baab and Cassidy Stinson, parochial vicars, did what Father Stinson called “the easiest thing in the world.”

The three of us would get together every week and, especially early on in the pandemic, we would just do a livestreamed question and answer session from the rectory,” he said. “It helped keep communication open at a time when a lot of people were really isolated. And we constantly were having people come up to us in the grocery store and in the parish and the office and say how much that in particular really helped.”

Here to stay

Beyond livestreaming Mass, which Msgr. McCarron termed “the greatest of the catechetical sessions we have,” St. Thomas More parishioners will be the beneficiaries of continued livestreams.

“Our outreach beyond the parish has been so successful that I can’t see not livestreaming. And we certainly now like the capability of livestreaming special events and when I do my RCIA talks, for example, we’ll be able to livestream those and things like that,” he said. “It’s now just part of the fabric of what we do.”

Msgr. McCarron advised his brother priests not to fear technology.

“Just go out there and do what you normally do,” he said. “(Parishioners) need someone to say, ‘You’re not isolated. We’re still here. We haven’t forgotten you.’ That’s all they need. Don’t worry about whether or not that’s your talent. It’s everybody’s talent. Everybody who’s been ordained is called to

proclaim the Gospel, so just do it.”

As for what he learned from the using technology as a way of staying connected with parishioners, Father Goertz spoke of it as “incarnational.”

“Jesus became incarnate at a certain time and place and needed to speak to people in the places where they were, in a manner that they could understand. In that sense, we’re doing exactly the same thing now because people live in a digital world, and we need to take the message of the Church there. There are lots of other voices competing in that space, and we need to make sure that ours is one of them.”

Priest offers how-to video for livestreaming

Like other parishes in the Diocese of Richmond, St. Bede, Williamsburg, needed to figure out how to livestream Sunday Mass when the public celebration of Masses was suspended on Tuesday, March 16.

Although he’s tech-savvy, Father Cassidy Stinson, a parochial vicar at the parish, said St. Bede “was in survival mode,” taking stock of what it had available to produce a livestream of the Mass.

“One of the big questions that we had early on was we didn’t know, like many places, how much we would have in terms of financial resources, what we’d be able to work with, so we weren’t really in a position where we felt comfortable trying to go out and invest in this whole new set of technology,” he said.

He learned that the parish had some of the hardware and was able to invest in a few pieces that would enhance the livestream production. He shared what they discovered via a 12-minute instructional video titled “How Our Parish Built A Budget HD Church Livestream System” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQgiMvS6MXg&feature=youtu.be>.

“I know for many parishes, it’s something that’s completely new to them to have to use technology to share their faith in that kind of way or share their liturgy specifically,” Father Stinson said. “So that was really where (the idea of making the video) came from.”

He said he kept the video simple — it covers internet and software, video and audio — in order to take away people’s “fear around using the media for this type of thing.”

“People very often are more capable, have more resources on hand than they realize,” Father Stinson said. “So my hope was that they could watch that, and even if they didn’t do more than just one or two of those things, it would also just kind of open up a new horizon of, you know, as simple as improving people’s experience of the Mass at home by fixing their sound or something like that.”

— Brian T. Olszewski

OPPORTUNITIES

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond seeks an Administrative Assistant to provide administrative support to the Office of Safe Environment in support of diocesan employees and volunteers working with minors and vulnerable adults. The Administrative Assistant will conduct location reviews to ensure compliance with the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People; post training dates on VIRTUS Online to allow for participant registration and assist VIRTUS users and local administrators with database questions, verification, account transfers and updates; receive and review background check results and assist the Director of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance Coordinator in responding to background check questions; receive and process reports from Virginia Department of Social Services Child Protective Services, Virginia State Police Fieldprint and Screening One. The Administrative Assistant will process background checks for Pastoral Center staff, seminarians and clergy, including background checks for 5-year renewal. Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications: Minimum of a high school diploma, related associate's/bachelor's degree preferred; three or more years of related administrative experience. Must possess effective verbal/written communication skills, planning and organizing skills, interpersonal skills and ability to maintain confidentiality. Working knowledge of various computer software is required. Excellent customer service orientation is required. Interested candidates should send a cover letter, résumé, and completed diocesan application to Sara Board, Acting Recruiter, at jobs@richmonddiocese.org. Position is open until filled.

Church of the Redeemer, Mechanicsville, is seeking a FT Parish Secretary. You will be the face of the Church while answering calls and receiving visitors in a welcoming manner. People skills are a must. Primary functions include maintaining census data using Parishsoft; distributing mail; maintaining parish website; creating weekly bulletin; updating kiosk; maintaining parish calendar; assisting chair of our Community Life ministry; and other related duties as requested.

Minimum education requirement of a high school diploma; work experience in secretarial/administrative assistance. Some college preferred. This is a non-exempt position. Must possess computer skills and be proficient in Microsoft Office suit. Candidate must be an active Catholic in good standing; model Catholic Christian values with staff and entire Catholic community; understand and adhere to the Diocesan Guidelines and Procedures. Confidentiality is a must.

Interested candidates should send

complete diocesan application <https://richmonddiocese.org/office-of-human-resources/>, cover letter, résumé and references to rwatson-fields@churchredeemer.org. Must be able to pass a background check. No faxes.

St. Mary Star of the Sea School has the following openings for the 2020-21 school year: part-time special education teacher, part-time Pre-K Montessori teacher, and substitute teachers. To apply, email or send your cover letter, a completed diocesan application form and résumé to Teri Smith at admin@saintmarystarofthesea.com. For additional information, please call the school office at 757-723-6358.

St. Mary Star of the Sea School provides a Christ-centered Catholic education to PK3 through 8th-grade students of all faiths under the leadership of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. The school is located at 14 N. Willard in Hampton, VA.

St. Pius X Catholic Church, Norfolk, is hiring for the following positions:

Part-time (10-15 hours/week) **maintenance worker**. The successful candidate needs to have skill and experience in all areas of maintenance to perform a full scope of minor electrical and plumbing repairs, as well as carpentry and painting skills. Physical requirements include the ability to lift 50 lbs., to walk extensively throughout the workday and to climb ladders and navigate heights such as the roof areas. This position requires a successful clearance by social services, criminal background check and certificate of VIRTUS training, all of which are provided through the parish. Salary is based on diocesan scale and demonstrated experience in the maintenance field.

Immediate opening for a **Communications and Social Media Specialist**.

This is a part-time (20 hours/week) position that reports to the pastor and business manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for creating and sending communications through various social media platforms, maintaining these platforms with the current parish events, the weekly bulletin and bulletin inserts, and maintaining the parish calendar. Some college work in a related field or equivalent education and experience is required. Proficiency with Google apps, Microsoft Office (Publisher, Excel, Word, Power Point), social media tools and experience in web publishing preferred.

Interested candidates should send a completed diocesan application, cover letter, and résumé to church@piusxparish.org.

The Benedictine Schools of Richmond seek an Events Coordinator to successfully plan and implement advancement fundraising events. Primary responsibilities include working

collaboratively with the advancement team and volunteers to plan and execute several annual and special events. The ideal candidate will have at least two years of experience planning and executing events, leading volunteer committees and managing budgets. Have an appreciation of the schools' unique missions. Enjoy planning special events and be friendly, hardworking, and appreciate working in a team environment. Experience in a non-profit or school environment is preferred. This is an 11-month, full-time, hourly position with an average of 30 hours of work per week. Evening and weekend hours are required to support events, as needed.

To apply: please submit a cover letter, résumé, an essay titled "My View of America" and a completed application to the Human Resources Manager, Jaime Harmeyer at jharmeyer@benedictineschools.org. Our application can be found on our website at <http://www.benedictinecollegeprep.org/about-bcp/employment>.

SHORTTAKES

Catholic Charities' Companion Care and Respite Care Programs

are currently accepting clients. Companion Care provides companionship, safety monitoring, medication reminders and more while allowing seniors to live independently at home. (Overnight assistance available, if needed.) Respite Care provides caregivers with a short-term, affordable break from the rigors of 24/7 caregiving. For more information on either program, call 757-456-2366 or email vdunlap@cceva.org.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Hired: As of May, Christy Heinen is the director of development for Saint Francis Home — a mission of the Diocese of Richmond that serves up to 125 elderly and residents with handicaps. The Richmond native and St. Gertrude High School alumna served in a similar capacity for 18 years with the Little Sisters of the Poor St. Joseph's Home.



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.

Giving

Continued from Page 5

More donors

At St. Bede, Williamsburg, development director Sam Samorian said offertory numbers "definitely went up" as a result of e-giving.

"Our number of online donors between April 1 and May 31 increased by 55%," he said, noting that the parish, with a little more than 3,000 families, went from 25-27% giving online to 45-50%. "The good news about that is that it's more sustainable. When folks are gone (on vacation), donations continue."

Samorian credited the diocese for its help.

"Their feedback to the parishes was extremely valuable," he said. "They provided us with the tools we needed."

Sacred Heart, Danville, had online contributors before the economic impact of COVID hit, but according to Father Jonathan Goertz, pastor, "It has grown tremendously over the past weeks."

"There's always a bit of an odd experience when folks are in the pew and the basket goes by and you don't put anything in it and you wonder, 'Are people looking at me not putting anything in the basket?'" he said. "So once we had nobody in the pews and no baskets, that whole issue fell away and people eagerly signed up."

Father Goertz said the amount contributed was higher than it was a year ago.

"We did an increased offertory campaign in the fall with the support from the diocese, and that has borne great fruit ever since then," he said.

'Saves our bacon'

At St. Thomas More, Lynchburg, Msgr. Michael McCarron said there was no "drop off" in offertory income, nor did the parish experience its annual "seasonal dip" in contributions.

"People were very aware that this was an essential thing," said the pastor. "Some of the cash flow coming in was smaller, but it got made up by people who were more ardent about putting in their envelopes and checks, and then of course the e-giving is a constant. And so that's extremely helpful."

While e-giving has been an option at the parish for at least three years, the suspension of parish Masses had an impact on it.

"We got up to about 40% of e-giving and 60% of offertory giving. With the shutdown, we basically just said if you want what you have to continue, you've got to give, and e-giving is the way to do it — and it flipped," he said. "We have about 65% e-giving and about 35% coming in from offertory and the mail. And it is a backbone. It is every single week. It saves our bacon."

Plenitud es Paz

En este contexto de la iniciativa “un Mundo de Encuentro”, la oficina de los Ministerios Étnicos, en colaboración con las Hermanas Misioneras Combonianas, presenta el taller “Sanación del Corazón” en el Centro Misionero de las Hermanas Combonianas. Se trata de un taller destinado a iniciar un proceso de conversión y transformación individual y de grupo. Este proceso se lleva a cabo

con un pequeño grupo de personas, preferiblemente multiculturales, en un ambiente de apertura, seguridad, confidencialidad, apoyo y amor. La metodología del proceso incluye la auto divulgación, la reflexión, la dinámica corporal. Se le invita a participar en este proceso de sanación y transformación explorando y desafiando su punto de vista habitual de relacionarse con los demás.



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Slave Trail Walk

On Saturday, July 11, Deacon Charles Williams led 16 individuals on a Young Adult Slave Trail Walk in Richmond, Virginia. Deacon Williams, the director of the Office for Black Catholics, partnered with the Office of Social Ministries to give young adults this experiential learning opportunity.

In addition to historical facts and accounts, Deacon Williams brought the human experience to the slave trail walk. From the overcrowded slave ships traveling across the seas to the shackled bodies marching through the dark night, participants placed themselves in the minds and bodies of the enslaved Africans to reflect upon the feelings of fear, dehumanization and physical pain. Toward the end of the trail, participants were led to the Reconciliation Statue. This powerful public symbol commemorates the international triangular slave trade while acknowledging Richmond's history of being one of the busiest slave centers in the country. Deacon Williams concluded the walk by reminding participants that the same injustices spoken about and felt along the trail still exist within our American society.

“I cannot breathe — a whisper of healing”

In the past few weeks, we have witnessed the worldwide manifestations against racism. Bishop Shelton Fabre, USCCB chairman of the ad hoc commission against racism says “we are broken hearted, sick and outraged watching another death before our eyes.” He refers to this event and the domino effect it provoked in the whole world as the “latest wake up call to be answered by each of us with conversion.” How I am responding to this call of conversion? What steps am I taking to diminish the stereotypes and racism around me? Bishops Fabre's statement takes me to consider what the USCCB's article on intercultural competencies where it talks on how the avoidance to speak openly about racism will continue to spark fire unless we “break” the “do not talk” rule of speaking openly to face racism. We need to find the safe space to talk about our experiences, express our feelings and express the reality of racism in this country. He speaks of the FIG complex that impedes to talk about it fear, ignorance and guilt.



In this context of the “One World Encounter” initiative the Office of Ethnic Ministry, in collaboration with the Comboni Missionary Sisters, presents “I cannot breathe — a whisper of healing” workshop at Comboni Sister Mission Center. It is a workshop intended to initiate a process of individual and group conversion and transformation. This process is carried out with a small group of people, preferably multicultural, in an atmosphere of openness, security, confidentiality, support and love. The methodology of the process includes self-disclosure, reflection, body dynamics. You are invited to take part in this process of healing and transformation by exploring and challenging your customary view of relating to others.

Today more than ever we need to be willing to make a personal and social change in our intercultural relationships to face the reality of diversity of this country and the whole world facing our prejudices, attitudes and behaviors and change them so that others are not intimidated but reassured.

Ethics, moral principles must guide treatment

JULIE ASHER
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The coronavirus pandemic is creating fear over limited resources for treating patients, especially the most seriously ill, but “this is not a time to sideline our ethical and moral principles,” said the chairmen of three committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“It is a time to uphold them ever more strongly, for they will critically assist us in steering through these trying times,” said the chairmen of the USCCB’s doctrine, pro-life and domestic policy committees in a joint statement April 3.

The statement came in response to recent news reports highlighting policies and practices relating to rationing protocols in response to COVID-19.

“Foremost in our approach to limited resources is to always keep in mind the dignity of each person and our obligation to care for the sick and dying,” the prelates said. “Such care, however, will require patients, their families, and medical professionals to work together in weighing the benefits and burdens of care, the needs and safety of everyone, and how to distribute resources in a prudent, just and unbiased way.”

The statement was signed by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Doctrine; Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities; and Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

“This pandemic has highlighted the fact that we have limited resources and therefore may be facing some difficult decisions ahead. At all times resources are limited — there are only so many beds and so many supplies — but this crisis has and will continue to challenge us greatly,” they said. “Every crisis produces fear, and the COVID-19 pandemic is no exception.”

Across the country, a critical shortage of personal protective equipment for medical personnel who are treating patients with the highly contagious virus and a lack of equipment such as ventilators has prompted some U.S. hospitals to consider instituting a blan-

ket DNR, or “do not resuscitate” order, for COVID-19 patients despite their wishes or those of their family.

Bishop Rhoades and Archbishops Naumann and Coakley praised hospitals and medical personnel for their courage and compassion in treating the nation’s COVID-19 patients.

“Hospitals and health care systems are the true epicenter of this pandemic and our health care professionals — doctors, nurses, technicians, administrators and support staff — have all demonstrated courage, compassion, and truly remarkable professional care in a time of growing crisis.

They acknowledged the difficult decisions about care confronting these health care workers and urged them to read a number of important statements from Catholic health care and medical ethical organizations reminding them — and the general public — of ethical and moral principles to be applied in these difficult circumstances.

“The Catholic Health Association of the United States, the Catholic Medical Association, the National Association of Catholic Nurses-USA, and the National Catholic Bioethics Center have all published excellent reminders of these principles and guidelines,” they said. “We ask people, especially medical professionals, to read these documents and apply them appropriately in their work.”

The statements they cited can be found online at these organizations’ respective websites: Catholic Health Association, <https://www.chausa.org>; Catholic Medical Association, <https://www.cathmed.org>; National Association of Catholic Nurses-USA, <https://nacb-usa.org>; and National Catholic Bioethics Center, <https://www.ncbcenter.org>.

Bishop Rhoades and Archbishops Naumann and Coakley also commended the Office of Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services “for issuing a reminder that in a time of crisis we must not discriminate against persons solely on the basis of disability or age by denying them medical care.”

Editor’s Note: The USSCB website has a special link to a page offering various resources for the nation’s Catholics as they weather the ongoing coronavirus pandemic: usccb.org/coronavirus.

Reform

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and charities, Brough added.

The Church has faced a simmering financial crisis for years. The credibility of Church leaders has suffered in the wake of the ongoing clergy sexual abuse scandal, leading people to leave the Church.

Added to the decline in membership is economic pressure from payouts to victims of the clergy sexual abuse scandal that have totaled in the hundreds of millions of dollars nationwide.

Finally, the pandemic has added to the financial woes because weekly Mass attendance has not fully rebounded because, despite the resumption of public liturgies in many dioceses, there remain public health officials’ restrictions on congregation size.

Brough described the recommended reforms as those that can be readily undertaken.

“This is not innovation for us in the Church,” he explained. “It is about spreading the best practices that are already there. These are actionable reforms. These are not vague recommendations.”

The report included other recommendations regarding finances such as training for members of diocesan finance councils that could be implemented by a lay association of council chairs and “ethical and faithful stewardship” regarding fundraising, parishioner engagement, disposition of gifts and investments.

‘Create a thriving Church’

Three other sessions of the summit led to recommendations for the U.S. Catholic Church as well.

The report called for creating a gover-

nance reform working group similar to one established by the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference. It would look at how to move toward a “co-responsible” model of Church governance whereby laity and clergy have equal say in decisions about Church matters.

Summit participants cited retired Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis in explaining the recommendation.

Pope Benedict said in 2012 that laypeople “should not be considered ‘collaborators’ of the clergy, but people who truly are co-responsible for the being and action of the Church.”

Pope Francis, meanwhile, has urged greater lay involvement and “synodality” in the Church, saying, “A synodal Church is a listening Church” that allows different parties to learn from each other.

The summit also encouraged Church leadership to be transformed to “create a thriving Church.” It encouraged the transformation of relationships that emphasize co-responsibility, listening, discerning and welcoming the diversity and talents of the body of Christ.”

A fourth recommendation focused on raising the voices of young adults within the Church, allowing them to enter into decision-making roles. The summit called for investment in ministerial education and leadership development of young adults and a boost in pastoral care for people of that age group.

Brough said young adults specifically were invited to the summit to provide their ideas and give voice to the needs of the next generation of Church leaders. “That was a significant step,” he said.

Editor’s note: The full report is online at <https://bit.ly/2ZDlG4T>.

Time Capsule

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of Richmond (1953). At age 42, he was ordained an auxiliary bishop of the diocese (1970). Following the retirement of John J. Russell, the 10th bishop of Richmond (1958–1973), Bishop Sullivan administered the diocese (1973–1974).

On July 19, 1974, Walter Sullivan became the 11th bishop of Richmond. On Aug. 13, 1974, the boundaries of the diocese were reconfigured as the Diocese of Arlington was created to encompass northern Virginia. Several other territorial changes took effect at the same time: the Diocese of Richmond ceded the eastern panhandle of West Virginia to the Diocese of Wheeling and received from it southwest Virginia, and the Diocese of Wilmington returned the Eastern Shore of Virginia that had originally belonged to the Richmond Diocese.

At the Mass marking the 175th anniversary of the Diocese of Richmond, Bishop Sullivan expressed the significance of the occasion in terms of the communion of the Church — the bonds that unite believers to God and to one another — and its evangelizing mission. Coincidentally, these are also the themes of the current bicentennial jubilee.

Bishop Sullivan also emphasized the need to protect all human life, to care for the poor and to seek interfaith and ecumenical cooperation. He concluded the homily by reflecting on his ministry as a priest and bishop.

This homily was published in The Catholic Virginian (Dec. 4, 1995). An excerpt follows:

“Our year of jubilee ends with today’s liturgy. People ask me, ‘Where do we go from here?’ They want to know what vision I hold out for our diocese as we approach the year 2000.

“In responding, I take my cue from Pope John Paul II. He sees the turn of the century as a moment in history that is filled with a ‘special grace for the church and the whole of humanity’ (Tertio milenio adveniente, No. 55).

“With the pope, I call for a new evangelization throughout the 37,000 square miles of the Diocese of Richmond. Evangelization means the spread of the gospel by word and action. Evangelization will take place only to the extent that people gather to celebrate in worship and communion.

“In such faith communities of belonging and caring, people experience the presence of the Lord and cannot rest until they share that experience with others. People must recapture the excitement of the first Christians when they boldly proclaimed, ‘We have seen the Lord who is risen, and we are his witnesses’ (Lk 24:48).

“It used to be said that we live in the world and go to church. Evangelization calls us to live in the church and go out to the world.”