



The Catholic Virginian

Serving the People of the Diocese of Richmond for 90 years



Vol. 96, No. 3

www.catholicvirginian.org

November 30, 2020

Bishops give moral OK to 2 COVID-19 vaccines

Reference Church teaching in addressing ethical concerns

JULIE ASHER
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — While confusion has arisen in recent days in the media over “the moral permissibility” of using the COVID-19 vaccines just announced by Pfizer Inc. and Moderna, it is not “immoral to be vaccinated with them,” the chairmen of the U.S. bishops’ doctrine and pro-life committees said Nov. 23.

Bishop Kevin J. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, addressed the issue in a memo to their brother bishops.

A copy of the memo was obtained by Catholic News Service Nov. 24.

“Neither the Pfizer nor the Moderna vaccine involved the use of cell lines that originated in fetal tissue taken from the body of an aborted baby at any level of design, development or production,” the two prelates said. “They are not completely free from any connection to abortion, however, as both Pfizer and Moderna made use of a tainted cell line for one of the confirmatory lab tests of their products.

“There is thus a connection, but it is relatively remote,” they continued. “Some are asserting that if a vaccine is connected in any way with tainted cell lines, then it is immoral to be vaccinated with them. This is an inaccurate portrayal of Catholic moral teaching.”

Bishop Rhoades and Archbishop Naumann cited three Vatican documents that “treat the question of tainted vaccines”: the 2005 study by the Pontifical Academy for

Life, “Moral Reflections on Vaccines Prepared from Cells Derived From Aborted Human Fetuses”; paragraphs nos. 34-35 in the 2008 “Instruction on Certain Bioethical Questions” (“Dignitatis Personae”) by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; and the 2017 “Note on Italian Vaccine Issue,” by the Pontifical Academy for Life.

“These documents all point to the immorality of using tissue taken from an aborted child for creating cell lines,” they explained. “They also make distinctions in terms of the moral responsibility of the various actors involved, from those involved in designing and producing a vaccine to those receiving the vaccine.

“Most importantly,” they added, “they all make it clear that, at the level of the recipient, it is morally permissible to accept vaccination when there are no alternatives and there is a serious risk to health.”

In a Nov. 21 statement, the president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association, Mercy Sister Mary Haddad said CHA ethicists, “in collaboration with other Catholic bioethicists,” used the guidelines released by the Vatican’s Pontifical Academy for Life in 2005 and 2017 on the origin of vaccines and “find nothing morally prohibitive with the vaccines developed by Pfizer and BioNTech (Pfizer’s German partner) and Moderna.”

She also said CHA “believes it is essential that any approved COVID-19 vaccine be distributed in a coordinated and equitable manner,” because COVID-19 “has had a disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, low-income communities, persons with preexisting health conditions, and racial and ethnic minorities.”

See Vaccines, Page 5



Father Dan Brady, pastor of St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, and parishioners Paul and Kathy Smith prepare copies of “Reading God’s Word” for mailing. Thanks to a bequest from the late Bettye Bales, the parish purchased 3,400 books for its members and members of its sister parishes. (Photo/Mary Sue McClintock)

Parishioner’s bequest spreads God’s Word

KRISTEN L. BYRD
Special to The Catholic Virginian

The call for Catholics to evangelize has been a constant in the Church for nearly 60 years. However, responding to that call requires an entity to have a plan and the resources needed to undertake that plan.

Father Dan Brady, pastor of St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, had a plan. He wanted to send a copy of “Reading God’s Word” to every parish family so that they knew their faith community was thinking of them and wanting to stay connected with them during the pandemic. The book contains all of the daily and Sunday Mass readings for the liturgical year that began on Nov. 29.

He also wanted to provide copies for St. Michael’s sister parishes — St. Elizabeth, Richmond, and Holy Family in Appalachia — and to offer copies to those who visit the parish.

Logistically and financially, the idea initially seemed unrealistic,

but that changed when the parish received a large bequest from Bettye Bales, a parishioner who died earlier this year.

“We didn’t realize she was dying. That really upset me,” Father Brady recalled. “We weren’t able to minister to her at the very end. That’s something I’ve been trying to make sure doesn’t happen. So, with this, we wanted to make sure people knew her.”

To this end, each book bears a label thanking Bales for her bequest so everyone knows the book came from her.

“I wanted to do something spiritual with her money; Bettye would want that. She’d love to be remembered for this,” Father Brady said.

In August, the parish ordered 3,400 copies at a cost of \$28,000 and quickly got to work planning the distribution and shipping. Mary Sue McClintock, the parish’s director of evangelization; Kathleen Guar-

See Word, Page 4

The Catholic Virginian
7800 Carousell Lane
Richmond, VA 23294

Inside This Edition

When our hope is tested, it can be strengthened
Page 2

Cardinal Gregory seeks dialogue with Biden
Page 5

If you have trouble praying, try this
Page 8

When our hope is tested, it can be strengthened



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

Throughout my nearly 13 years as a bishop, my episcopal motto, “Christ Our Hope,” has been a source of direction and focus for me — even more so throughout 2020.

Every Advent, hope is the focus of our prayer and reflection as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This year, however, our hope is being challenged by the pandemic, by civil unrest in our streets and by the incivility that continues to affect our culture and society.

This has made many people fearful about their physical, mental and social health, and concerned about the future and what it holds for them and their loved ones. For some, those fears and concerns have resulted in a temptation to despair, to lose hope that all of our best efforts may not change things for the better, or worse, be futile.

When we read the COVID stories, when

we see violence in our cities and hear hostility among some of our civic leaders, our hope is being tested. Yet, as with all virtues, when our hope is tested, it is then that it can be strengthened and proven.

Hope is a gift of our faith in God that assures us that there is no situation that we can imagine, no situation that has ever existed, in which God can’t bring good from it. It is always possible to have a joyful, hopeful spirit going into the future.

No matter what our circumstances are, no matter what tragedies or challenges we are facing individually, communally or culturally, we know, as St. Paul wrote to the Romans, that all things work for good for those who love God.

We have Our Lord’s assurance that he can transform the most desperate, difficult, tragic situations into occasions of grace and new life when we go to him in faith. There is no situation that we as Catholics and Christians confront that can overcome us because we have that assurance which is rooted in our faith, our hope in and our love for God.

In Psalms 42 and 43, we read the three laments of a man surrounded by people who

are challenging his faith and beliefs; they’re saying there is no God. But he does not lose hope!

He prays, “By day may the Lord send his mercy, and by night may his righteousness be with me!” and “Send your light and your fidelity, that they may be my guide.” Three times he affirms his hope by calling upon “my savior and my God.”

Like the psalmist, we must open our hearts to God’s love. That can only be experienced and encountered if we are intentional in setting aside time for prayer — a time when we are alone with God and opening ourselves up to hear his word.

This Advent, I encourage you to welcome those encounters with God so that you will have a deep, profound sense of hopefulness for the future. That hopefulness is ours because we have confidence — faith — that God is with us.

He is always with us, directing us toward the hope of resurrection — in the most challenging months we’ve experienced this year and during the joy-filled times, we welcome with the celebration of “Christ Our Hope.”

During this season, accept the invitation to walk in that hope.

‘Make space at table for everyone,’ pope urges in book

CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis admits he is not an economist, but he is a pastor.

And as a pastor, he has seen how the global economy has cast aside many members of his flock, and he knows that the Gospel and Catholic social teaching call for a different response.

“Solidarity is not the sharing of crumbs from the table, but to make space at the table for everyone,” Pope Francis said in a new book written with Austen Ivereigh.

The book, “Let Us Dream: The Path to A Better Future,” was to be published Dec. 1 by Simon & Schuster.

The pope’s concerns about the current situation of the world, especially given the coronavirus pandemic, will not be new to anyone who followed his homilies as the pandemic developed in the spring, watched his weekly general audience series on Catholic social teaching or read his encyclical, “Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship.”

But the book sets out systematically how he takes the “see-judge-act” method of social action — what he calls “contemplate-discern-propose” — and uses it to describe the current state of affairs, to look at attitudes behind many issues and to call for a new way of doing things.

Part of the book, Ivereigh said, is based on Pope Francis’ recorded responses to his written questions and part on suggestions outlined

by the pope, elaborated by Ivereigh and then redacted by the pope.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a global trauma or trial, Pope Francis said, and it is precisely how one acts in a trial that reveals the state of his or her heart: “How solid it is, how merciful, how big or small.”

“God asks us to dare to create something new,” he said. “We cannot return to the false securities of the political and economic systems we had before the crisis. We need economies that give to all access to the fruits of creation, to the basic needs of life: to land, lodging, and labor.”

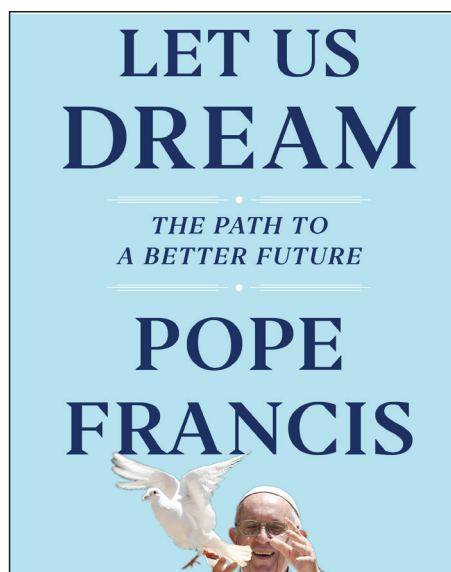
And, he said, “we need a politics that can integrate and dialogue with the poor, the excluded and the vulnerable, that gives people a say in the decisions that impact their lives.”

In other words, the pope said, “we need to slow down, take stock and design better ways of living together on this earth.”

The only way to get a proper perspective, he said, is to go to the margins of society, to the places where people suffer most and allow that suffering to touch one’s heart.

“I think often of persecuted peoples: the Rohingya, the poor Uighurs, the Yazidi — what ISIS did to them was truly cruel — or Christians in Egypt and Pakistan killed by bombs that went off while they prayed in church,” he said.

The pope’s prescription is centered on dialogue, a recognition of the God-given dignity of every human being and an understand-



In “Let Us Dream: The Path to A Better Future,” by Austen Ivereigh and Pope Francis, the pope said he experienced three “COVID moments” in his lifetime: lung problems that threatened his life when he was 21; his “displacement” in Germany in 1986 for studies; and when he was sent away to Cordoba, Argentina, for almost two years in the early 1990s. (CNS photo/courtesy Simon & Schuster)

ing that the Earth and all the good it contains were meant by God to be a gift for everyone, not just those strong enough to grab the most the quickest.

“I cannot stay silent over 30- to 40-million unborn lives cast aside every year through abortion,” he said. “It is painful to behold how in many regions that see themselves as developed, the practice is often urged because the children to come are disabled, or unplanned.”

“Human life is never a burden. It demands we make space for it, not cast it off,” Pope Francis insisted.

“Of course,” he said, “the arrival of a new human life in need — whether the unborn child in the womb or the migrant at our border — challenges and changes our priorities. With abortion and closed borders we refuse that readjust-

ment of our priorities, sacrificing human life to defend our economic security or to assuage our fear that parenthood will upend our lives.”

To claim “to promote the Gospel and not welcome the strangers in need, nor affirm their humanity as children of God, is to seek to encourage a culture that is Christian in name only, emptied of all that makes it distinctive,” Pope Francis said.

Abortion, anti-immigrant sentiments, racism, lack of care of the elderly and the embracing of an economic system that focuses on profit at all costs are all signs of the “erosion of the value of life,” he said.

“Without a vision for society rooted in the dignity of all people,” he said, “the logic of the unfettered market ends up turning life from a gift into a product.”

In Prince George cemetery, a celebration of life

Sacred Heart parishioners honor those who served faith community

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

As Saturday, Nov. 7, graveside luminary event at Sacred Heart Parish, Prince George, “breathed life into the cemetery headstones.”

Such was parishioner Jeff Stoke’s impression of the event.

While graveyards can be scary and somber places, Sacred Heart Cemetery was a place of quiet celebration with luminaries marking the 288 graves. Seven parishioners shared stories of people interred. Attendees sipped cider and cocoa as the Celtic band Clan Haggis played in the background.

Father Joe Goldsmith, administrator of the cluster parishes including Sacred Heart, Prince George; St. John, Dinwiddie; and St. James, Hopewell, said funerals are often “dark and heavy and sad,” but this event was a celebration, a remembrance, of lives.

The 60-some attendees walked from the church steps under the night sky, through a dark church to a softly lit room containing photos of deceased parishioners and finally outside to the illuminated cemetery. Boy Scout Troops 902 and 2837 had laid out the luminaries during the vigil Mass.

Father Goldsmith likened the walk to a symbolic funeral path where people go from darkness to light, from death to eternal life.

Event organizer Penny Merhout said that during COVID, people have had more time to think about life and death, and this event “puts it all into perspective.”

That was true for Stoke, who said the event opened a dialogue



Luminaries marked each of the 288 graves in Sacred Heart’s cemetery during a special event honoring the early families and other deceased parishioners. Members of Boy Scout Troops 902 and 2837 placed each of the luminaries for the Saturday, Nov. 7, commemoration. (Photo/John Messina)

with his 11-year-old daughter Violet and 17-year-old son Ben. Violet asked questions about her paternal grandfather who died before she was born. The event made it easier for him to talk to them about “death, the circle of life and people who died before us.”

“The event helps us remember the founders and others who were responsible for what our parish is today,” parishioner Tom Beaudet said. “It took a lot of love and hard work over the years to develop the parish family we have.”

People roamed the cemetery in reverence, soaking in the ambience and stopping at graves to listen to stories about deceased parishioners.

Beaudet talked about his father, Richard Beaudet.

Jeff Stoke said he was struck by Beaudet’s narrative because of the tender way he described his father. Heralding his father as his “hero,” Beaudet described him as a “gentle natured, smart, loving, caring and a wonderful role model” who loved to tell jokes, bring smiles and happiness to other people.

“He was the greatest father any kid could ever hope for,” said Beaudet, who has three brothers.

Ben Stoke, Kevin Kessler and others said they were moved by Father Goldsmith’s narrative of the parish’s first pastor, Father Jan Konicek. In 1905, the priest was sent from what is now the Czech Republic to minister to the Sacred Heart congregation in their language.

In 1911, he also ministered to families in the coal mines in Henrico County where six coalminers had died in an explosion. In 1910, he fell ill with “some sort of blood disease.” His health continued to deteriorate, and he died in 1912 at the age of 33.

Frank Pezzillo paid tribute to his friend, Deacon Bob Baker.

Sharon Jadrnak and Dawn Weber said that Pezzillo’s narration of Deacon Baker, who died a year and a half ago, touched them the most because they had volunteered alongside him for years. Deacon Baker was instrumental in setting up a Haiti ministry and tending to the poor in the local area.

Parishioners Joe Vinsh, Darla Glazier and Dennis Sebera talked about their families with the same surnames who were among the early parishioners. Deacon Ed Hanzlik’s grandson, Isaiah Langford, explained his family ties as well.

Sacred Heart Parish was established in 1906 by 29 Slovak and Czech families who began immigrating to the area in 1887. The

parish has grown to more than 500 families, and many of the descendants still live in the community.

Marie Hanzlik donated 11 acres on which the church, hall and cemetery stand. The first church was blessed in 1906, and the cemetery was established within two years with its first interment in 1908.

Violet Stoke thought the event would be boring, but she had so much fun looking at the birthdates on the headstones, especially trying to find ones with her birthday, that she didn’t want to leave.

Ben Stoke liked hearing about the trials and tribulations of the parish founders.

“What they did was absolutely phenomenal — to make it all the way across the ocean and then come here and build from nothing is amazing,” he said. “I will say it certainly made me appreciate the life I have a little bit more.”

Chris Perez also found the tales of the early parishioners interesting, especially that of the Bohemian immigrants Franticek and Mary Sebera, who moved in 1890 from North Dakota to Virginia via a Conestoga wagon with the first five of their 10 children.

For some, the graveside luminary was an opportunity to rebuild the sense of community that was threatened or nonexistent due to COVID restrictions. While Masses are once again public, some feel it is still too risky health-wise to attend, and many are reluctant to go to social gatherings, especially those held indoors.

As a result, Weber said she no longer feels the sense of community, but the graveside luminary was a good step. She said the event “provided an opportunity to share faith and to celebrate our church, our families and our lives.”



As part of the Saturday, Nov. 7, procession from the church at Sacred Heart, Prince George, to the parish cemetery, attendees pass through a softly-lit room displaying photos of deceased parishioners. (Photo/John Messina)

Word

Continued from Page 1

nieri, database coordinator; and Scott Guy, maintenance supervisor, were integral in pulling the project together.

Guy helped move the 170 boxes of books to give greater access to volunteers. He also took 100 of them to the post office daily until all were shipped.

"I think it is important that we get the books to our parishioners, especially in the world today, so they can feel connected to the Church during this difficult time that we are in," he said. "Prayer is the best way to stay connected to God and each other, always."

Guarnieri called herself "the behind-the-scenes coordinator." She coordinated the supplies for mailing and delivering the books and created neighborhood lists and shipping labels.

She and McClintock rallied staff members and parishioners to help

in the endeavor. After people volunteered, it became clear that this wasn't just about delivering books but building a bridge to each other and to God.

"Recently we painted 'Alive in Christ' on our pavement so that people would feel alive when they entered the building, but also alive when they read God's Word, wherever they are," said McClintock.

That sentiment was carried through to parishioners in the form of a note from Father Brady that was inserted into each book. The note invites recipients to read along with the Scripture each week, as well as reflect on the meaning of the readings. He even suggested they write their own homily based upon the readings.

The books were organized and prepared, some for hand delivery and some for shipping. Volunteers wore masks and social distanced during the process.

In addition to mailing the books, St. Michael distributed the other

2,400 by other means. As part of a sprawling diocese, it was a challenge to get all of the books to their proper homes. Parishioners who were able to come to Mass had the opportunity to pick them up at church. Others were shared at Knights of Columbus and youth ministry group meetings. Hundreds more have been hand delivered to parishioners.

Traveling in pairs, 40 volunteers took a box of 20 books and left copies on parishioners' doorsteps. To stay healthy and safe, they never knocked on doors and always wore facemasks.

The response from the community has been outstanding. After being quarantined for months, volunteers were happy to be outside and doing something meaningful, and recipients are happy to spend some of their indoor time reading the Word of God.

Guarnieri said the project was not only a great form of outreach, but it built a bridge during a time when members of the faith commu-

nity are experiencing separation.

The parish has received several notes and phone calls from parishioners who wanted to thank St. Michael for their copy of "Reading God's Word."

"It is a way to bring St. Michael to all those who have not yet been able to return. The emails and calls we have gotten from the parishioners who received the books have shown that many people have missed being at church," she said. "They are so grateful for this connection and knowing the church is reaching out to them and will be here for them when they are ready and able to return in person."

St. Michael's theme for this liturgical year is "Praying the Word." Even though parishioners can't pray together physically, they are connected in prayer and through this book.

"One of our tasks as a Church is to spread the Word," said Father Brady. "To me, I can't think of any better way to do this than this way."

Pastor pays outreach postage from stamp collection

While St. Michael Parish was able to purchase 3,400 copies of "Reading God's Word" for members of its parish and its two sister parishes, there was another cost associated with getting the book to parishioners: postage for the 1,000 copies that needed to be mailed at a cost of \$3.86 each.

Father Dan Brady, pastor, had a solution. A stamp collector for 65 years, and with thousands of stamps accumulated over that time, he donated them to the parish in order to cover the cost of the mailing.

"When I realized this ridiculous number I've collected, I decided to use them," he said. "For me, it's perfect. They are being used to spread the Word."

Father Brady's love of stamps began with his grandfather. As a child, his grandfather would sit him down and show him his collection. Some stamps dated to the 1860s and 1870s. Those bore the actual signature of the postmaster. This fascinated the boy, and he has been collecting ever since.

When his grandfather passed away, Father Brady inherited his collection.

"I can still remember my grandmother taking me to the store and getting me a new stamp album," Father Brady recalled. "It was a very special way to start."

His interest in stamps ebbed and flowed during his adolescence but grew as he got older.

After finishing college, Father Brady joined the Peace Corps with whom he served in West Africa. There, he noticed the stamps were very different from stamps in the United States and started saving them.

He has since collected stamps from all over the world during his travels. Some have portraits, paintings, flags and monuments. All have a story to tell. He sees stamps as "miniature works of art."

Over the years, Father Brady kept buying sheets and books of new and distinctive stamps, never just a few. If a new stamp came out, he would go and get a book of them, even



Father Dan Brady, pastor of St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, donated 10,000 stamps from his collection to cover the cost of mailing 1,000 copies of "Reading God's Word" to members of his parish. The priest, who has been collecting stamps for 65 years, said the stamps no longer belonged in collection books, but on the packages spreading God's Word. (Photo/Mary Sue McClintock)

if he was not yet in need. He kept the unused stamps, and eventually grew his collection to more than 30,000 stamps.

When the decision was made to mail a thousand copies of "Reading God's Word," Father Brady knew his stamps no longer belonged in collection books, but on the packages spreading God's Word.

"One of the things I've always been particular about is that stamps should be used, not just collected," he said.

May Sue McClintock, the parish's director of evangelization, added, "He feels certain this was the reason he started collecting all along. He is excited to share this with the parishioners of St. Michael."

Minus the 10,000 stamps required for the mailing, Father Brady no longer has his stockpile, although he did keep one stamp of each design for his collection. He also kept his main collection of vintage, international and favorite stamps.

The reaction of the parishioners has made his donation completely worthwhile.

"It's been absolutely fantastic," Father Brady said. "We're going crazy sitting in our houses staring at four walls. Everyone is just so grateful for something to do."

He said the parish's theme for the year, "Praying the Word," and "Reading God's Word" was a perfect combination — a way to bring people together.

He hopes readers will see that God invites everyone to come together as one and find peace in God's message.

"I think the world needs us all the more right now. We live, unfortunately, in a time when everybody is angry at everybody. We have a message of love to spread. It's in the Word, the books we pass out," he said. "We need to be messengers of that kind of peace and reconciliation."

— Kristen L. Byrd

How Cardinal Gregory hopes to work with Biden

Notes responsibility to be 'in dialogue' even when they disagree

CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — As Washington's new cardinal and with a Catholic soon to be living in the White House, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory said he hopes to collaborate where possible while respectfully pointing out where President-elect Joe Biden's policies diverge from Catholic teaching.

In a Zoom interview Nov. 24 from the Vatican's Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he was in quarantine for 10 days as a COVID-19 precaution prior to the consistory at which he was elevated to the College of Cardinals, the cardinal said he would not prevent the new president, who goes to Mass every Sunday, from receiving Communion in the archdiocese.

"The kind of relationship that I hope we will have is a conversational relationship where we can discover areas where we can cooperate that reflect the social teachings of the Church, knowing full well that there are some areas where we won't agree," the cardinal said. "They are areas where the Church's position is very clear," particularly its opposition to the president-elect's support for legal abortion.

In deciding when to collaborate and when to criticize, he said, "I hope that I don't highlight one over the other."

"I hope it's a real dialogue, because I think that's the mantra of Pope Francis — that we should be a Church in dialogue, even with those with whom we have some serious disagreements," he said.

The archbishop of Washington said "informed Catholics" know the Church's teaching on the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death, so he does not believe

“Conflict within the Church is not a new reality; it goes back to apostolic times. What seems to be new is the capacity for people to broadcast the conflicts and to allow social communications to intensify the conflict.”

- CARDINAL WILTON D. GREGORY

they would be confused by the Church cooperating with a Biden administration on other issues.

"It's not a matter of confusion," he said. "On my part, it's a matter of the responsibility that I have as the archbishop to be engaged and to be in dialogue with him, even in those areas where we obviously have some differences."

While some Catholics believe Biden should not be allowed to receive Communion when he goes to Mass, Cardinal Gregory said that for eight years as vice president, Biden went to Mass and received Communion.

"I'm not going to veer from that," he said. The cardinal said there also is a need for

dialogue within the Church among people who think differently.

"Conflict within the Church is not a new reality; it goes back to apostolic times," he said. "What seems to be new is the capacity for people to broadcast the conflicts and to allow social communications to intensify the conflict."

Ordained to the priesthood in 1973 for the Archdiocese of Chicago, Cardinal Gregory spoke about the late Chicago Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin's efforts to promote a way for Catholics to find "common ground" and reaffirm communion among them.

One key, he said, is developing "the capacity to have civil disagreements — serious disagreements, you know, really pointed disagreements — but done in such a way that the focus is on the argument, not on the demonization of the people with whom we disagree."

Disagreements are part of "being a family, a family of faith," he said. "The difficulty is too many people want to throw out of the family of faith people with whom they have disagreements."

As the first African American cardinal, he said he thinks Pope Francis' choosing him is a sign that "the Catholic Church says we have to be more inclusive, to be more engaging with people of different backgrounds and races and ethnic traditions."

For more than 60 years, going back to St. John XXIII, the popes have been sending that signal by expanding the College of Cardinals, "and Pope Francis has, of course, put that in hyperspeed, because he's now appointed cardinals from countries that have never had a cardinal."

Vaccines

Continued from Page 1

CHA encouraged Catholic health organizations "to distribute the vaccines developed by these companies."

Bishop Rhoades and Archbishop Naumann did not point to any specific media outlets claiming the moral unsuitability of the vaccines. However, after Pfizer and Moderna announced their vaccines, at least two Catholic bishops warned against using them, saying they are morally tainted.

On Nov. 11, Pfizer and BioNTech announced that results of a large ongoing study show its vaccine is 95% effective; the vaccine is already being manufactured and has been since October. Five days later, Moderna said preliminary data from its phase three trial shows its coronavirus vaccine is 94.5% effective in preventing COVID-19.

Pfizer and Moderna are applying to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for emergency approval of the vaccines, which would quickly pave the way for distribution of the vaccines. The FDA is to meet Dec. 10.

On Nov. 16, Bishop Joseph E. Strickland of Tyler, Texas, tweeted the Moderna vaccine "is not morally produced. Unborn children died in abortions and their bodies were used as 'laboratory specimens.' I urge all

who believe in the sanctity of life to reject a vaccine which has been produced immorally."

In a Nov. 18 video posted on his diocesan website and subsequent interviews with local media, Bishop Joseph V. Brennan of Fresno, California, weighed in on the vaccines, saying: "We all want health for ourselves and for others. We want to promote that also ... but never at the expense of the life of another."

In May, the Trump administration launched Operation Warp Speed, the moniker of its initiative to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to Americans as quickly as possible. The program has funded the manufacturing of six promising vaccine candidates, two of which are the ones announced by Moderna and Pfizer.

As soon as the FDA approves their vaccines for distribution, Operation Warp Speed hopes to distribute 300 million doses around the country by January. Because Moderna and Pfizer's vaccines involve two shots per person, this would be enough to immunize 150 million Americans.

Other COVID-19 vaccines on the horizon include one being developed by AstraZeneca with Oxford University.

Like Bishop Rhoades and Archbishop Naumann, John Brehany, director of institutional relations at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in

Philadelphia, said a recent interview on the "Current News" show on NET TV, the cable channel of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, said the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines were not themselves produced using cell lines derived from aborted fetal tissue.

He expressed "great respect for Bishop Strickland," calling him "a bold courageous witness to the faith," who is saying "some true things about issues that go back decades in pharmaceutical research and development," in the production of vaccines for measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox and other diseases.

But in the case of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, Brehany emphasized, any connection to aborted fetus cell lines is extremely remote.

For Dr. Robert Tiballi, an infectious disease specialist in Chicago and a member of the Catholic Medical Association, this indirect use raises an ethical issue for Catholics.

"The fetal cell lines were not directly used in the Moderna vaccine, but they were indirectly used several steps away from the actual development of the vaccine," he told "Currents News" in a separate interview.

Any such cell lines were derived from tissue samples taken from fetuses aborted in the 1960s and 1970s and have been grown in laboratories all over the world since then.

In its 2005 study, the Pontifical

Academy for Life said Catholics have a responsibility to push for the creation of morally just, alternative vaccines, but it also said they should not sacrifice the common good of public health because there is no substitute.

"Catholics can have confidence if there is a great need and there are no alternatives, they are not forbidden from using these new vaccines," Brehany told "Current News," but he added: "There is much the Church calls us to do in seeking out alternatives and advocating for alternatives."

Catholics "need to provide the urgency and advocacy" to get pharmaceutical companies to understand there are alternatives to using fetal cell lines to develop vaccines, "so they can see the need for this," he added, echoing the Pontifical Academy for Life.

A case in point is the decision by Sanofi Pasteur to no longer use an aborted fetal cell line in producing its polio vaccines, a move recently approved by the FDA.

Sanofi is one of the companies currently developing a COVID-19 vaccine by utilizing "cell lines not connected to unethical procedures and methods." Inovio Pharmaceuticals and the John Paul II Medical Research Institute are other such companies.

Follow Asher on Twitter: @jlasher

What Church needs to do to grow, be healthy

I have heard the question raised: "With people not attending Mass during the pandemic, will they all return when the pandemic is over?"

The Church has already been losing members in recent decades, and a further loss because of the pandemic could be devastating. To keep the Church healthy and growing, three things would be needed.

First, be honest to Jesus' call to the kingdom of God on earth, a kingdom of peace, justice and love. We need to bring the presence of Jesus to the world and discover the presence of Jesus anew in those in need, according to Matthew 25.

Then we bring that Jesus we have discovered in the world to Mass with us so that there is a mutual discovery of Jesus in the Eucharist and in the world.

Another area the Church will need to grow in after the pandemic is over is to be more inclusive. With the Black Lives Matter movement, the women's movement and the movement for gender equality, the Church must be more inclusive. Not to be inclusive could be turning away the presence of Jesus.

Third, the Church needs to take very seriously the environmental issue if the Church and world are to survive. We need to follow the teachings of Popes St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis, especially "Laudato Si'."

We need to be people of faith and realize how essential it is for us to be good stewards of the creation God has placed in our hands. We need to work hard at preserving creation for ourselves and generations to come.

— **Father Louis R. Benoit**
Roanoke

Pope, bishops premature in congratulating Biden

Why did the pope and U.S. bishops decide to publicly offer congratulations to Joe Biden while the outcome remains undecided and probably will for some time?

There is no urgent need that called for these congratulations now. We have a president and functioning government. This fact will not change regardless of who is president on Jan. 20, 2021.

No reasonable person disagrees with prayers for all Americans in this time of uncertainty nor argues against peace and unity for these

United States and the world. This should most surely follow a true and complete accounting and audit of the vote thereby delivering a right and just certification to the elected president, whom-ever he may be.

Natural, common sense should have prevailed on the leaders of the Catholic Church to withhold congratulations so as not to insert themselves in the political processes of a nation.

Perhaps if they relied more on supernatural grace and wisdom and exercised prudence, they would inspire the nation to calm and peaceful patience while pursuing the truth and eschewing all fraud and falsity, and demand it of our media and government.

Far more importantly, where is our bishops' concern for the immortal souls of all those who support and promote objective sin and evil, abortion, contraception, sinful sexuality, socialism and more? Why is there no call to a deep and true repentance and absolute and total conversion to Jesus Christ by our bishops?

I am reminded of Ezekiel 3:18-21, and I paraphrase, "if you warn the wicked man and the righteous man not to sin, you will have saved your life."

— **Dave Tezza**
Virginia Beach

Right to worship needs Church support in court

Since April, there has been a new trend among the predominantly Catholic families I meet. The average is a dozen a week. We catch up on changes since the last meeting or get to know each other if it's the first to understand the family's goals and needs.

Often, the conversation includes elements of our faith. The ability to incorporate my faith into my work is a significant reason I became a field agent with the Knights of Columbus.

Our conversations often included the impact of the pandemic. Everyone missed celebrating Mass with our community and partaking of the Eucharist. Interestingly, a frequent theme was the disappointment in our Catholic Church.

More specifically, disappointment in how the Church, especially in America, seemed to so easily surrender our First Amend-

ment rights. They would ask me rhetorically, "How can we so easily relinquish those freedoms our Christian predecessors had to fight and often be martyred for to establish our Church?"

They feel the Church is more fearful of litigation due to recent events regarding abuses but don't feel that is a justification.

Maybe this isn't prevalent in other parts of the country. I serve in one of the densest populations of active duty and retired military families. They know intimately what it is to sacrifice. I asked other agents, Catholic friends and family in other states. They experienced the same.

What inspired me to write this letter was news that the Brooklyn Diocese filed suit against the state of New York for its draconian edicts. Maybe it's time for other dioceses "to follow suit"?

— **Ben Salazar**
Norfolk

Keep churches open

I can sit next to a complete stranger for three-plus hours on an airplane at 100% capacity to an earthly destination, but I must sit 6 feet away from a brother or sister in the faith in a church at less than 50% capacity as we strive for a heavenly destination.

During lockdown, Home Depot and liquor stores stayed open as essential and didn't even serve earthly food, but churches were shuttered from giving the true food of the Body of Christ through which all who eat shall have eternal life.

Governors control whether our churches are open, and if open we're muzzled and can't sing; but St. Peter said, "We ought to obey God, rather than men" (Acts 5:29), and Jesus told us, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!" (Lk 19:40).

Millions hope in a man-made vaccine to protect against dying from COVID, but the faithful were/are denied the sacraments that provide grace to prevent eternal damnation and bring us to everlasting life.

Our lives have completely changed for a contagion that has been the sole cause of death for just over 10,000 people (CDC's updated numbers), Kyrie Eleison; but abortion is the sole cause of death for 3,000 babies every

day and over 860,000 babies every year, Christe Eleison.

The sheep know the True Shepherd's voice. For Church leadership: keep our churches open; feed us, your sheep, the sacraments and regain the sacredness of life.

— **Bob Boyer**
Virginia Beach

Uncover the secret of America's original sin

On Nov. 14, a diverse group of Catholics from Hampton Roads and Richmond's Sowers of Justice opened their hearts and minds to empathetically experience the walk taken by frightened, sick and confused Africans as they were delivered from Benin, Africa, to the James River dock in Manchester.

It is one thing to be white with a lifestyle of privilege in America and another to try, for a brief afternoon, to walk in the footsteps of God's children with dark skin, who were treated as property to be sold for free labor.

We prayerfully reflected on their experiences of dehumanization while also recalling our own backgrounds of racial bias that we carry with us from childhood. Deacon Charles Williams, director of the diocesan Office for Black Catholics, asked us to pair up as we walked and to share our memories of family racial discussions during our younger years.

The Richmond Slave Trail, which can also be self-guided, goes through a hidden-away area of Richmond that is easy to completely overlook unless you are seeking to uncover the

secret of America's original sin.

I, along with my fellow walkers, was deeply transfixed by the experience, and we highly recommend the walk as a prayerful activity during which you can allow the Spirit to speak to your soul about openness and reconciliation.

— **Maureen Marroni**
Norfolk

Pray for president-elect

Re: "After election, Catholic leaders pray for healing unity," (Catholic Virginian, Nov. 16), the bishop of the Delaware Catholic diocese, the CEO of the Catholic Health Association and the cardinal of Chicago were all quoted.

Their comments were outstanding, however, I was greatly dismayed and disappointed that there was not one mention of praying for the innocent unborn and the sanctity of life at all stages. That is especially important because the United States is going from the most pro-life administration to a pro-abortion administration. What makes it even more egregious is that the president-elect is supposedly a "devout Catholic."

I had to read the article several times to ensure that I did not miss some comments about protecting life at all stages — with a special focus on the pre-born.

I urge prayers for the president-elect to guide him in his decisions so that he can truly be a "devout Catholic."

— **Ted Cors**
Williamsburg

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.

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

Publisher: Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout

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

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

Circulation: Ashly Krebs (804) 622-5226 akrebs@catholicvirginian.org

Eastern Correspondents: Wendy Klesch and Jennifer Neville

Western Correspondents: Karen Adams and Joseph Staniunas

Central Correspondents: Kristen L. Byrd and Rose Morrisette

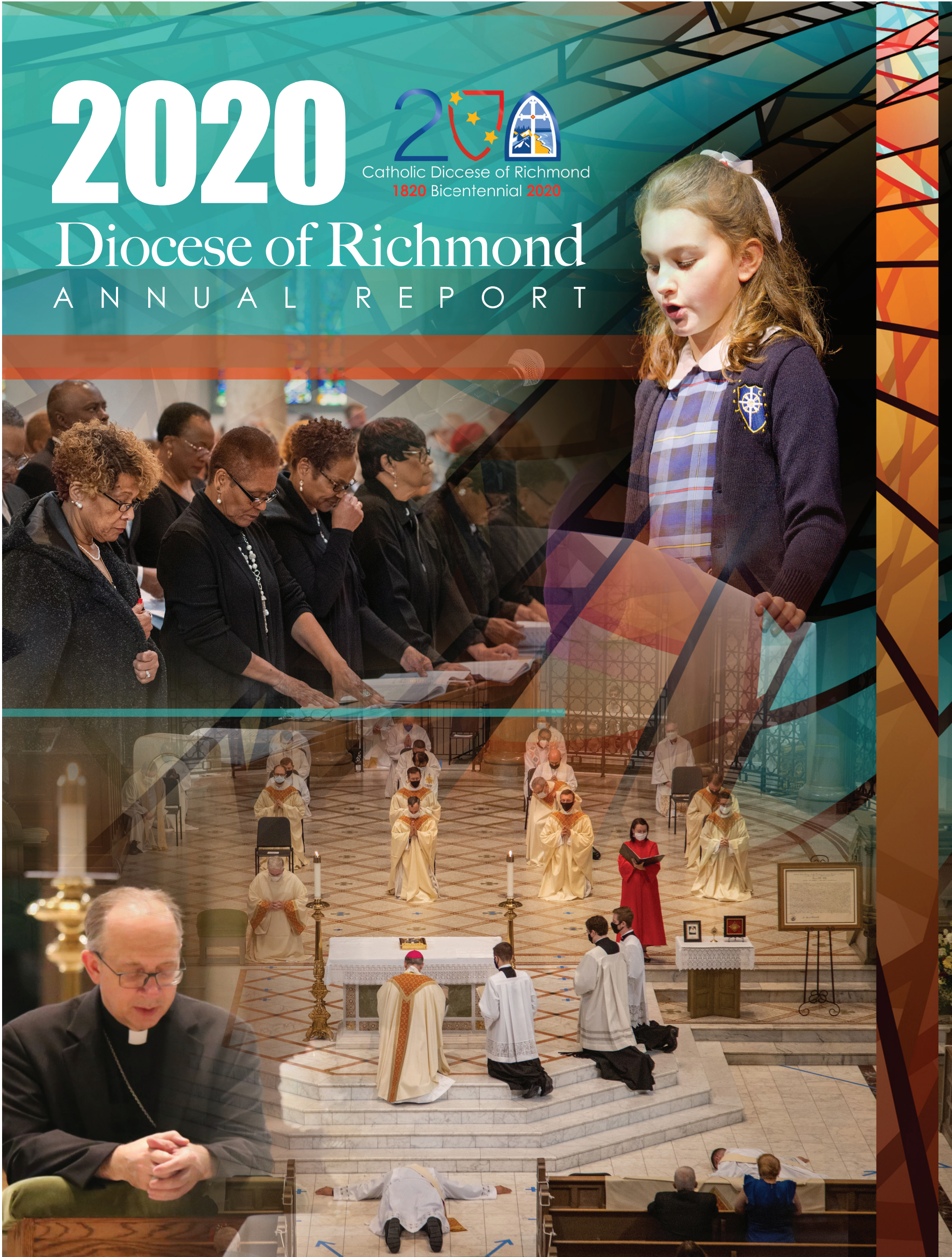
Postmaster: Send address change to The Catholic Virginian, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, VA 23294. The Catholic Virginian ISSN 0008-8404 — Published every other week on Monday by The Catholic Virginian Press, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, VA. Periodical postage paid at Richmond, VA and at additional mailing office. Sixty cents per copy, \$15 per year.

2020



Catholic Diocese of Richmond
1820 Bicentennial 2020

Diocese of Richmond ANNUAL REPORT



“REJOICE IN HOPE, ENDURE IN AFFLICTION, PERSEVERE IN PRAYER.” - Romans 12:12

MISSION

We, the Christian faithful of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, led by our Bishop and in union with the universal Church, are listeners, learners, teachers and Disciples of Christ. We embrace our diversity and its expression in faith. We share a vision of a diocese where love grows, life triumphs and justice and peace prevail. We participate in God's work to renew our Church and the world, through Word, Worship, Community and Service.

November 30, 2020

A Message from Bishop Knestout

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is likely that many of us share the feeling that things did not turn out as we had expected this year. In January, no one could have predicted how the world would change and the challenges that we would be facing. First and foremost, there is the tragic loss of life from the pandemic. There is the financial impact being felt by many due to the shutdown of businesses for reasons of health and safety. Families with children are dealing with a multitude of issues from childcare to fully virtual instruction.

Our churches became very quiet as a result of the suspension of public Masses for a period of time. The celebration of graduations, anniversaries and birthdays are different when groups are not able to gather.

We were two months into the celebration of our diocesan bicentennial year, anticipating multiple occasions to celebrate and commemorate our diocese's history when COVID-19 disrupted life. We had no idea how much change we'd undergo, but we knew that the focus on our bicentennial themes of communion and mission, and our commitment to providing pastoral care to the faithful, would continue.

Beginning in March, the onset of COVID-19 affected us sacramentally and financially. Ours is a Church of community, of gathering around the altar to be nourished by the Word of God and the Eucharist. For two months our parishioners could only watch Mass via livestreams.

Financially, with Mass attendance suspended, our parishes felt the impact immediately. Our Catholic Community Foundation personnel devoted countless hours, working closely with pastors and parish staff, to offer guidance with how parishes might best sustain financial support.

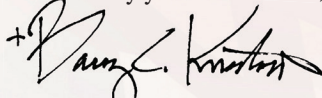
Despite having to change course, as of today, our Annual Diocesan Appeal raised \$3,902,000 and is 4.0% over its goal. I humbly thank you for keeping our ministries funded so that we can strengthen our communion and fulfill our mission.

Reflected in this year's annual report are the costs associated with the diocese's Independent Reconciliation Program in which \$6.3 million was paid to more than 50 victim survivors of clergy sexual abuse. A full report detailing this program and our extensive efforts to assist these individuals may be found on the diocese's website, richmonddiocese.org. Because of the cost of this program, combined with the economic uncertainty caused by COVID-19, we are being cautious with how we have budgeted for this upcoming year. At the same time, we will do all we can to serve the spiritual and pastoral needs of the faithful. As St. Vincent de Paul, the patron of our diocese, wrote: "Rarely is any good done without difficulty."

We have had to adapt to what has occurred this year. We don't know how much longer and to what degree these adjustments will continue. However, one thing is certain: God is with us. He sustains us in our communion with his Son, and the Holy Spirit guides us in carrying out his mission.

Let us continue to walk by that faith.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



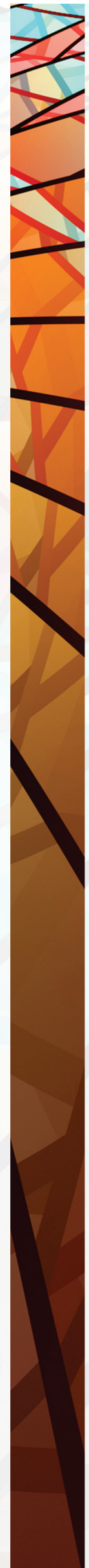
Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Bishop of Richmond

CONTENTS

Holy Week Reflection
3

Bicentennial Year in Review
4 - 5

Financial Statements
6 - 8



Holy Week REFLECTION

SUMMARY

While the public celebration of Masses had been suspended on March 16, the impact of COVID-19 on the faithful’s spiritual life hit hardest when Holy Week began on April 5. Throughout the diocese, parishes sought and implemented ways to engage parishioners in the commemoration of this most historic time in the Church year. While it was no substitute for the faithful coming together as a community, technology proved to be a blessing as some parishes were able to

livestream liturgies for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday. In areas where a local livestream wasn’t available, parishioners could watch the liturgies celebrated at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. While Holy Week and Easter were unlike any we have ever experienced, thanks to the gifts of time, talent and resources from our faith-filled Catholic community, we were able to commemorate and celebrate the Paschal Mystery in a reverent, meaningful way.

...with your whole heart ...in a relationship with Christ ...through the Darkness

 <p>Fr. Michael Renninger Pastor, St. Mary, Richmond</p>	 <p>Fr. Matt Kiehl Chaplain, College of William & Mary Rector, Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham</p>
 <p>Magr. Tom Miller Retired Priest of the Diocese of Richmond</p>	 <p>Sr. Irma Cuesta, CMS Director, Office of Ethnic Ministries</p>

Join Deacon Anthony Ferguson online each evening as he leads you through evening prayer led by a number of clergy, talks by various guest speakers, music by choirs across the Diocese and discussion topics for

Geoff and Bethany Gasperini
Parents of 5 children

Angela Hamrick
High School Teacher

HOLY WEEK MISSION

Wanting to provide as many opportunities for spiritual enrichment as possible during this time of isolation, concern and uncertainty, the diocese livestreamed a three-night mission, April 6-8. The virtual mission featured three priests, three laypeople and a religious speaking about the diocesan bicentennial theme, “Shine like Stars.” Music was provided by five parish choirs. Viewership for the virtual Holy Week Mission reached nearly 24,000 screens through diocesan social media platforms.*

*2020 Source: Office of Communications

PALM SUNDAY



Palm Sunday began the virtual celebration of Holy Week liturgies due to the temporary suspension of Masses amid the health concerns imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, Bishop Knestout dispensed Catholics from the obligation of attending Mass on Sundays and holy days until further notice.



HOLY THURSDAY

Witnessing that the community aspect of Holy Thursday would be missing due to COVID-19 restrictions, Bishop Knestout encouraged the faithful to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and grow closer to God and his Son. While not physically present for Mass, many parishioners sustained their faith communities through **offertory**. **richmonddiocese.org**, which provided opportunities to continue supporting the pastoral and sacramental ministries of their parishes.

GOOD FRIDAY



With almost no people physically present in church, the impact of the Good Friday liturgy might have been lost had it not been for livestreaming. The Catholic Community Foundation worked tirelessly with parishes on how to use social media for bringing this and all liturgies to their parishioners. In early April 2020, approximately **37** parishes were livestreaming on social media using Facebook and YouTube platforms. By June 2020, more than **130** parishes were using some type of social media technology to reach their parishioners and stay connected.* While viewing time and screen numbers varied from parish to parish, Bishop Knestout’s Holy Week liturgies – including Palm Sunday, the Sacred Triduum and Easter Sunday — from the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart reached a combined 37,435 screens across Facebook and YouTube. Weeks later, the diocese began livestreaming the bishop’s Sunday Masses, furthering its reach on Twitter.**



*2020 Source: Catholic Community Foundation

**2020 Source: Office of Communications



EASTER VIGIL



Bishop Knestout stated that the sacrifices and suffering of the pandemic were a contradiction to the hope and joy celebrated at the Easter Vigil — one of the greatest community celebrations of the Church year. Our faith communities would have to wait until summer to celebrate with our catechumens as they entered the Church. When they did, we welcomed them and rejoiced with them.

EASTER SUNDAY



Nothing could extinguish the life and the light of our Risen Lord on Easter! We came together as community — diocese, parishes, individuals — helping each other, supporting each other and, most importantly, praying for each other. While our world is sometimes overwhelmed by chaos, darkness, death and sorrow, Bishop Knestout reminded us that we will withstand these challenges “with the armor of our faith, the confidence in Christ who has conquered sin and death, and gives us light and life, today and every day.”




Bicentennial 'Shine like stars in the world, as you h

As our 200th anniversary comes to a close, Bishop Barry C. Knestout noted our diocesan commemoration would provide a look at the past "while charting a course for the future."

The following is a collection of events and initiatives that contributed to the celebration of our diocesan bicentennial.

BICENTENNIAL PRAYER (Sept. 27, 2018)

The bicentennial prayer expresses the themes of communion and mission – communion keeps the Church intact; mission enables the Church to grow. The prayer is based largely on St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians from which the bicentennial motto originated.



Bicentennial Prayer of the Diocese of Richmond

Father of lights,
the radiance of your Son has guided the advance of the Gospel across the Diocese of Richmond for two centuries, strengthening our Church from the Eastern Shore to the Cumberland Gap. Grant that the nearness of your Son may dispel the darkness of our sins, so that as our love increases more and more, we may dare more than ever to fearlessly proclaim the word. Holding fast to the word of life, may we shine like stars in the world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

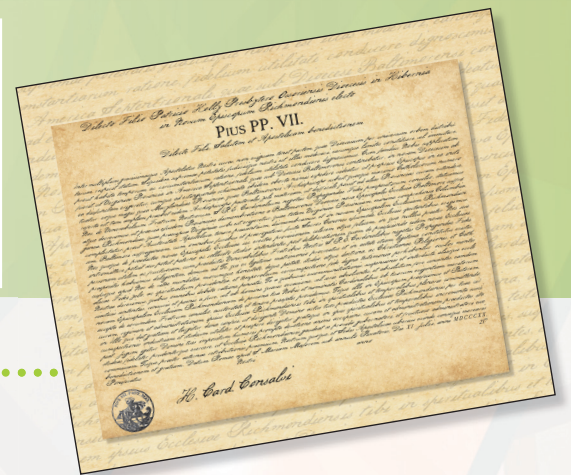
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
DIOCESAN PATRON



Catholic Diocese of Richmond
1820 Bicentennial 2020

LOGO (Aug. 9, 2019)

Shari Evans, a parishioner of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Norfolk, was announced as the winner of the bicentennial logo contest on Aug. 9, 2019. The design was inspired by the stained glass windows of the Basilica and represents the breadth of the Diocese of Richmond from the Eastern Shore to the Cumberland Gap.



APOSTOLIC BRIEF (Aug. 21, 2019)

The diocese commissioned a reproduction and translation of the founding document (apostolic brief) of the Diocese of Richmond.

BICENTENNIAL HYMN 'We Shine Like Stars in the World' (Oct. 11, 2019)

The bicentennial hymn was selected following a diocesan-wide contest so it could be used throughout the commemorative year. Composed by Daniel Keeley, director of music ministries at Our Lady of Nazareth Church, Roanoke, "We Shine Like Stars in the World" was announced as the winner of the bicentennial hymn contest on Oct. 11, 2019. Keeley told The Catholic Virginian he felt the hymn should be "a martial kind of song that would exemplify us moving forward as a Church in the Diocese of Richmond."

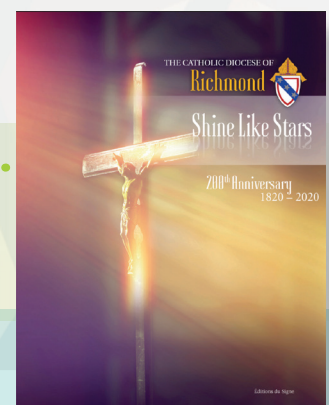


PILGRIMAGE to DC (Oct. 12, 2019)

Nearly 600 pilgrims joined Bishop Knestout on a pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 12, 2019, for prayer and catechesis. The journey helped set the tone for the bicentennial year by introducing the faithful to the bicentennial themes of communion and mission, which are expressed in the bicentennial motto: "Shine like stars in the world, as you hold fast to the word of life" (Phil 2:15-26).

COFFEE TABLE BOOK (December 2019)

A commemorative book, "Shine Like Stars," was published in December 2019. The first published copy was presented to Pope Francis by Bishop Knestout during his "ad limina" visit to the Vatican on Dec. 3, 2019.



old fast to the word of life.' (Phil 2:15-16)

EASTERN VICARIATE MASS

(Jan. 19, 2020)

Bishop Knestout opened the bicentennial year with a regional Mass in the Eastern Vicariate at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Norfolk, on Jan. 19, 2020, which commemorated the arrival in Virginia of Bishop Patrick Kelly, first bishop of Richmond. At all three regional bicentennial Masses, Bishop Knestout used a historic chalice that belonged to Right Reverend Augustine van de Vyver, sixth bishop of Richmond, and a crozier that belonged to Bishop Walter F. Sullivan, 11th bishop of Richmond.

CENTRAL VICARIATE MASS

(July 11, 2020)

The regional Mass in the Central Vicariate commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond was celebrated in conjunction with the ordination of two priests and one transitional deacon at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, on July 11, 2020. Originally scheduled to take place in the spring, the ordination dates for these three men were postponed due to COVID-19 and to ensure the safety of our parishioners and clergy. On display at the cathedral were replicas of the founding documents of the diocese and relics of St. Vincent de Paul, diocesan patron; St. Katharine Drexel, founder of two historic diocesan schools; and St. John Neumann, patron of Catholic education.

WESTERN VICARIATE MASS

(Sept. 26, 2020)

A Western Vicariate Mass marking the feast day of the diocesan patron, St. Vincent de Paul, was celebrated at St. Andrew Catholic Church, Roanoke, on Sept. 26, 2020. During the third and last of the diocese's regional bicentennial Masses, Bishop Knestout emphasized outreach to the poor and vulnerable in our midst as an expression of our life as Catholics, noting "that's been consistent throughout the history of this local Church." Due to the pandemic, the Central and Western Vicariate Masses were livestreamed in order for the faithful to safely participate.

OCTAVE OF SERVICE (Sept. 27 – OCT. 4, 2020)

An Octave of Service in honor of St. Vincent de Paul began on Sept. 27, 2020. Parishes, schools and individuals were invited to put their Catholic faith in action by serving their communities.



EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS (NOV. 6-7, 2020)

The culmination of the bicentennial jubilee was the first Eucharistic Congress ever held in the Diocese of Richmond, Nov. 6-7, 2020. Bishop Knestout opened the celebration on Friday evening, Nov. 6. Keynote presentations were given virtually by Cardinal-designate Wilton D. Gregory of Washington (English) and Bishop Luis R. Zarama of Raleigh (Spanish). Saturday began with 8:30 a.m. Mass at the Pro-Cathedral of St. Peter, Richmond, the first cathedral of the diocese. An indulgence was attached to the papal blessing Bishop Knestout imparted at the conclusion of Mass and was obtained by the faithful who participated in Mass via livestream. A Holy Hour for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was then held at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington was homilist. Parishes across the diocese held their own Holy Hours in a synchronized component to the event. Breakout presentations and discussion groups were held virtually.



INDULGENCES

In addition to the indulgence imparted at the Eucharistic Congress Mass, Pope Francis also granted an indulgence to the faithful who make a pilgrimage to any of the three historic churches within the diocese during the jubilee: the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk; the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond; and St. Andrew Catholic Church, Roanoke. While there, pilgrims should pray, at a minimum, the Our Father, the Creed and prayers associated with the Virgin Mary. The bicentennial indulgences provide a singular way to celebrate our jubilee, and they express the closeness of Pope Francis to the Diocese of Richmond.

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

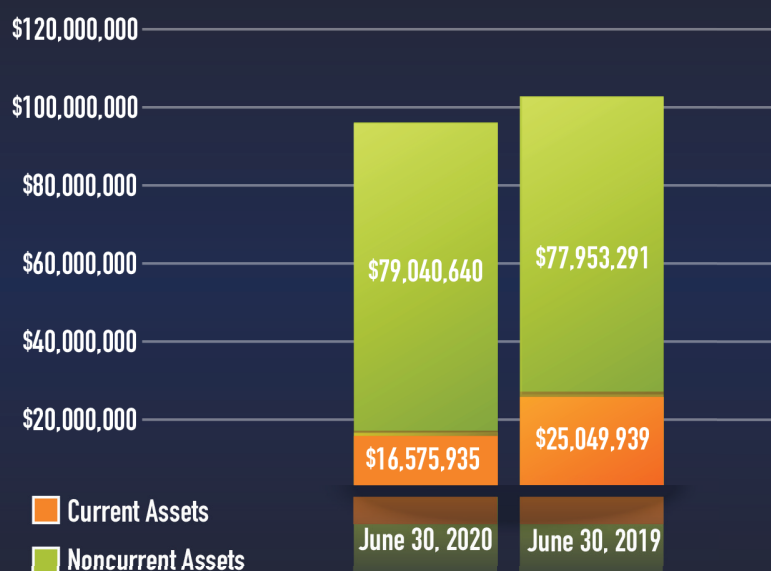
ASSETS

	JUNE 30, 2020	JUNE 30, 2019
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 554,242	\$ 1,461,256
Short-Term Investments	3,795,235	6,303,156
Accounts Receivable	5,301,835	4,516,598
Pledges Receivable - Current Portion, Net	5,686,649	11,620,360
Prepaid Expenses and Other Current Assets	1,237,974	1,148,569
Total Current Assets	16,575,935	25,049,939
NONCURRENT ASSETS		
Pledges Receivable - Noncurrent Portion, Net	677,166	2,695,843
Investments	61,632,322	60,151,647
Other Noncurrent Assets	615,392	732,953
Land, Buildings and Equipment, Less		
Accumulated Depreciation	16,115,760	14,372,848
Total Noncurrent Assets	79,040,640	77,953,291
Total Assets	\$ 95,616,575	\$103,003,230

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	JUNE 30, 2020	JUNE 30, 2019
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 5,221,213	\$ 5,649,152
Independent Reconciliation Program Payable	6,300,000	-
Parish Share Liability	5,145,091	11,358,407
Notes Payable	13,373,398	12,009,912
Other Current Liabilities	2,139,026	2,346,473
Total Current Liabilities	32,178,728	31,363,944
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES		
Net Unfunded Priest Pension Liability	10,599,873	7,533,423
Net Unfunded Priest Other Postretirement		
Employee Benefits Liability	10,416,801	8,495,364
Other Noncurrent Liabilities	835,337	118,806
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	21,852,011	16,147,593
Total Liabilities	54,030,739	47,511,537
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	422,119	14,847,842
With donor restrictions:		
To be spent for specific purpose	33,536,444	33,002,022
Maintained in perpetuity	7,627,273	7,641,829
Total Net Assets	41,585,836	55,491,693
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 95,616,575	\$103,003,230

ASSETS



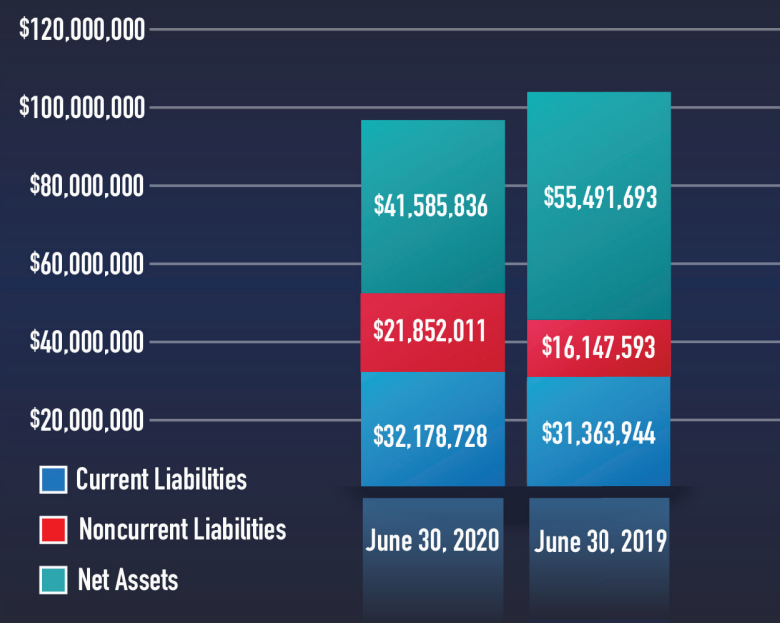
Statements of Financial Position

Assets decreased \$7.4 million as of June 30, 2020 when compared to the prior year. Pledges receivable, current and noncurrent portion, decreased \$8.0 million as the *Living Our Mission* campaign is nearing the end of its pledge redemption phase. Cash and short-term investments declined \$3.4 million as less revenue was collected near the end of the year due to the pandemic, and these funds were drawn upon to fund general operations. Offsetting these decreases, fixed assets increased, reflecting the cost of repairs and renovations to 304 North Sheppard Street, preparing the building for sale to Cristo Rey Richmond High School.

Current liabilities increased 2.6% or \$815,000, as a result of offsetting events. Current liabilities include the accrual of \$6.3 million for the Independent Reconciliation Program settlements to victim survivors. The amounts payable to the parishes for their share of the *Living Our Mission* campaign decreased by \$6,200,000. Notes payable increased \$1.4 million reflecting the \$1,999,000 loan from the Paycheck Protection Program offset by debt payments during the year on Plant Fund and Tuition Assistance Fund debts.

Noncurrent liabilities increased \$5.7 million primarily as a result of an increase in the obligation for the priests pension plan and the amount needed to be set aside for other postretirement benefits for priests.

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS



Changes in Net Assets

During the year ended June 30, 2020, expenses exceeded revenues by \$13.9 million, dropping total net assets to \$41.6 million from \$55.5 million as of the end of the prior year. Net assets without donor restrictions ended the year at \$422,119, lower by \$14.4 million, as most of the operating losses for the year were funded by unrestricted assets.

Net assets with donor restrictions, however, remained relatively level with the prior year at \$41 million. See the Statements of Activities for a further explanation.

For questions regarding the 2020 Catholic Diocese of Richmond Annual Report, contact the Diocesan Finance Office located at the Pastoral Center at (804) 359-5661. Additional information is available at www.richmonddiocese.org where the audited financial statements may be found.

Statements of Activities

Total revenue was \$9.9 million lower year-over-year. Assessments to the parishes were lowered as a result of the temporary suspension of public Mass due to COVID-19, which resulted in a \$3.8 million decrease in assessments for Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Health Insurance and Tuition Assistance. As the *Living Our Mission* campaign wraps up, contributions were lower by \$5.7 million and investment income was lower by \$1.8 million.

Total expenses increased \$1.8 million year-over-year. The recognition of \$6.3 million in settlements associated with the Independent Reconciliation Program was offset by lower *Living Our Mission* campaign case distributions as the campaign winds down. Nearly \$5.0 million was recorded to reflect an increase in the priests pension plan obligation and for other postretirement benefits for priests, primarily due to low interest rates. Where possible, costs were trimmed in a number of the program, administrative and financial services areas in recognition of less revenue due to COVID-19, the Independent Reconciliation Program and lower investment income.

VIETNAMESE NEW YEAR MASS (Jan. 26, 2020)

Celebrated at Church of Vietnamese Martyrs, Richmond, with Bishop Barry C. Knestout.

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

	JUNE 30, 2020	JUNE 30, 2019
OPERATING REVENUES		
Diocesan Assessments:	\$ 9,105,597	\$ 10,608,520
Contributions from Elderly Housing Facilities	4,150,000	3,925,000
Contributions and Collections	2,242,541	1,444,439
Program and Fee Revenue	1,683,018	1,727,787
Other Income	1,414,830	1,041,340
Investment Income	1,008,952	2,827,695
Total Operating Revenues	19,604,938	21,574,781
OTHER REVENUES		
Insurance Assessments	13,625,275	15,063,189
Campaign Contributions, Net	3,966,821	9,626,239
Tuition Assistance Assessments	3,899,951	4,771,644
Total Other Revenues	21,492,047	29,461,072
Total Revenues	41,096,985	51,035,853
AUXILIARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES		
Insurance Expenses	13,898,533	14,161,738
Tuition Assistance Program	4,349,040	5,161,235
Change in Unfunded Priest Pension Liability	3,066,450	1,232,283
Change in Unfunded Pries Other Postretirement		
Health Obligations	1,921,437	241,779
Campaign Case Distributions	1,367,600	6,292,574
Total Auxiliary Programs and Services	24,603,060	27,089,609
PROGRAM EXPENSES	14,057,014	14,835,307
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES	10,042,768	11,257,001
INDEPENDENT RECONCILIATION PROGRAM	6,300,000	–
Total Expenses	55,002,842	53,181,917
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(13,905,857)	(2,146,064)
Net Assets – Beginning of Year	55,491,693	57,637,757
NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR	\$ 41,585,836	\$ 55,491,693

PROGRAM EXPENSES

	JUNE 30, 2020	JUNE 30, 2019
OFFICES OF BISHOP AND VICARS		
Bishop's Office	\$ 385,241	\$ 390,031
Vicar General	255,572	279,141
Vicar for Clergy	166,645	173,147
Chancellor's Office	2,328	3,353
Total Offices of Bishop and Vicars	809,786	845,672
PASTORAL MINISTRIES		
Support for Priests:		
Diocesan support for priests	960,825	1,117,165
International priests enculturation and mentorship	703,062	660,193
Priest auto fund grants	600,556	603,540
Priests long-term care	532,826	492,411
Retired priests health care and support	260,268	280,107
Priests convocation and formation	73,069	39,645
Priests Council	1,418	2,515
Vocations	1,356,285	1,539,773
Cemeteries	648,856	644,138
Tribunal	554,958	561,842
Custodial Fund contributions	364,469	23,699
Retreat Centers	278,072	351,361
Education Endowment Contributions	165,341	170,030
Permanent Diaconate	154,330	149,482
Diocesan Theologian, Worship and Other	137,354	154,032
Diocese of Richmond Housing Corporation	41,586	60,344
Total Pastoral Ministries	6,833,275	6,850,277
CATHOLIC EDUCATION MINISTRIES		
Office of Catholic Schools	877,100	939,988
Christian Formation	645,616	648,201
Total Catholic Education Ministries	1,522,716	1,588,189
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL MINISTRIES		
Ethnic Ministries	464,804	636,958
Fuel and Hunger Fund	325,200	254,500
Social Ministries	280,946	249,156
Home Missions Program	10,000	223,024
Total Social and Cultural Ministries	1,080,950	1,363,638
OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION		
Campus field operations	1,379,040	1,441,980
Youth programs and events	540,580	646,434
Administration and cross-office programs	406,463	445,801
Center for Marriage, Family and Life	217,866	380,258
Campus programs and events	114,326	105,032
Young Adult programs and events	15,883	26,675
Evangelization Pastoral Plan	667	28,524
Total Office for Evangelization	2,674,825	3,074,704
COMMUNICATIONS		
Catholic Virginian	820,820	830,073
Office of Communications	314,642	282,754
Total Communications	1,135,462	1,112,827
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$ 14,057,014	\$ 14,835,307
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES		
Finance and Real Estate	\$ 1,240,805	\$ 1,284,858
Development	1,167,416	1,110,422
Depreciation	1,088,132	1,046,834
Information Technology	929,376	825,152
Human Resources	897,690	967,570
Professional fees and general administration	722,754	849,154
Facility operations, repairs and maintenance	612,919	654,879
Payroll Processing	508,146	690,773
Plant Fund	472,652	765,808
Annual Diocesan Appeal	465,054	561,523
USCCB and Virginia Catholic Conference Dues	441,354	334,319
Interest Expense	358,642	426,037
Bad debt expense	228,399	819,756
Living Our Mission	199,011	287,990
Archives and Museum	196,298	187,504
ParishSoft Accounting	176,890	232,716
Copy Services	146,495	149,810
Bicentennial Celebration	129,964	4,376
Risk Management	59,893	56,314
Other	878	1,206
TOTAL ADMIN & FINANCIAL SERVICES	\$ 10,042,768	\$ 11,257,001

2020 EVENTS OF NOTE**PRAYER BEFORE THE VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES**
(Jan. 29, 2020)

Bishop Knestout gave the invocation at the start of the Virginia House of Delegates session with a prayer from the Book of Ecclesiastes 3:1.

**2020 CONFIRMATIONS**

When public Masses resumed this year, pastors were delegated with the faculties to confer the sacrament of confirmation for candidates who were to attend a confirmation liturgy that was suspended due to COVID-19.

**PRAYER SERVICE FOR RACIAL HEALING** (June 12, 2020)

Bishop Knestout joined Deacon Charles Williams, director of the diocesan Office for Black Catholics, in a livestreamed Prayer Service for Racial Healing. The livestream had nearly 8,000 views.

**LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY INSTITUTE (LEMI)** (Oct. 24, 2020)

Having completed formation through the diocese's LEMI program, 11 women were commissioned as lay ecclesial ministers by Bishop Knestout at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.

OUR BRIGHTEST STARS: SAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH 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

Each year on Nov. 1, the Church venerates the saints in one celebration: All Saints Day. A saint is someone who is in heaven, which means being united to the Trinity, together with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all of the blessed (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1024).

Some saints are canonized, meaning that the Church has officially declared them to be in heaven, and that, because they were martyred or were exceptionally virtuous, they may be publicly venerated and invoked. Canonization provides role models and intercessors for the Church on earth.

Most holy men and women do not receive official recognition; their sanctity is unknown or forgotten. In the history of the Catholic Church in Virginia, countless men and women have given witness to their faith and made sacrifices to carry out the Church's mission. They are mostly anonymous and are honored on All Saints Day.

Memories have endured of some holy people associated, in varying degrees, with the Diocese of Richmond. They have either been canonized or are in the process of being canonized. They are stars of the highest magnitude in a constellation of sanctity.

Spanish Jesuit Martyrs of Virginia (1570–1571)

Thirty-seven years before the first permanent English settlement in North America at Jamestown (1607), eight Spanish Jesuits and a boy landed near present-day Williamsburg on Sept. 10, 1570. They were the first people to proclaim the Christian faith in the territory that became Virginia.

They were Fathers Juan Baptista de Segura and Luis Francisco de Quirós, and Brothers Gabriel Gómez, Pedro Mingot Linares, Sancho de Zaballos, Cristóbal Redondo, Gabriel de Solís and Juan Baptista Méndez. Betrayed by their indigenous guide, Don Luis de Velasco, they were killed between Feb. 4 and 10, 1571. Only the boy, Alonso de Olmos, survived, who was rescued a year later. The cause for these martyrs' canonization began in 2002.

St. Vincent de Paul (1581–1660)

Richard Vincent Whelan, the second bishop of Richmond (1841-1850), probably chose his namesake, Vincent de Paul, to be the patron of the diocese. The Catholic Church in Virginia at that time was rural, missionary and poor — just like the focus of the saint's ministry in 17th-century France.

Vincent de Paul is remembered for reforming the clergy — he founded the Vincentian order of priests and co-founded the Daughters of Charity — and for



Mother Maria Bernardetta de la Immaculada and the future Pope Francis, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, met in Argentina and were friends until her death in 2016. (Courtesy photo)

evangelizing the poor. Canonized in 1737, he is honored as the Apostle of Charity and Father of the Poor.

St. John Nepomucene Neumann (1811–1860)

A German-speaking immigrant from what is today the Czech Republic, John Neumann was a dedicated priest to German immigrants in New York state. He later joined the Redemptorist order.

He was sent to Richmond to conduct an eight-day mission for German Catholics in September 1842. Neumann's preaching at St. Peter Cathedral contributed to the eventual founding of a parish in the city for the German Catholic community: St. Mary (1848–1937). He was appointed bishop of Philadelphia (1852). This first American bishop to be canonized (1977) is remembered for his pastoral zeal.

Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos (1819–1867)

Like St. John Neumann, his Redemptorist colleague and, for a time, his confessor, Francis Xavier Seelos came to the United States as a missionary from present-day Germany. Father Seelos was a pastor in Annapolis, Maryland, when he and other Redemptorists began ministering to Union soldiers at Fort Monroe during the Civil War.

At that time, priests of the Diocese of Richmond were no longer able to reach the fort because of the hostilities. Seelos arrived at the installation in December 1862 and remained for a brief period. Later, he preached missions along the East Coast and in the Midwest, and then served as pastor in Michigan.

His final assignment was as a pastor in New Orleans. He died there of yellow fever in the course of ministering to victims of the disease. Venerated for his generosity and kindness as a priest, Francis Xavier Seelos was beatified in 2000.

St. Katharine Drexel (1858–1955)

Mother Katharine Drexel and her half-sister, Louise Morrell, used their fortune to support charitable causes. They founded schools for African Americans in the Diocese of Richmond. St. Emma's Industrial and Agricultural College for boys (1895) and St. Francis de Sales School for girls (1899) were both located in Rock Castle (Powhatan County).

Katharine funded the work of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, the religious order she established to minister to African Americans and Native Americans. Mother Drexel was the second native-born American to be canonized (2000).

Servant of God Frank Parater (1897–1920)

Although there are no records of a jubilee celebration for the centenary of the founding of the Diocese of Richmond, the untimely death that year of one of its seminarians became a lasting testimony of holiness.

A Richmond native, Francis Joseph Parater III was a devout and well-rounded young man who attained the rank of Eagle Scout. Parater was later sent as a diocesan seminarian to the North American College in Rome, where, at age 22, he died of rheumatic fever.

A spiritual testament in which he offered his life "for the spread and success of the Catholic Church in Virginia" was discovered after his death. His cause for canonization was introduced in 2001.

Servant of God Dorothy Day (1897–1980)

In an address to Congress during his 2015 visit to the United States, Pope Francis highlighted the contributions of Dorothy Day: "Her social activism, her passion for justice and for the cause of the oppressed, were inspired by the Gospel, her faith and the example of the saints."

Day co-founded the Catholic Worker movement in an effort to bring about systemic change in society. Her involvement in the civil rights movement brought her to Danville, Virginia, in July 1963, where she demonstrated in support of integration. Her cause for canonization began in 2002.

Servant of God Mother Maria Bernadetta of the Immaculate (1918–2001)

"I'm waiting on the cardinal to call me; sometimes he can't, but most of the time he calls me at 2:00."

Mother Maria Bernadetta of the Immaculate was speaking of the weekly phone call she received from her friend, then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio (Pope Francis). The two became friends in Argentina, where she was serving, and their friendship continued when she returned to her native Italy.

A Poor Sister of St. Joseph, Mother Maria Bernadetta also worked in Richmond as a cook at St. John Vianney Seminary (1966-1978). There she was remembered for her kindness and down-to-earth wisdom. Her cause for canonization was introduced in 2019.

The bicentennial motto of the Diocese of Richmond is, "Shine like stars in the world, as you hold fast to the word of life" (Phil 2:15-16). The 2020 jubilee honors all holy men and women who have contributed to the spread of the Catholic faith in Virginia. The reputation of sanctity emanating from the brightest "stars" associated with the Richmond Diocese guides those who seek holiness in our own day.

If you have trouble praying, try this



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. Because of what has been going on in the world lately (the pandemic, difficulty finding work, etc.), I am having trouble concentrating when I pray. Any suggestions for avoiding such distractions? (Portland, Oregon)

A. Don't be discouraged — or surprised. Distraction is a normal companion to prayer. Some of the best-known saints have spoken of their struggles to focus while praying.

St. Therese of Lisieux (the "Little Flower") had a "trick" that she would use. She explained, "I also have many (distractions), but as soon as I am aware of them, I pray for those people the thought of whom is diverting my attention, and in this way, they reap benefit from my distractions."

It is important for us to set aside certain times exclusively for prayer. Sometimes I do pray when I am doing other things, i.e., driving a car, even working out on a stationary bike. But those can't be the only times that I pray — I also need to pray when I am doing nothing else.

And I can't rush in from a busy day, plop down in a chair or on my knees and expect to focus immediately on the Lord; instead, I need some moments to settle and catch

my breath before I start to pray.

So, when you meet with distractions while praying — as inevitably you will — don't panic. Simply pause, refocus, and then continue your conversation with the Lord.

Q. Why do we call the day Jesus was crucified "Good" Friday? Christ was made to suffer horribly, so this has always bothered me. (Radford)

A. A fair number of people agree with you, and some have suggested that "Black Friday" would be a more appropriate designation. Interestingly, in the Greek Orthodox Church, the day is known not as "Good" but as the "Great and Holy Friday."

Certainly, if you had asked the friends of Jesus on that day itself, they would have seen nothing good in what transpired. Christ had been tortured, then executed as a common criminal, and his followers had begun to scatter.

But less than 48 hours later, all that changed. The tomb of Christ was now empty, Jesus had risen from the dead and had already begun to appear to those who had been close to him.

One theory, supported by the Oxford English Dictionary and some other linguists, is that the word "good," as applied to the day of Christ's death, comes from an antiquated meaning of the word,

meaning "holy."

I prefer the more traditional Christian explanation — namely, that we call the day "good" because, through it, Jesus has won victory over sin and death for himself and for us.

Q. We have been parishioners for more than 25 years in a small-town Catholic church. Last Sunday at Mass, we were asked to pray for President-elect Joe Biden. Then we were asked to pray (as always) for an end to the taking of unborn lives. No connection was made — just two separate petitions. We were outraged and walked out of Mass.

Afterward, my husband went to speak to the priest, who said that my husband needs to examine himself for his anger in not wanting to pray for someone. With that, my husband gave him our collection envelopes and said that these were our last two. The priest gave back the envelopes and said, "We don't need your money."

The next day, my husband emailed the priest, apologized for allowing his emotions to get the better of him and asked for a sit-down discussion with the priest. The priest's response was, "Sure, but let's let some time pass before we meet."

We feel that the priest has overstepped his bounds and would like some advice on how to handle this spiritually. (Massachusetts)

A. I admire your husband for his apology, and I am encouraged that he and your parish priest will have a further conversation. It does seem proper to me to offer prayers for our president-elect; and while I disagree strongly with President-elect Biden on the issue of abortion legislation, I understand your priest's feeling that the prayer of the faithful was not the proper setting to argue our case.

On Nov. 7, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued a statement congratulating President-elect Biden on his election and praying that the Blessed Virgin Mary may "help us to work together to fulfill the beautiful vision of America's missionaries and founders — one nation under God, where the sanctity of every human life is defended and freedom of conscience and religion are guaranteed."

On Nov. 12, Pope Francis called President-elect Biden to congratulate him. No account of their conversation was released by the Vatican, but Biden's transition team said that the president-elect "expressed his desire to work together on the basis of a shared belief in the dignity and equality of all humankind on issues such as caring for the marginalized and the poor, addressing the crisis of climate change, and welcoming and integrating immigrants and refugees into our communities."

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

Time Is Running Out!

Receive a Charitable Tax Deduction Before The Year Ends

Did you know that you can make a gift of cash or appreciated property before December 31 and enjoy a charitable tax deduction and valuable tax savings on this year's tax return?

Your gift can even provide you with income for the rest of your life!

Make Your End of Year Gift Today!



**Catholic
Community
Foundation**
of the Diocese of Richmond

For more information, contact Maggie Keenan at (804) 622-5221 or mkeen@richmonddiocese.org

Make your Advent journey purposeful, prayerful



IN LIGHT OF FAITH

BARBARA HUGHES



Although its popularity seems to have fallen by the wayside, it's a timely teaching tool and activity for families with children, though even oldsters can benefit from it.

Rather than accelerating the practice of decorating for Christmas weeks in advance, why not opt for a small, shapely tree branch, dry or evergreen, to decorate with symbols that portray the spiritual heritage of Jesus?

Place the branch — about 2-3 feet tall — in a pot of earth, followed by a Google search that will take you to images that symbolize stories in the Bible that paved the way for the coming of the Messiah. The images can be printed or duplicated, or you may choose to create your own symbol to represent the Old Testament event.

Either way, decorating a Jesse tree can be a meaningful way to spend time with family, a spouse or even alone, and it's guaranteed not to contribute to a sugar or cholesterol high.

Since people are shopping online more and spending more time at home because of the pandemic, this may be the perfect year to begin a new tradition. It'll make the waiting more enjoyable while spiritually preparing all involved to be more mindful of the reason for the season.

Decorating a Jesse Tree is a wonderful way to get to know the people upon whose shoulders Christianity stands. People like Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and David. More than ever, we need to echo the prayer of Solomon and ask for wisdom for our leaders while reflecting on the lives of the prophets, who challenged the people to remain faithful while they waited for deliverance.

The Hebrew saints prepared the Israelites for the coming of Christ first through the Law of Moses, the kings and prophets, Elizabeth, Zechariah and, finally, through Mary. We are called to do the same.

Although times have changed, people have not, making our journey not so different from the journey of the Israelites. We live in anticipation of what is to come even as we continue the pilgrimage that takes us from exile to the promised land.

Their story is our story, though we have the advantage of knowing how the story ends. We know that Christ has come, that Christ is with us and that Christ will come again. That should put a song in our heart and a prayer on our lips as we journey toward Christ's coming this year.

When we consider how long the Jews waited for the Messiah, four weeks of Advent is miniscule by comparison. The Good News is that we get to celebrate Advent every year, reminding us that preparation is important and is ongoing.

Mindful of the journey at hand, let's make the most of every day lest we're caught off guard with our spiritual-to-do-list unfinished. We can begin by making this Advent the best one ever by ensuring the journey toward Christmas is lived purposefully and prayerfully.

Confident that the Strong Branch of Jesse's Tree lights our way, let's begin Advent with voices raised as we pray: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

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

Listen to Lord's herald proclaiming glad tidings



BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY

MSGR. TIMOTHY KEENEY

I recently celebrated one of those milestone birthdays — 60 years old. I still remember what 14 felt like when I went to the high school seminary with the Redemptorists. I remember what it felt like when I left the seminary to go to law school when I was 26, and what it felt like when I left law to return to the seminary at 32. I am now on the verge of celebrating 25 years of priesthood.

Why this trip down memory lane? Because I can remember on this path that led to priesthood there were times when I wondered if I would ever see the day of my ordination.

When we are in the midst of the journey, we can get impatient about the journey's end. Yet from the point of view of my 60-year-old self, it can all seem like yesterday.

Each Advent we call to mind again our

expectation of the final coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of time. Now, 2,000 years after the first coming of the Lord, it is understandable if our expectation of that definitive coming is something less than imminent in our hearts and minds.

Yet each year, we hear the voice of the Church encouraging us on the way: "Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God."

Although each year has its joys and sorrows, the Lord's command to offer comfort to his people seems particularly appropriate this year.

That word of comfort also comes with the encouragement not to lose heart and confidence in the promise of the Lord's coming: "Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God."

If there have been twists and turns to this year that have caused our faith life to lose its edge or we have begun living our life without God truly being at the center of everything, Advent is the appropriate time to listen to the herald of the Lord crying out his glad tidings: "Here comes with power the Lord God, who rules by his strong arm."

One of the reasons to go down memory lane each year in Advent is to see that the

promises God made to his people in the Old Testament have been fulfilled in the New Testament. Isaiah's prophecy would only be fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ and his herald John the Baptist.

From the perspective of those who lived in the time in between, it must have felt like they would never live to see the day of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Yet it was fulfilled — and fulfilled in a way beyond anyone's imagining.

In the same way, we live in the time in between the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy and Jesus' promise of his definitive coming. We can be tempted to grow weary, cold in our faith and overwhelmed by the problems of the day. But God will fulfill his word just as he has in the past.

Remember the words of St. Paul from today's readings: "[T]hat with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day."

In that calculation, we are only two days after the Lord's promise of the new heaven and the new earth. He will fulfill his promise soon. Take up Advent's call that we be ready in mind and heart for his coming.

Msgr. Timothy Keeney is pastor of Incarnation, Charlottesville.

Second Sunday of Advent – Year B

Is 40:1-5, 9-11

Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14

2 Pt 3:8-14

Mk 1:1-8

OPPORTUNITIES

Part-time Bookkeeper (7 hours per week), St Andrew the Apostle Church, Chincoteague.

Description: Provides bookkeeping support via ParishSoft programs while providing administrative support to the Pastor and Business Manager. Manages in the main parish office.

Responsibilities: Works in the parish front office. Must work well independently, take direction from Business Manager/Pastor, and must work well with staff and parishioners. Assists Business Manager by recording transactions and posting them to various ParishSoft accounts. Processes checks or payments for Pastor's signature. Conducts daily banking activities, general ledger entries and various ParishSoft financial reports. Reconciles reports to third-party records. Assists in preparation and compilation of annual budget and financial results.

Qualifications: High school diploma required. Bachelor's degree in accounting or three years' bookkeeping experience must be noted on résumé. Must be a Catholic in good standing and VIRTUS qualified in order to meet diocesan policies for the protection of children. Strong interpersonal communication skills and excellent administrative, clerical and organizational skills a must. Recognizes the importance of confidentiality of all parish conversations and documents. Must be able to adapt to competing demands, changes in the work environment and meet deadlines. Detail-oriented with demonstrated success in previous bookkeeping responsibilities. Proficient in computer skills including MS Office, Word, Excel, Adobe and Windows 365.

For further information, call 757-894-9696 (cell).

Diocese of Richmond

seeks a Director of Development for the Catholic Campus Ministry at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. Our Catholic Campus Ministry serves a large number of students, staff and faculty who are active in their faith.

The Director of Development will be responsible for growing and expanding an already well-established development program through meeting with supporters, composing

appeal letters and cultivating and maintaining the over 100 monthly donors to the ministry. The Director of Development will also work closely with the Director and the Chaplain to find ways to expand our database and identify more alumni and friends of the ministry in order to invite them to participate in our ministry through their generosity.

Responsibilities will also include working with a student development team, writing grant appeals, leading weekly development meetings and helping oversee a leadership council.

Qualifications: A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required with 3-5 years of experience in fund development preferred.

This is a full-time exempt position on a salary basis. Salary is commensurate with experience and diocesan pay scale.

Interested candidates should please submit a cover letter, résumé and diocesan application to jobs@richmond-diocese.org.

St. Olaf Catholic Church, Williamsburg,

seeks a Facilities Maintenance Coordinator (36 hours per week) responsible for maintaining and repairing parish buildings, rectory and grounds. Performs and supervises tasks related to HVAC, electrical, plumbing, security, environmental, safety, custodial and event coordination. Must be a team player with excellent project coordination, organizational skills, exceptional interpersonal and communication skills and attention to detail. Evenings and weekend work required when necessary. This position requires a high school diploma or equivalent and 1-3 years' experience in buildings and grounds upkeep.

Please send résumé to office@stolaf.cc

Holy Cross Catholic Church, Kernersville, NC,

is seeking a full-time Director of Faith Formation. This person is responsible for the coordination of educational activities that help parishioners grow in their knowledge and understanding of God, the Church and their faith. To find out more about joining the dynamic team in a diverse and growing parish, please visit holycrossnc.org and click on "Job Opportunities."

St. Elizabeth, Richmond, is looking for a part-time Parish Secretary. Applicant must have a minimum of three years of experience, be self-motivated, able to work with little direction and have good organizational skills. Duties include assisting Priest Administrator and bookkeeper with secretarial needs, facilitating marriage prep paperwork and interacting with parishioners, visitors and callers. This position is typically 8-12 hours per week with normal office hours being Tuesday-Friday, 1-4 p.m., however can be flexible. Ideally the start date would be Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2021. Please send your résumé to Father Jim Arsenault at Jarsenault@richmond-diocese.org.

the burden of infertility and loss to a free virtual mini-prayer retreat. Discover ways to connect more deeply to God and your spouse through prayer; contemplate the Lord's closeness in your suffering; and learn ways to surrender your sorrows to God and invite him to guide you and strengthen your marriage. Retreat ends with a Facebook Live event 2 p.m., Dec. 6. For more information and to register, visit <https://springsinthedesert.org/>.

Join Church of the Redeemer virtually for the 13th Annual No Room at the Inn gala, Friday, Dec. 4, 7-8 p.m. Start your holiday season with beautiful nativities, Redeemer's Choir and a live auction. The auction runs Nov. 27-Dec. 4 @ 7:45 p.m. You can also view nativities online Dec. 5-25. This is a free event, but donations are welcomed to support our beneficiaries that provide safe housing to those in need. Go to www.churchredeem.org/no-room to participate in the auction or join our gala live.

er.org/no-room to participate in the auction or join our gala live.

LARCUM is going virtual! On Dec. 4 and 5, Dr. Phillip Cary, internationally acclaimed expert on St Augustine, scholar-in-resident at the Templeton Honors College, professor of philosophy at Eastern University and editor-in-chief of Pro-Ecclesia, will speak about "Being Formed by the Gospel in a Post-Christian Age: A Proposal for the Church Catholic."

As a fruit of the limitation in the pandemic, we have become accustomed to meeting online and to dialogue in a different context. The result is that one can attend the LARCUM (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic and United Methodist) Conference without the cost of travel, et al. Registration is \$25 per person; students are free.

For additional information and to register, visit www.virginalarcum.org.

SHORTTAKES

Praying Through Infertility, online retreat, Dec. 4-6. For those struggling with infertility, the time spent preparing for and celebrating Christmas can be bitter-sweet. But the Lord offers us great hope! Springs in the Desert invites those carrying

We're Hiring!

JOIN THE HOPE TEAM



Work for a community that cares.

Our Lady of Hope is dedicated to people, and that includes our team members. Our team enjoys wonderful benefits, a great West End location near Short Pump Town Center, and a positive working environment. **We are now hiring for a variety of positions in multiple departments, full- and part-time.**

Contact Stefanie: 804-360-1960 or scardwell@ourladyofhope.com.



HOPE IS WHERE THE *Heart* IS

ourladyofhope.com/careers
 13700 N. Gayton Road • Richmond, VA 23233

Assisted Living • Nursing Care • Memory Care • Rehabilitation

A nonprofit community sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. Open to people of all faiths.

 Coordinated Services Management, Inc. - Professional Management of Retirement Communities since 1981 

Obispos: Pandemia abre camino a nuevas posibilidades de evangelización

DENNIS SADOWSKI
Catholic News Service

CLEVELAND — Si bien la pandemia del coronavirus puede haber conducido a un aislamiento debilitante para los católicos, no ha disminuido su hambre por la Eucaristía, expresaron obispos de todo el país.

En una discusión en línea de 45 minutos el 17 de noviembre, los obispos describieron una sed inquebrantable por la Eucaristía, detallando algunas de las medidas extraordinarias que la gente ha tomado para adorar ante el Santísimo Sacramento.

Ellos hablaron sobre el impacto del coronavirus en comunidades de iglesias locales como parte del segundo día de la asamblea general de otoño de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos, que este año se transmitió en vivo debido a la pandemia.

“El poder del Espíritu Santo vive en los corazones de los fieles”, expuso el obispo David P. Talley de Memphis, Tennessee.

“La gente está expresando un amor y una devoción profunda a la Eucaristía”, agregó el arzobispo John C. Wester de Santa Fe, New Mexico.

En la diócesis de Brownsville, Texas, el obispo Daniel E. Flores habló de las veces que ha llegado a las parroquias y ha encontrado a gente arrodillada afuera, orando por la oportunidad de recibir la Sagrada Comunión y el regreso de las experiencias normales de adoración.

“Esta es una renovación que encuentro, personalmente, muy edificante y una fuente de gran fortaleza”, comentó el obispo Flores.

El obispo Kevin W. Vann de Orange, California, describió la misma escena de personas arrodilladas bajo la lluvia una mañana temprano, esperan-



Mass is livestreamed on Facebook by Father Tom Kovatch, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Bloomington, Ind., March 28, 2020, during the pandemic. (CNS photo/Katie Rutter)

do que se abriera la Catedral de Cristo.

Las comunidades hispanas se han visto particularmente afectadas por la imposibilidad de asistir a misa y explicó cómo empezará a viajar para visitar pequeños grupos de personas los domingos.

Varios obispos indicaron que tal anhelo por la Eucaristía presenta una oportunidad para que la iglesia comience un nuevo esfuerzo de evangelización y catequesis a medida que la celebración pública de la misa se expande gradualmente y los líderes de la iglesia determinan la mejor manera de alentar a las personas a volver a participar en la vida parroquial.

El obispo James S. Wall de Gallup, New Mexico, describió los desafíos que tiene al ministrar en una diócesis que se extiende a dos estados, en New Mexico y en Arizona, y en la que las reservas de los nativos americanos abarcan el 62% del territorio diocesano. Si bien la cuarentena puede haber disminuido en algunas comunidades,

declaró, las reservas permanecen bajo límites más estrictos debido al nivel alto de infección y muerte, lo que impide a los nativos americanos católicos de ir a adorar.

“Yo diría que, si hay una gracia que he visto como resultado de esto, es un mayor amor por la Eucaristía ... Creo que esta ausencia de la Eucaristía realmente ha creado un anhelo, un hambre, un deseo en nombre de nuestra gente”, expresó a la asamblea.

La pandemia también le ha dado tiempo al obispo Wall para desarrollar una carta pastoral sobre la Eucaristía, una que va a publicar durante el Adviento o a principios del 2021.

El arzobispo Paul S. Coakley de Oklahoma City, presidente del Comité de Obispos sobre Justicia Doméstica y Desarrollo Humano, abrió la discusión explicando cómo ha visto al Espíritu Santo trabajando entre líderes laicos, clérigos, religiosas, y organizaciones parroquiales para continuar con varios ministerios.

Describió una “nueva conciencia de que necesitamos ser una iglesia más evangelizadora”.

Otro prelado, el obispo auxiliar Robert E. Barron de Los Ángeles, presidente del Comité de Evangelización y Catequesis de los obispos, sugirió que se desarrolle una campaña nacional para alentar a las personas a que traigan a alguien más con ellos, cuando puedan regresar a la misa regular.

En todo el país, la pandemia ha llevado a los líderes diocesanos a ayudar a las parroquias a adoptar nuevas tecnologías para la transmisión en vivo de la misa, mantenerse en contacto con los feligreses, en particular con los ancianos, y aprender cómo ayudar a las personas a acceder a alimentos y otras necesidades básicas.

The beauty of celebrating Simbang Gabi

During Advent, Filipinos celebrate Simbang Gabi (Night Mass), a novena of Masses that expresses the love for God through our Blessed Mother Mary. Filipinos gather for nine consecutive days of prayer in anticipation of Jesus' birth. Individual parishes in the Diocese of Richmond are welcome to celebrate Simbang Gabi starting Dec. 15, through Dec. 23, at 4 p.m.

Simbang Gabi is a long-treasured Philippine tradition. It is originally a series of “dawn Masses” for nine consecutive days before Christmas Day. Its liturgical significance emanates from Advent being a season of spiritual preparation and purification to worthily welcome and receive the Child Jesus in our midst.

The Mass at Dawn, Simbang Gabi, is one of the longest and most important religious celebrations in the Philippines, which has lasted over 600 years.

The Simbang Gabi is a time when Catholic parishes across the Philippines celebrate Mass outdoors in order to accommodate the faithful. At times, when Mass is not celebrated outside, the doors of churches are, nevertheless, left wide open to allow attendants to share in the atmosphere of the Mass.

Its origins began in Mexico, where the practice of holding Mass outdoors began in 1587, when Pope Sixtus V gave permission to Diego de Soria, a Mexican friar, to hold Mass outdoors because the churches could not accommodate the huge number of worshippers that came to celebrate Christmas.

The novena culminates with the Mass of the Gifts, or Misa de Gallo, which celebrates the birth of Jesus. However, it was not until 1669, during the early years of Christianity in the Philippines, that the Misa de Gallo became a Philippine spiritual tradition.

During Advent, in preparation for the birth of Christ, missionary friars held pre-dawn Masses for nine consecutive days to usher in the event of Jesus' birth. The Masses were usually celebrated at 4 a.m. since they took place during the harvest season when farmers had to be in the fields at the crack of dawn.

“Gallo” means rooster in Spanish. At the first sound of dawn, at the crowing of the rooster, the entire family would get up and walk to the nearest parish church.

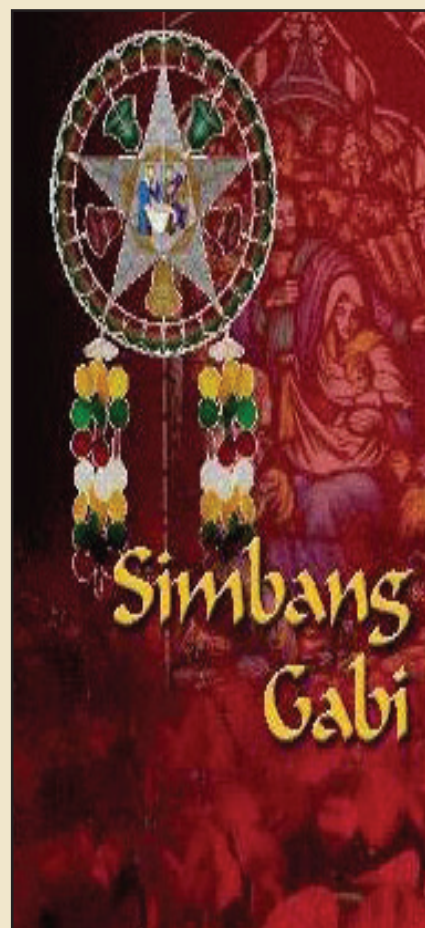
During this time, colorful lanterns are hung in every door, window, tree branch and street corner. Bands play native carols all across town

while families, couples and individuals make their way to the nearest church.

Shortly after Mass, people gather in their homes to celebrate Noche Buena and feast on local delicacies made of rice flour, coconut milk and

other traditional desserts.

Luz G. Rayel-Straub is an advisory committee member for the Diocese of Richmond's Asian Ministry/Office of Ethnic Ministries and a member of Sacred Heart, South Prince George.



JOIN US TO CELEBRATE SIMBANG GABI

Church of the Sacred Heart

Livestream only

at <https://www.catholiccluster.com>

via Facebook or YouTube

South Prince George, VA

December 18, 2020, Friday, 7:00 PM

PUBLIC / LIVESTREAM

St. Jerome Catholic Church

116 Denbigh Blvd

Newport News, VA 23608

December 18, 2020, Friday, 6:00 PM

POC: Gemma Kerstetter, 757-817-7607

Pre-registration for Mass is required at

Simbanguabi2020@gmail.com

Church of the Redeemer

8275 Meadowbridge Rd

Mechanicsville, VA 23116

December 19, 2020, Saturday, 5:30 PM

POC: Rey Bonjoc, 804-241-4624

Pre-registration for Mass is required at

<https://www.churchredeemer.org>

Eucharistic Congress included outreach to children, youth

Special activities sponsored by the diocesan Office of Christian Formation and the Office for Evangelization provided children and youth a unique opportunity to participate in the Diocese of Richmond's bicentennial celebration.

The Office of Christian Formation held Eucharistic Congress picture and essay contests to help children in kindergarten through 5th grade reflect on the bicentennial theme: "Shine like stars in the world, as you hold fast to the word of life" (Phil 2:15-16).

In grades K-2, children illustrated the prompt: "My Community Shines like Stars." In grades 3-5, children wrote an essay to answer the following: "Tell us your story of 'Shining Like Stars'... An experience of bringing happiness, joy and love to your church community and Diocese of Richmond."

After reviewing over 100 entries representing five of diocesan Catholic schools and a wide range of parishes, one winner was selected from each participating grade.

The winners are:

Kindergarten: **Azara Mumford**, St. Joseph School, Petersburg

1st grade: **Declan Maxwell**, Portsmouth Catholic School, Portsmouth

2nd grade: **Charlotte Charbonneau**, St. Matthew Church and School, Virginia Beach

3rd grade: **Brenna McClure**, Portsmouth

Catholic School, Portsmouth

4th grade: **Joseph Waring**, St. Bridget Parish, Richmond

5th grade: **Rommel Castillo**, St. Pius X Catholic School, Norfolk

In addition to the picture and essay contests, the Office of Christian Formation also sponsored a "Project with a Purpose" in which school students created cards for residents of adult care facilities across the diocese.

The Office for Evangelization solicited entries to its Eucharist Art Festival for students in grades 6-12 from Nov. 7-14.

The Eucharistic Art Festival was created as a reflection-style contest in which youth could submit entries in a variety of media including visual art, film, dance, photography and poetry to reflect on "What the Eucharistic Congress means to me."

Trevor Chapman, a 6th grade student at St. Mary Star of the Sea School, Fort Monroe, was announced as the winner.

Chapman submitted a pencil drawing of his family gathering together to glorify the Eucharist.

In his entry statement, Chapman wrote: "I made this peice (sic) of art of my family to express the gathering love and glorifying of the Eucharist. What the Eucharist means to me is that we gather and glorify the world as we receive and share Jesus Christ with others."

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Good people doing good things I: When Jim Cavallario of the St. Matthew Parish maintenance department put out the call for volunteers, parishioners Chester and William Reha answered. They not only groom the grounds, but help maintain, service and repair the groundskeeping equipment. Chet, an alumnus of St. Matthew School, performed his Eagle Scout project cutting back and recycling dense overgrowth around the perimeter of the grounds, making it safer and easier to maintain.

Speaking of St. Matthew School, they want to hear from anyone who attended between 1963 and 2010. Email alumni@smsvb.net.

Good people doing good things II: When nonagenarian Eva Hicks was about to be discharged from Our Lady of Hope Health Center after completing a month of rehab, she told staff members that her sister, also a nonagenarian, lives in North Carolina and wasn't available to give her a ride to her Richmond home. So, staff members Jenna Swann, Meredith Auchmoody and Amy Boles used the Our Lady of Hope bus and transported Ms. Hicks 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.

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

Help us provide warmth this holiday season to seniors in need!

SOCKS FOR SENIORS

BENEFITTING:



November 30 through December 18, our sister communities will be collecting socks for men and women served by Commonwealth Catholic Charities. Per their donation policy, we are only able to accept **newly purchased items**.

Drop off **new** socks (all sizes; white is preferred) at Our Lady of Hope or St. Mary's Woods in the outdoor bins marked *Socks for Seniors*.

Questions? Call Connie (804-360-1960) or Roslyn (804-741-8624).

WORKING TOGETHER TO CARE FOR YOU



804-741-8624

stmaryswoods.com
1257 Marywood Lane
Richmond, VA 23229



804-360-1960

ourladyofhope.com
13700 North Gayton Road
Richmond, VA 23233

Nonprofit communities sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.
Open to people of all faiths.



Coordinated Services Management, Inc. - Professional Management of Retirement Communities since 1981

