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Father Ken Shuping, pastor of St. Gerard, Roanoke, gives Communion to Charles Anderson Sr. during the Mass to celebrate Anderson's 100th birthday on Feb. 8. An original member of the historic Black Catholic church founded in 1946, Anderson was honored for his decades of service to his church, neighborhood, community and country.

(Photo/Karen Adams)



Pope: Smile, say kind words during Lent

CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — As Christians pray, fast and give alms during Lent, they also should consider giving a smile and offering a kind word to people feeling alone or frightened because of the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis said.

“Love rejoices in seeing others grow. Hence it suffers when others are anguished, lonely, sick, homeless, despised or in need,” the pope wrote in his message for Lent 2021.

The message, released by the Vatican Feb. 12, focuses on Lent as “a time for renewing faith, hope and love” through the traditional practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. And, by going to confession.

Throughout the message, Pope Francis emphasized how the Lenten practices not only promote individual conversion, but also should have an impact on others.

“By receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others,” he said. “Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain.”

The pope's message contained several references to his encyclical “Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship.”

For example, he prayed that during Lent Catholics would be “increasingly concerned with ‘speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words

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‘Miracles happen through love’

Christopher Anderson Sr. reflects on century of living

“You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (Lk 10:27).

KAREN ADAMS
Special to The Catholic Virginian

For a century, Charles Anderson Sr. has loved God and loved others, and on Feb. 8, his 100th birthday, he felt all that love reflecting back to him.

An original member of St. Gerard, Roanoke — the first and only black Catholic parish in southwest Virginia — Anderson was honored on his birthday with a special Mass and celebration at the church, which he helped to establish in 1946.

“I love this church so much,” Anderson said at his home before the event. “I have a personal love for it that goes back a long way.”

He is a veteran of World War II, an award-winning Master Gardener and a longtime volunteer in community activities, especially in the historic black Melrose-Rugby neighborhood near the church, where he still lives.

But helping to build St. Gerard Parish is one of his proudest accomplishments, he said. He has served the church as a parish council member, Grand Knight of

the Knights of Columbus, Bingo fundraiser and organizer of youth sports teams, which brought football and baseball to the neighborhood, and photographer.

“He was at every event,” said Jim Allen, parish business manager.

During the Mass, Father Ken Shuping, St. Gerard pastor, read a letter to Anderson from Bishop Barry C. Knestout that noted his achievements, extolled his “fruitful life, blessed by faith and generosity,” and honored his “courage, character, deep faith, and service to God and country.”

Surrounded by friends and family, Anderson also was honored with a proclamation from Roanoke City Mayor Sherman Lea naming Feb. 8 “Charles William Anderson Sr. Day.” The proclamation was read by city council member Stephanie Moon Reynolds.

In his homily, Father Shuping said to Anderson: “We give thanks for your life and the many ways you’ve responded to God’s call to be there for all those around you. We thank you for your example to us. May the Lord continue to bless you and may you always find peace in our Lord and Savior.”

‘Help others’

When reflecting upon his long life, Anderson has a
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Intent of Lent is ongoing conversion of heart



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

As has been our life since last March, due to the pandemic we have had to adapt how we celebrate so many aspects of our faith. Because of health concerns, many have not been able to personally participate in some of the sacraments of the Church, particularly the celebration of Mass. Technology, through our livestreamed Masses, has kept us connected, but it has not been what we experienced when our entire parish communities would worship together.

If you were among those who went to Mass

“Our hope is that the inner transformation we experience will guide us throughout Lent and beyond, and that we will continue to turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.”

on Ash Wednesday, you did not have ashes marked upon you in the manner to which you were accustomed. Instead, in following a directive from the Holy See, ashes were sprinkled upon you — a longtime practice for the distribution of ashes in many other parts of the world.

In our cultural environment, we have been

forced by the pandemic to do without or limit many of the customary ways we express our Catholic faith. That adjustment is difficult for us; it is a trial and sorrow. At the same time, we’re doing it for a greater, common good which is to safeguard the health of us all. For this reason, it’s appropriate that we’ve made these adaptations, knowing that they are temporary.

For some, this form for receiving ashes was disconcerting because we welcome the external, tangible symbols of our faith. We want to express our beliefs through physical encounter with these sacramentals. That is why Masses on Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday regularly attract — in pre-COVID years — a large number of participants.

But the externals are only part of what we express; the ashes indicate the spirit with which we approach Lent and the change of heart we seek. In the Gospel for Ash Wednesday — Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 — Jesus emphasizes interior transformation. He admonishes us not to draw attention to ourselves when it comes to the penitential acts we do during Lent.

That is the intent of Lent — the ongoing interior conversion of heart. While the manner in which we receive ashes changed for this year, our commitment to conversion didn’t. More than ever, the words associated with our reception of ashes, “Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel,” should be guiding us this season.

Those words are the basis for the ongoing change of heart for which we strive. Not only are they applicable to our daily prayer and reflection during Lent, but they should be the impetus for how we live throughout the year.

For example, while we are required to abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent, the Church did *not* put aside that abstinence on Fridays during the rest of the year. Instead, it said you could do — and should do! — an alternative sacrifice every Friday if, for whatever reason, one needed not to abstain.

The external expressions of Lent and the

internal conversion are complementary. The external presentation appeals to our senses; it is something meant to enhance, enable, facilitate and reinforce our internal transformation. That is a personal experience. For some, it is easy to enter that place of reflection and formation, while for others, it takes more time and external actions to make progress in it.

What is important is that we grow toward that place where our internal spirit of repentance and our external manifestation of repentance both aid in drawing us closer to God, and we don’t lose our longing for the external presentation of our faith which, for many, we manifest in prayer, fasting and almsgiving, giving evidence of our interior change of heart.

Our hope is that the inner transformation we experience will guide us throughout Lent and beyond, and that we will continue to turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.

CLERGY ASSIGNMENTS

The Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, bishop of the Diocese of Richmond, has announced the following appointments, effective Monday, Feb. 15, 2021:

OFFICIAL

Father Francis Boateng from chaplain of Church of the Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach, and priest in residence at St. Matthew, Virginia Beach, to administrator of St. Mary, Wytheville, and St. Edward, Pulaski.

Father Policarpio Lagco from parochial vicar of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Newport News, to priest in residence at St. Matthew, Virginia Beach.

Father Daniel Malingumu as temporary chaplain of Church of the Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach, in addition to his current role as pastor of Church of the Ascension and dean of Deanery 2.

Ashes mark beginning, not end, of new life, says theologian

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Ash Wednesday and Lent are a time to recall that new life emerges from the ashes and that spring blossoms from the bleakness of winter, said a noted Italian theologian.

And when people fast from media overload, as Pope Francis has asked people to do for Lent, they should be directing their attention to the real people around them, Servite Father Ermes Ronchi told Vatican News Feb. 16.

Instead of being “glued” to the internet, “what if we were to look people in the eye the way we look at our phones, 50 times a day, looking at them with the same attentiveness and intensity, how many things would change? How many things would we discover?” he asked.

The Italian priest, who was chosen by Pope Francis to lead his annual Lenten retreat in 2016, talked with Vatican News about how to

“We are living in a time that can bring us back to the essential, rediscovering what is permanent in our life and what is fleeting. Therefore, this moment is a gift to be more fruitful, not to castigate.”

— SERVITE FATHER ERMES RONCHI

understand Lent and Ash Wednesday during a global pandemic, particularly when many people have already lost so much.

He recalled the natural cycles in farm life when wood ashes from heating homes over a long winter

would be returned to the soil to provide it with important nutrients for the spring.

“Ashes are what is left when nothing is left, it is the bare minimum, the almost-nothing. And it is from here that one can and must begin again,” he said, rather than stopping in despair.

Ashes smudged or sprinkled on the faithful are then “not so much about ‘remember you must die,’ but ‘remember you must be simple and fruitful.’”

The Bible teaches “the economy of small things” in which there is nothing better than to be “nothing” before God, he said.

“Do not be afraid of being fragile but think of Lent as the transformation from ashes to light, from what is leftover to fullness,” he said. “I see it as a time that is not penitential, but alive, not a time of mortification, but as revitalization. It is the time the seed is in the earth.”

For those who have suffered

great loss during the pandemic, Father Ronchi said that strain and struggle also leads to new fruit, like a gardener who prunes trees “not for penance,” but “to bring them back to the essential” and stimulate new growth and energy.

“We are living in a time that can bring us back to the essential, rediscovering what is permanent in our life and what is fleeting. Therefore, this moment is a gift to be more fruitful, not to castigate.”

No matter what measures or restrictions may be in place due to the pandemic, people still have all the tools they need, which no virus can take away: charity, tenderness and forgiveness, he said.

“It’s true that this Easter will be marked by fragility, many crucifixes, but what is being asked of me is a sign of charity,” he added. “Jesus came to bring a revolution of tenderness and forgiveness without bounds. These are the two things that build up universal fraternity.”

Radio show opportunity to mentor Latino youth

St. James parishioner encourages teens, young adults

JENNIFER NEVILLE
Special to The Catholic Virginian

Think positive.
Perform positive.
Talk positive.

Such are the criteria to be on William Estremera's "Stop the Madness Latino Show" radio broadcast in the greater Richmond area each Sunday evening. Estremera, a parishioner at St. James the Greater in Hopewell, hosts the program that can be evangelical without preaching.

During the show, Estremera plays Latin genre music and interviews renowned and up-and-coming Hispanic musicians, singers and actors, and occasionally a local politician. Some topics broached in the interviews have been their struggles to be successful, how their faith has played a role in their lives and how having a positive mindset has helped them.

A youth mentor component brings in two to three different high-school students or young adults each month to participate in the program. They are primarily from the cluster parishes, which also include St. John Nepomucene, Dinwiddie, and Church of the Sacred Heart, Prince George, but participation may open to youth and young adults from other Catholic parishes in the Richmond area.

The teens and young adults learn about the nuts and bolts of the studio, help interview the show's guests and talk off-mic with Estremera about themselves, their goals and the steps they need to take to achieve those dreams. Estremera assures them that they are just as capable and worthy of attaining their aspirations as anyone else.

That's a message he didn't hear often growing up.

Born in New Jersey in 1971, Estremera is the second oldest of four children. The family moved so frequently between New Jersey and Puerto Rico when he was growing up that he went to six elementary and two high schools, most of them Catholic. He has been Catholic since childhood, going regularly to Sunday Masses from childhood through adulthood. As a child, he was an altar boy and in youth group.

Estremera said he "grew up on the streets of New Jersey" in minority neighborhoods where after-school and social programs were scarce. Because there was no park nearby, he and his friends played games in the street, sometimes being quite creative when they fashioned a basketball court out of a milk carton on a pole.

Attending a summer program as a child at the YMCA where his sister was frequently "hit on" sparked a childhood of fighting. He stood up to bullies and fought so frequently that he joked if his mother had enrolled him in boxing classes, he would have become a world champion. He was expelled from his Catholic high school for fighting and had to attend public school for his junior and senior years.

Normally the only Hispanic student in his classes, he said nuns at Catholic schools made him think he couldn't do anything right, that he was always in the wrong.

Opportunity to mentor

Estremera's first mentoring experience came when he joined the military in 1991. Through the years, his superiors took him under their wing, doling out responsibilities so he could progress to the next position. He adopted Army values — loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and courage.



William Estremera, host of "Stop the Madness Latino Show," explains how radio works as he sets up for the broadcast on Sunday, Oct. 18, at WHAP Radio, Petersburg. Seated, left to right, are his teen guests: Daisy Portillo, Samantha Pedro and Melissa Ramos. Behind them is Teresa Portillo. The show is no longer heard on WHAP, but is aired on Sundays, from 6-8 p.m., on Ultra Radio Richmond, 94.1 FM, 1540 AM and 1480 AM. (Photo/Father Joseph Goldsmith)

As he advanced in rank, he mentored other soldiers. Now, after 27 years in the military, he wants to mentor youth. He said his radio show provides a path to do so.

Karen Ardez, a freshman at John Tyler Community College who attends Sacred Heart Parish, said Estremera told her not to let anybody tell her "what to do and what not to do."

Heidi Martinez, a 10th grader at Dinwiddie High School who also attends Sacred Heart, said her favorite part of working with Estremera was talking with him because he was relatable, energetic and genuinely interested in her life. The evening was full of laughs, smiles and touching music that was "really bumping you up the whole time."

Laden with Christian values

Estremera draws on years of experience in the music industry to make "Stop the Madness Latino Show" a success.

From 1989 - 1991, he was a background dancer and then road manager for singer Jaidie Torres. When he was in the military, he was stationed in 11 countries and seven states where the installations had few opportunities for Latino entertainment.

He became a DJ in the Latin genre for functions and on base locales such as clubs and bowling alleys. He also got involved in music promotion and management as he coordinated Latino events and helped with activities such as Hispanic Heritage Month.

Estremera, who funds "Stop the Madness Latino Show" himself, said he thoroughly researches performers before inviting them on the show to ensure they will share positive messages. During the interviews, the guests often talk about their Christian values and the importance of prayer and faith.

"That's the kind of message I am trying to put out there," he said.

Father Joseph Goldsmith, administrator of the cluster parishes, said that in one interview, the teens asked a salsa singer about his faith. He told them that whenever he is on tour, he and his wife find a Catholic church to attend for Mass. He also shared the importance of staying strong in faith and keeping God first.

"That kind of testimony is priceless," Father Goldsmith said. "This is evangelization. This is where faith becomes real."

Reaching Church's 'endangered species'

Although the show isn't a direct extension of the parish, programs like "Stop the Madness Latino Show" may make the Church more attractive to "our endangered species of young people who are walking away from the Church in droves because they don't think that it's relevant," Father Goldsmith said.

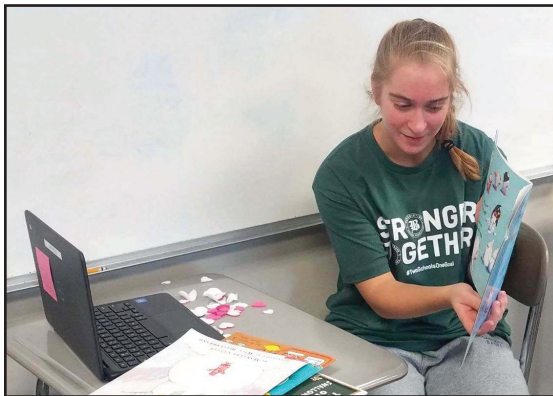
That could prove true for Nelson Reyes from St. Augustine, Chesterfield. He described his experience with the show as "beautiful" and life-changing. The timid 18-year-old from Guatemala was inspired when actor Joel Roman, describing his path to success, said he didn't think he would "amount to much." Impressed, Reyes is coming out of his shell. He said he's "already seeing changes" in himself as he is more confident talking to people.

"Does that help him convert his entire life to become a more obedient Catholic and love Jesus in the sacraments?" Father Goldsmith rhetorically asked. "Right now, no, but in the long run, yes."

He said the evangelization on the program is not forced.

"What [Estremera is] doing just flows from who he is. He is very comfortable with his Catholic identity," the priest said.

Serving through giving



Left: Samantha Smith, a sophomore at St. Gertrude High School, reads to All Saints School students via Zoom during the first ever combined Day of Giving held by the Benedictine Schools of Richmond, Friday, Feb. 5. Due to COVID-19, each school's Day of Service took place on campus.



Benedictine College Preparatory sophomore Joel Startling, left, and junior Dylan Faniel build beds for children without them during the Day of Giving, Friday, Feb. 5. The cost of materials to build 20 beds for Sleep in Heavenly Peace was sponsored by the St. Patrick Church Irish Festival. The Benedictine PTO and St. Gertrude PTSO donated funds for sheets, comforters and pillows. The Day of Giving raised scholarship funds for the schools. (Photos/Benedictine Schools of Richmond)

Fetal pain bill introduced in House

Would bar most abortions after 20 weeks

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Citing leading experts in the field of fetal pain, U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, said the proposed Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act would end the “excruciating suffering and physical pain of unborn babies” by barring most abortions after 20 weeks’ gestation.

Smith, a Catholic, who is co-chair of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus, was joined by 142 other members of the U.S. House in introducing the measure Feb. 15.

“We know that by 20 weeks unborn babies killed by abortion experience excruciating suffering and physical pain,” Smith said a statement.

“The dismemberment abortion — the most common abortion method used during the second trimester — involves cutting and dismembering the child’s fragile body including severing his or her arms and legs,” he said. “Until rendered unconscious or dead, the baby feels every cut.”

He called this “unconscionable human rights abuse” that “must stop.”

“Pain, we all dread it. We avoid it. We even fear it,” Smith said. “And we all go to extraordinary lengths to mitigate its severity and its duration for ourselves. Yet every day, a whole

segment of human beings is being subjected to painful — and deadly — procedures.”

Saying that today “we are not living in uninformed times,” Smith cited reports on fetal pain by a number of medical experts, including Dr. Colleen Malloy, assistant professor in the Division of Neonatology/Department of Pediatrics at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine.

“When we speak of infants at 20 weeks post-fertilization, we no longer have to rely on inferences or ultrasound imagery, because such premature patients are kicking, moving and reacting and developing right before our eyes in the neonatal intensive care unit,” Malloy said in testimony before the House Judiciary Committee in May 2012.

“In other words, there are children the same age who, in utero, can be painfully killed by abortion who have been born and are now being given lifesaving assistance,” said Malloy, who similarly testified in March 2016 before the Senate Judiciary Committee, which at the time was considering its own version of the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

“I firmly believe, as the evidence shows, that the fetal pain experience

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Pope

Continued from Page 1

that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn,” a quote from the encyclical.

“In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be ‘willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference,’” he said, again quoting the document.

The Lenten practices of fasting, almsgiving and prayer were preached by Jesus and continue to help believers experience and express conversion, the pope wrote.

“The path of poverty and self-denial” through fasting, “concern and loving care for the poor” through almsgiving and “childlike dialogue with the Father” through prayer, he said, “make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.”

Pope Francis emphasized the importance of fasting “as a form of self-denial” to rediscover one’s total dependence on God and to open one’s heart to the poor.

“Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down — like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false — in order to open

the doors of our hearts to the one who comes to us, poor in all things, yet full of grace and truth: the son of God our savior.”

Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, presenting the message at a news conference, also insisted on the importance of “fasting and all forms of abstinence,” for example, by giving up “time watching TV so we can go to church, pray or say a rosary. It is only through self-denial that we discipline ourselves to be able to take the gaze off ourselves and to recognize the other, reckon with his needs and thus create access to benefits and goods for people,” ensuring respect for their dignity and rights.

Msgr. Bruno-Marie Duffe, secretary of the dicastery, said that at a time of “anxiety, doubt and sometimes even despair” because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lent is a time for Christians “to walk the way with Christ toward a new life and a new world, toward a new trust in God and in the future.”

Editor’s note: The text of the pope’s Lenten message can be found at http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/lent/documents/papa-francesco_20201111_messaggio-quaresima2021.html.

LENTEN MENU

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SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT THROUGHOUT LENT

Why pope is visiting Iraq, despite concerns

DALE GAVLAK
Catholic News Service

AMMAN, Jordan — Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and security concerns, Pope Francis hopes to visit Iraq, an opportunity that eluded his predecessors.

Iraqis are excited that he is scheduled to come, despite those concerns.

“Iraqi Christians are very much optimistic because it’s a sign of hope and solidarity despite the pandemic, despite the security challenge. It’s a strong sign of solidarity,” Iraqi Father Emanuel Youkhana told Catholic News Service by phone from the northern city of Dahuk. Father Youkhana is a priest, or archimandrite, of the Assyrian Church of the East.

The 84-year-old pope, newly vaccinated, is moving forward with his March 5-8 trip unless there is a serious new wave of coronavirus infection there. It marks his first foreign trip since being grounded for 16 months due to the pandemic.

Pope Francis told Catholic News Service staffers at the Vatican it is important that the Iraqis “will see the pope is there in their country,” even if most would see him only on television because of social distancing requirements.

First-of-its kind visit

It’s the first-of-its kind visit by the pope after St. John Paul II’s scheduled trip to Iraq in 2000 had to be canceled due to regional tensions. St. John Paul wept that he could not go, as he especially wanted to visit the city of Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, recognized as the patriarch of faith in one God by Jews, Christians and Muslims.

In mid-2019, Pope Francis announced that he intended to make his first visit to Iraq the following year, but the trip was postponed amid regional tensions and ongoing anti-government protests across the southern and central parts of the country. The pope told CNS in early February that he does not want to disappoint the Iraqis for a second time.

Iraq is set to receive thousands of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines in addition to the Chinese Sinovac vaccine this month. In early February, the Iraqi Health Ministry reported 1,134 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the total number of confirmed infections to 628,550.

On Jan. 21, the day after the Vatican announced plans for the



papal trip to Iraq, two suicide bombers detonated explosive vests in a crowded market in central Baghdad, an attack claimed by the Islamic State group. At least 32 people died and more than 100 were injured.

Shortly afterward, Cardinal Louis Sako, the Baghdad-based patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church, called on the faithful to fast and pray for peace in Iraq and for an end to the pandemic. He dismissed the significance of the bombing on the overall security situation in Iraq and said, “There is no risk for the pope.”

Security challenges

The Iraqi government is responsible for the pope’s safety and that of his entourage during the visit.

“There are security challenges, that is quite clear, because everywhere there are militias and terrorist groups. The Shiite militias will help (the Shiite-dominated government) in securing the visit. We hope, we pray there will be nothing,” said Father Youkhana, who runs the Christian Aid Program Northern Iraq.

The Christian program assists displaced Iraqis around Dahuk and the Ninevah Plain, where tens of thousands were displaced by Islamic State militants in 2014. “But if you follow the news in Iraq, ISIS is there. ISIS is still active,” he said.

“The government will not want to risk any situation with the pope’s visit, because it would cause a failure for country. The pope is respected in many sectors of Iraqi society,” Iraqi Dominican Father Ameer Jaje, an expert in Shiite relations, told CNS by phone from Baghdad.

He added that it is difficult for clergy to comment on security as it is the domain of the Iraqi government. Iraqi President Barham Salih said he

hoped a papal visit would help the country “heal” after years of strife.

More than 500 people have been killed in over a year as young Iraqis have protested, advocating for civil rights and a better economy and against sectarianism, corruption and unemployment. The protests were mainly in Baghdad and the south.

Message for young people

Despite reaching historic numbers in late 2019 and successfully mounting pressure on political elites, the protests wound down in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Also, the violent crackdown by Iraqi security forces and militia groups, as well as kidnappings and targeted assassinations, caused their numbers to recede. Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has been vocal about his support for the protesters’ demands.

Father Jaje said he believes Pope Francis has a special message for Iraq’s young people, who are tired of the sectarianism tearing their country apart.

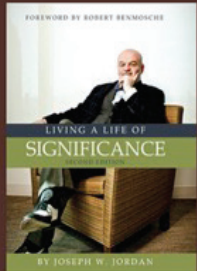
“Iraqi youth say: ‘No, to divisions on sectarian lines.’ They want to live like other people in the world. I believe these people are looking forward to the pope’s visit, because he will deliver a message of hope to them, an encouragement for the country to live and reject the kind of sectarianism that has been destroying Iraq,” said Father Jaje, who is also an adviser to the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

“Many youth have sacrificed their lives for Iraq’s sovereignty and the desire to live together as one people: Iraqis, whether Sunni Muslim, Shiites, Christians or whomever. I believe the pope will encourage Iraq to reclaim its sovereignty and put an end to violence,” Father Jaje told CNS.

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Pope is right; vaccination is 'ethical choice'

GUEST COMMENTARY

DR. CAROL BURGER, PH.D.

There is a plethora of information about the current COVID-19 pandemic coming to us via print media, television, online and the anecdotal tales we hear within our social circles. Much of what we see and hear is helpful and science-based, but much more of it is misinformation that is unhelpful and, in some cases, has proven to be lethal.

When it was reported on Jan. 9, 2021, that Pope Francis stated it was an "ethical choice" to be vaccinated, he was greeted with a negative outcry from some Catholic (and other) sources. The idea that some would reject the Holy Father's suggestion that being vaccinated could save your life as well as the lives of others is frankly incomprehensible.

As Pope Francis further remarked, some people in our country are thinking, "something that isn't right, ...[and] take a path against the community, against democracy, against the common good."

Some of this "not right thinking" may come from a misunderstanding about how sci-

ence works. This strain of COVID-19 has been with us for one year. During that time, scientists around the world worked feverishly in their laboratories, shared data and helped one another to, at this time, produce at least four different vaccines that work to protect humans against infection by the virus.

This accomplishment was based upon and an extension of 30 or more years of research on the basic science of the structure and transmission vectors of many viruses in the coronavirus family.

During the time researchers were seeking to discover how this particular virus strain was transmitted and what it actually did once it entered the human body, they were pressed to make predictions from incomplete data. They told the public what they knew about other viruses in the same family as COVID-19.

As more information was collected, the actions of this particular virus became clearer, and scientists could speak with more authority about what we needed to do to mitigate the spread of the virus.

This is how science works. It is an iterative process where sometimes a wrong path is taken, and one must start over with new assumptions. Most times, the efforts of many people

working separately come together to solve an important problem.

I worked for many years as a technician and research assistant in hospital pediatric hematology and oncology laboratories before continuing my education and earning a doctorate in immunology. It may be difficult for those without a background in epidemiology, immunology or virology to understand how much time, expertise and money led us to the point of being able to seriously reduce the infectivity of this virus and save countless lives.

However, public health professionals have known for over a century that people can protect themselves from an air-borne disease by wearing masks, washing their hands and keeping social distance. These simple acts are not political, not an infringement on anyone's rights, not socialist or whatever else those who spread hate and mistrust try to lead people to believe.

These simple acts and getting vaccinated can bring us back to our extended families, to work, to recreation, to church.

Dr. Burger is an associate professor emerita who taught and performed research at Virginia Tech for over 25 years. She is a member of St. Mary Parish, Blacksburg.

Sprinkled ashes an outward sign of faith

In a letter (Catholic Virginian, Feb. 8), a reader expressed contempt for the proposal that ashes on Ash Wednesday were to be sprinkled on our heads rather than the usual cross on the forehead.

Many countries, including the Vatican and Italy, have traditionally sprinkled ashes, so in a way this was more of a return to tradition and was still an outward sign of our faith.

Secondly, consider Matthew 4:7: "Jesus answered him, 'Again it is written, "You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test."'"

Yes, we should love and fear the Lord with all of our hearts, but a global pandemic means we must make sacrifices in our Christian charity. God gifted humanity with reason, scientific intrigue and free will so that we could find ways to protect and improve ourselves, not as a test against our faith.

We have a duty to protect our priests and other parishioners from a deadly disease. This is an outward sign of our faith. God asks us to fear, but also to love. So please, wear a mask, wash your

hands and accept the sprinkling of ashes you received.

— **Mary Elizabeth Larson**
Charlottesville

Catholic politicians can't be devout, pro-abortion

Re: "Bishop warns against the Weaponization of Eucharist" (Catholic Virginian, Feb. 8) in which Bishop Robert W. McElroy argues against denying the Eucharist to President Biden and other Catholic political leaders based upon their abortion stance. "Weaponization" has become worn out political hyperbole used to elicit an adverse emotional reaction void of critical thinking.

Jesus said, "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely" (Lk 20:45-47).

These politicians are hypocrites and destroying our nation's moral integrity. They want to obfuscate and normalize

abortion to gain Catholic votes while remaining subservient to the altar of the abortion lobby. Case in point is President Biden's reversal on supporting the Hyde Amendment.

The Church's pro-life stance is unambiguous and does not provide for abortion lite. What common ground should be surrendered to permit this evil? How can you be a devout Catholic and implement policies that promote the deaths of millions of innocent babies? These public figures are influential and manipulative and seek to devalue the Church's pro-life position for their own political gain.

By not standing on moral principle in depriving the Eucharist to these politicians who are publicly unrepentant and brazenly disobeying the Church's stance on abortion, the Church runs the risk of being perceived as fostering a double standard.

— **Carmine Largo**
New Kent

Remembering a humble servant

During this pandemic, so many millions of people are remembering beloved family members

and close friends. Only a few weeks ago, I learned that a person I knew died of complications from COVID.

A good number of people might remember Robert Quirin. Bob was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond in

1957, and would serve in a variety of ways until he left the priesthood in 1988.

Not long after his ordination, Vatican Council II was convened, and Bob would embrace the vision and teachings

See Letters, Page 12

CV letters policy

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

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Love

Continued from Page 1

simple, faith-based credo.

“My big thing is love — love one another, because miracles happen through love,” he said. “And do some good to help others whenever you can.”

Born into a Baptist family, Anderson was drawn to the Catholic Church at 25. He met Redemptorist Father Maurice McDonald, sent to establish a mission church for the Black community in Roanoke, who would become his longtime friend.

“He had a big influence on me and made the Catholic Church so appealing,” Anderson said. “We were almost like brothers.”

Anderson was part of the small group gathered for the first Mass in October 1946 in a house on Moorman Road that would become St. Gerard Parish.

Food and flowers

Anderson was born in Kanawha, West Virginia, in 1921, to Claude, a coal miner, and Jeanette, a homemaker. The family moved to Roanoke when Anderson was a toddler. As the youngest of the couple’s three boys, he spent a lot of time at home with his mother, who taught him how to cook and garden — two skills that would shape Anderson’s life.

For 35 years, he worked in

the kitchen at the Salem Veteran Affairs Medical Center as the cook foreman before retiring. Outside of work, he also was known for his culinary creations, especially his lemon pound cake.

Anderson also became a champion rose-grower, and, as a member of the Roanoke Rose Society, once tended more than 200 rose bushes in his home garden. Many of his roses won blue ribbons.

“He makes the world more beautiful, and he is so full of life,” said Tomeka Moore, a nurse and family friend who is his daily care provider.

Anderson still lives in the home where he and his late second wife, Ruth, raised son, Charles Jr. Despite losing part of a leg to an infection and needing a wheelchair, Anderson never complains.

“Every day he says, ‘I feel good,’” Moore said.

Leads by example

At the celebration, Anderson’s niece, Mildred Harris, signed a red poster-sized birthday card for her uncle, along with her sisters Charlene Lightfoot and Cassandra Carson, all of Roanoke. Their father was Anderson’s brother, James.

“He is just a wonderful man,” Harris said. “He loves life and is always praising God.”

Father Jose Arce, St. Gerard’s parochial vicar, organized the



Charles Anderson Sr. prepares to cut the cake at the celebration of his 100th birthday at St. Gerard, Roanoke, on Feb. 8. Anderson, an original member of the historic Black Catholic church founded in 1946, was honored with a special Mass on that day. He is helped by parish secretary Isaura Munoz, center, and parish business manager Jim Allen. (Photo/Karen Adams)

Thankful for everything

St. Gerard — now a diverse parish of Hispanic and white families, as well as Black, including many from Africa — is known as a church that welcomes everyone.

“I have never seen anybody so thankful to God for everything,” said Sparta, who visits him weekly at his home, where they sit outside in nice weather.

Sparta recalled how Anderson tutored African refugees when they first arrived in the area, and how he took Communion to veterans at the VA Medical Center on Sundays.

“He really walks the walk,” Sparta said.

Father Shuping noted how rare a treasure is a parishioner who can recall 75-year-old church history after having been there.

“You have always ensured that St. Gerard’s is a place of worship for all peoples,” he said in his homily.

Anderson choked up as he thanked everyone gathered for his celebration.

“I love you all,” he said.

On his 100th birthday, he embodied his belief: “Love one another; it pays off and comes back to you.”

event with parishioners Will Sparta and Allen.

“He keeps the faith and is always in a happy mood and ready to help,” said Father Arce. “I would like to follow his example.”

Charles Jr. also tries to follow that example.

“He always wants to do the right thing,” he said. “I try to copy him. He lives by his trust in God.”

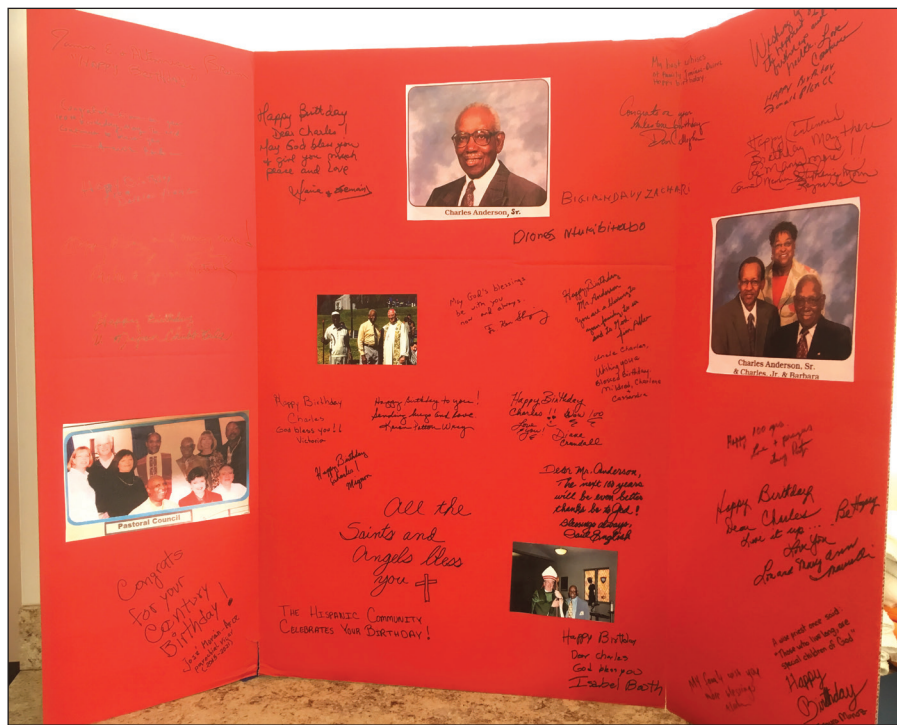
At 71, Charles Jr. still seeks his father’s ideas about life.

“His mind is so good. I can still turn to him and ask him advice about things,” he said.

Inspired by his father’s life of service, Charles Jr. also worked at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center as a nurse’s aide for more than 30 years; they were there briefly at the same time.

Most of all, he said, he is proud of his father for all he has done — especially in helping establish St. Gerard Parish and assisting in its growth.

“Most Black people around here weren’t Catholic; this was unusual,” said Charles Jr., who is also a parishioner. “He is so proud to be a founding member of this Black Catholic church.”



A large, red, poster-size display card in honor of the 100th birthday of Charles Anderson Sr. was set up for friends and family to sign. (Photo/Karen Adams)

Bill

Continued from Page 4

is no less than the neonatal pain experience or even than that which you or I would experience from dismemberment or other physical injury,” she told the Senate committee.

“One of the most basic of government principles is that the state should protect its members, including all born infants, from harm. ... We should not tolerate the gruesome and painful procedures being performed on the smallest of our nation,” Malloy said.

Carol Tobias, president of National Right to

“We should not tolerate the gruesome and painful procedures being performed on the smallest of our nation.”

— DR. COLLEEN MALLOY

Life, said Feb. 16 that the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act “would prevent cruel and excruciating abortions from being performed on innocent children.” She was grateful that Smith and a third of House members who back “the unborn child should not die painfully and brutally.”

Results of a Knights of Columbus/Marist Poll released in late January showed that 55% of respondents supported banning abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, except to save the life of the mother. The percentage included 69% of pro-lifers, 55% of Independents and 45% of those who self-identified as “pro-choice.”

Why celibacy is a prerequisite for ordained priesthood



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. My wife and I recently came into communion with the Roman Catholic Church. I know that a hot-button topic in the Church is the question of whether there should be married priests. I have slowly come to the belief that unmarried priests make logical and biblical sense.

Seeing how hard our own parish priest works, it doesn't seem that he would also have the time to care for a family, and I have read the biblical reasoning in Matthew 19:12 and Paul's guidance in First Corinthians. But my question is this: How does the Catholic Church reconcile this teaching with the fact that the chief apostle and first pope, St. Peter, was married? (Camden, North Carolina)

A. In the Latin-rite (Roman) Catholic Church, celibacy is today a prerequisite for ordination to the priesthood. But that has not always been so; it is a discipline that developed over history. (Even today, clerics of Eastern-rite Catholic churches

are permitted to marry before ordination.) For the first several centuries of the Christian era, it was common for Latin-rite priests to marry.

As you mention, St. Peter was obviously married, since Luke 4:38 tells the story of Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law. And St. Paul says in his First Letter to Timothy 3:2 that "a bishop must be irreproachable, married only once, temperate, self-controlled."

But over time, the Church came to the realization — as you yourself suggest — that a priest is most free to serve the people and his ministry by not having the responsibility of a family, and it was the First Lateran Council in 1123 that finally mandated celibacy for Western clergy.

That requirement, and the practical reason behind it, are reflected in the current Code of Canon Law: "Clerics are obliged to observe perfect and perpetual continence for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and therefore are bound to celibacy which is a special gift of God by which sacred ministers can adhere more easily to Christ with an undivided heart and are able to dedicate themselves more freely to the service of God and humanity" (Canon 277).

Further evidence, though, of the fact that clerical celibacy is not a revealed truth but a matter of Church law can be found in the fact that, in the United States, several dozen Episcopal and Lutheran married clergy who became Catholic have been allowed to be ordained as Roman Catholic priests while still remaining married.

Q. I recall some time ago a change in the language of the creed we say at Sunday Mass to make it more inclusive. The new phrases were things like "For us and for our salvation" and "was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became one of us." I realized recently, though, that our parish no longer uses this newer language and has gone back to "for us men" and "became man."

When was it decided to revert to the older language? Or perhaps the inclusive language was not universal — in my case, perhaps it started at the parish of the university I attended. (Lansdale, Pennsylvania)

A. The phrases that you quote — "for us and for our salvation" and "became one of

us" — are "homemade versions" of the language of the Nicene Creed and have never enjoyed any official status. My guess is that the priest at the university parish you attended crafted that wording himself, so as not to offend any members of the congregation.

The actual text — as approved for use at Mass and as it appears in the Catechism of the Catholic Church — is the following: "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man."

Should it be of any comfort to you, as I have mentioned before in this column, the Latin word from which the English is translated — "homines" — is generic; it means "person" or "human being," not "member of the male sex."

But the average participant at Mass can't be expected to know this, and so I look forward to the day when the Mass text in English will reflect more clearly that wider meaning. Meanwhile, I often choose to use instead the Apostles' Creed, which is a permissible liturgical alternative and whose language cannot be misunderstood as exclusive.

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

OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND

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Foster the GOOD

A LUNCH SPEAKER SERIES

Realizing that ministry has radically shifted in the past year, the Office for Evangelization and the Office of Social Ministries are presenting a new monthly speaker series: *Foster the Good*. Those that serve the church: Youth Ministers, Social Ministers, Campus Ministers, and Volunteers, have found themselves pushed in new directions, and this series looks to build up the skills needed to truly serve the Church in this particular period of time.

FEBRUARY 25, 2021
12:30-1:30PM

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OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND

OSM
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Guided by the Spirit, observe Lent with a joyful heart



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

Lent is a journey of the Spirit. Scripture tells us that following Jesus' baptism, "The Spirit sent him out toward the desert. He stayed in the wasteland forty days, put to the test there by Satan" (Mk 1:12-31).

Matthew wrote, "Then Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil" (4:1).

Luke's Gospel says, "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, then returned from the Jordan and was conducted by the Spirit into the desert for forty days where he was tempted by the devil" (4:1-2).

In each account the Spirit is mentioned first, and yet for many Christians, Jesus being tempted by Satan becomes the primary focus. This may account in part for the negative feeling that Lent conjures up for many people.

Over the centuries, Christians notoriously beat their breasts, resolving to give up anything that would be pleasing to the senses. But if that's the effect that Lent evokes, it's no wonder celebrations like Mardi Gras and "Fat Tuesday" entice observants to enjoy a last fling before they begin their Lenten journey.

If receiving ashes on the first day of Lent reminds us only of our mortality, we are approaching the season with a glass-half-empty mindset. This season is serious, but it should not be one of doom and gloom because, as Christians, we believe that death is not the end.

When in imitation of Jesus, we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us through the desert, and we emerge with a heart that is purified, strengthened and more Christlike.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are three hallmarks associated with Lent. However, if we view them as works that we accomplish, Lenten resolutions seem burdensome. When we allow the Spirit to guide us, the quality of our actions becomes the focus rather than the quantity. Recall that Jesus cautioned against multiplying prayers, rattling on the way the pagans do.

Prayer is about relationship, intimacy and deepening our love for God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We do our part by setting aside quality time, minimizing distractions and believing that feeling God's presence is less important than believing that the enfolding, nurturing and transforming love of God is happening deep within our soul.

It's not about the length of our prayer time, but about the level of faith and surrender we bring to prayer, resisting the temptation to make it "my prayer."

One way we can do this is through prayerful participation at Mass, even if it's only through livestream. Much emphasis is placed on listening to the Scripture readings, but every word that is prayed deserves careful attention.

One of my favorite lines in the Mass is the priest's petition to the Father to send down the Spirit like dewfall from heaven. The image of dew glistening in the early morning fills me with hope because dew is visible everywhere, though we never actually see it descend.

Morning dew dissipates gradually, but the effects of moisture seeping into the earth are

not lost. So it is with the grace that comes to us through the Holy Spirit. We don't see it come to us from heaven, but it's at work deep within our souls, inviting us to see that God is present everywhere for those who have eyes to see.

More than the central act of our worship, the Mass is Jesus' perfect act of surrender to his Father, which we are called to emulate. The more we are drawn to imitate Jesus' perfect self-offering to the Father, the more we will be inclined to suffer in union with the heart of Jesus, making fasting and almsgiving a natural outpouring of our prayer life.

St. Teresa of Avila wisely cautioned that a life of prayer cannot exist in the presence of a life of self-indulgence. When performed with love, every act of self-denial becomes a prayer.

Self-indulgence can take many forms, which is why Scripture reminds us that a pure and contrite heart is what pleases God most. Purity of heart requires fasting not as much from food as it does from the human tendency to judge others, lose patience or consider only people we like or with whom we agree as my neighbor. To love my neighbor as myself is to give freely and unconditionally because everything we have is a gift from God.

Clearly, there's no better way to show gratitude for the privilege of journeying with Jesus than to enter Lent with a joyful heart, inviting the Spirit to lead us to the Resurrection of our Lord.

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

Rely on God rather than on earthly things



BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY
MSGR. TIMOTHY KEENEY

Apart from Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter novels, most of us do not like tests. Last week, we had the account of Jesus' testing in the wilderness, and this week our first reading begins succinctly, "God put Abraham to the test."

In a sense, we can understand the devil in the role of testing Jesus, for he is the tempter.

But something in us is offended by seeing God as testing us, and especially this seemingly inhuman test of Abraham in ordering him to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Isn't the role of a good teacher rather to empower and encourage a student, rather than passing what seems a cruel and arbitrary test? Yet, the Scriptures show us again and again that God puts his loved ones to the test.

Israel was tested in the wilderness to renew their covenant faithfulness. God permitted alien peoples with strange gods to continue to inhabit the promised land to

see if Israel would be faithful or chase after false gods. The tribulation of the exile is used by God to transform Israel from a faithless people into a faithful remnant.

From the Scriptures, we see that God's tests may involve suffering and trial, but they are never cruel or arbitrary. God's tests are medicinal and reparative. They are meant to wake us up to the reality of our situation before we totally lose our way.

Second Sunday of Lent – Year B

Gen 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

Ps 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19

Rom 8:31b-34

Mk 9:2-10

This includes the test given to Abraham. We are all too susceptible to seeing our security in the things of this world, our savings, our reputations, our plans. This is a danger even when we are dealing with good things such as our generativity.

With the fulfillment of the promise of descendants, Abraham could be tempted to no longer place his trust in God alone. Rather, now the future seems set. His memory and family seem secure with the birth of Isaac. The truth is that when we rely primarily on earthly things, earthly powers, earthly success, all is lost.

The test that God puts before Abraham is meant to wake him up to the danger in which he finds himself. The test that Abraham will face will require him to deny the role of his own part in the future that God promises.

Isaac is a symbol for Abraham of all Abraham's own efforts to secure his future. This is

what Abraham is rejecting as he lifts the knife to sacrifice his son. But then God restores Isaac to Abraham; he receives his son back not as a product of his own efforts, but as pure gift.

On Good Friday, God will fully enact what is forestalled at Mount Moriah. Jesus' death on the cross fulfills the sacrifice requested of Abraham, and his resurrection on Easter Sunday completes the true restoration of Isaac to Abraham.

When Jesus faces his test in the desert, he puts bread, power and honor in their proper perspective of a life given over to the will of God. What Abraham is facing is a model for us of embracing the tests we are given that wake us up to our proper relationship with our loving God, and upon whom we depend for everything. These tests are a gift to us — lest all be lost by our reliance on the wrong things.

Msgr. Timothy Keeney is pastor of Incarnation, Charlottesville.

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OPPORTUNITIES

Catholic Diocese of Richmond is seeking an associate director for campus ministry.

The associate director for campus ministry will supervise, support and oversee all campus ministry activities for the 68 colleges and universities within the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. Focus will be on the development and support of all campus ministry staff members, creation of resources and programs for college students, and the formation and implementation of a comprehensive vision for campus ministry across the diocese.

Qualifications: A minimum of a bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in a field related to theology or pastoral ministry as well as a minimum of five years of prior professional experience in campus ministry is required. Must have strong managerial, organizational and people skills in order to support the many staff members that they supervise. A practicing Catholic in good standing, a thorough knowledge of Church teachings and fluency in relevant Church documents on evangelization are required.

This is a full-time position with night and weekend work occasionally occurring, primarily during the academic year.

Interested candidates should please send a cover letter, résumé and completed Diocese of Richmond employment application to jobs@richmond-diocese.org.

Catholic Diocese of Richmond is seeking a director of campus ministry to serve the communities of Virginia Military Institute and Washington and Lee University in Lexington.

The director of campus ministry is responsible for the development, implementation and direction of comprehensive campus ministry programs for the students of both schools. These responsibilities include supervising student leaders, pastorally responding to student needs and overseeing student programs and activities. The director will also have the responsibility of overseeing financial accounts, serving as the liaison between the local Catholic parish, overseeing development efforts and building interfaith relationships among the other campus ministries.

Qualifications: Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required with a master's degree preferred (in a relevant field). 3-5 years of experience in pastoral work in campus ministry is preferred.

This is a full-time, exempt, salaried position. Salary is commensurate with experience and diocesan pay scale. Interested candidates should send a cover letter, résumé and completed Diocese of Richmond Employment Application to jobs@richmond-diocese.org.

Roanoke Catholic School, Roanoke, is seeking a full-time high school science teacher. The qualified candidate will need to possess a VDOE license and endorsement in this field. To apply, please send a completed diocesan application, cover letter and résumé to Mrs. Nicole Lieber, dean of faculty, at nlieber@roanokecatholic.com.

St. Pius X School, Norfolk, is seeking an administrative assistant for the current school year. Ideal candidate must have office experience, attention to detail, ability to multitask and provide great customer service. The ability to communicate fluently in Spanish is a plus. Interested applicants should send a cover letter, résumé, two current letters of reference and diocesan application to: Mark Zafra, principal, St. Pius X Catholic School, 7800 Halprin Drive, Norfolk, VA 23518 or email materials to: mzafra@piusxparish.org.

SHORTTAKES

Join Deacon Charles Williams, director of the Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics and deacon at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, on a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Oct. 21-30, 2021, for the most deeply moving spiritual experience of your lifetime. The 10-day tour for \$3,599 includes airfare, hotels, tours, breakfast and dinner, daily Mass in holy places and much more. For further information, contact: Alba Kim 804-298-4035 or email tours@albastours.com or visit www.albastours.com.

Reservations are available now. Space is limited. COVID policies available upon request.

Join Msgr. Patrick Golden, pastor of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, on a Pilgrimage to Poland, Prague and Budapest, Sept. 18-30, 2021. We will reflect on the lives of St. Faustina and St. Pope John Paul II. In addition, experience scenic and historic Central Europe. 13-day tour for \$4,299 including airfare, hotels, tours, meals, Mass every day in holy places, including at Our Lady Victorious, home of the Infant Jesus of Prague, and much more.

For further information, please contact: Alba Kim: 804-298-4035 or email: tours@albastours.com or visit www.albastours.com.

Reservations are available now. Space is limited. COVID policies available upon request.

IN MEMORIAM

Patricia 'Patsy' Arsenault



A Memorial Mass was celebrated on Friday, Feb. 5, at St. Elizabeth, Richmond, for Patricia "Patsy" Arsenault. Mrs. Arsenault, 87, passed away on Friday, Jan. 22.

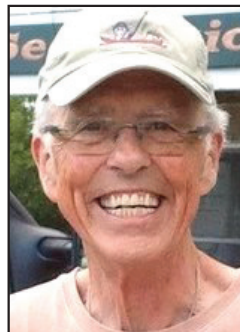
She is survived by her children: Lori (Sherman) Gorbis; Father Jim Arsenault, pastor of St. Elizabeth Parish, Richmond; and Tom (Jackie) Arsenault. She is further survived by five grandchildren; four

great-grandchildren; a sister, Dorothy Allard; and sister-in-law, Marian (Walter) Tarnowski.

Mrs. Arsenault was preceded in death by her parents, Albert and Anna Adams; her husband of 64 years, James; a sister, Marguerite; and a brother, Tom.

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas 'Tom' R. Golden



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Tuesday, Feb. 2, at Holy Cross, Lynchburg, for Thomas "Tom" R. Golden. Mr. Golden, 85, passed away on Friday, Jan. 29.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Patricia, and by six children: Thomas Barry Golden (Jackie); Vanessa Cooper (David); Teresa Marie Golden; Jennifer Bell (Ed); Msgr. Patrick Dupree Golden, pastor of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke; and Richard Kelly Golden (Wendy). He is further survived by 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Golden was preceded in death by his parents, Leo Joseph and Julia Alma Mullins Golden, and by a brother, Leo J. Golden.

He was devoted to his faith and family, and was a longtime, faithful member of Holy Cross Catholic Church.



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DAVIDE DIONISI - CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

“La vejez: nuestro futuro. La condición de los ancianos después de la pandemia”. Este es el título del documento publicado hoy con el que la Pontificia Academia para la Vida, de acuerdo con el Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral, propone una reflexión sobre las lecciones que hay que extraer de la tragedia causada por la propagación del Covid-19, sobre sus consecuencias para hoy y para el futuro próximo de nuestras sociedades.

Repensar el modelo de desarrollo

Lecciones que han hecho surgir una doble conciencia: “por un lado, la interdependencia entre todos y por otro la presencia de fuertes desigualdades. Todos estamos a merced de la misma tormenta, pero en un cierto sentido, se puede decir, que remamos en barcos diferentes, los más frágiles se están hundiendo cada día”. “Es esencial repensar el modelo de desarrollo de todo el planeta”, dice el documento, que retoma la reflexión ya iniciada con la Nota del 30 de marzo de 2020 (Pandemia y Fraternidad Universal), continuada con la Nota del 22 de julio de 2020 (La Humana Communitas en la era de la Pandemia. Consideraciones intempestivas sobre el renacimiento de la vida) y con el documento conjunto con el Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral (Vacuna para todos. 20 puntos para un mundo más justo y sano) del 28 de diciembre de 2020. La intención es proponer el camino de la Iglesia, maestra de humanidad, a un mundo cambiado por Covid-19, a mujeres y hombres en busca de sentido y esperanza para sus vidas.

Covid-19 y las personas mayores

Durante la primera oleada de la pandemia, una parte sustancial de las muertes por Covid-19 se produjo en instituciones para ancianos, lugares que se suponía que debían proteger a los más frágiles de la sociedad y en los que, en cambio, la muerte golpeó desproporcionadamente más que en el hogar y el entorno familiar.

“Lo que ha sucedido durante la pandemia de COVID-19 nos impide resolver la cuestión de la atención a los ancianos con la búsqueda de chivos expiatorios, de culpables individuales y, por otro lado, de levantar un coro en defensa de los excelentes resultados de los que evitaron el contagio en las residencias. Necesitamos una nueva visión, un nuevo paradigma que permita a la sociedad cuidar de los ancianos”.

Dos mil millones de personas mayores de 60 años en 2050

El documento del PAV subraya que “bajo el perfil estadístico-sociológico, los hombres y las mujeres tienen en general, hoy en día, una más larga esperanza de vida”. “Esta gran transformación demográfica representa, efectivamente, un gran desafío cultural, antropológico y económico”. Según datos de la Organización Mundial de la Salud, - se lee en el documento - en 2050 en el mundo habrá dos mil millones de personas mayores de sesenta años, es decir, una de cada cinco será anciana. Así pues, “es esencial hacer que nuestras ciudades sean lugares inclusivos y acogedores para la vida de los ancianos y, en general, para la fragilidad en todas sus expresiones”.



Photo/Vatican News

Ser mayor es un don de Dios

En nuestra sociedad suele prevalecer la idea de la vejez como una edad infeliz, entendida solamente como la edad de los cuidados, de la necesidad y de los gastos para tratamientos médicos. “Llegar a anciano es un don de Dios y un enorme recurso, un logro que hay que salvaguardar con cuidado”, dice el documento, “incluso cuando la enfermedad llega a discapacitar y surge la necesidad de una atención integrada y de alta calidad”. “Y es innegable que la pandemia ha reforzado en todos nosotros la conciencia de que la ‘riqueza de los años’ es un tesoro que debe ser valorado y protegido”.

Un nuevo modelo para los más frágiles

En cuanto a la asistencia, la PAV indica un nuevo modelo, sobre todo para los más frágiles, inspirado sobre todo en la persona: la aplicación de este principio implica una intervención organizada a diferentes niveles, que realiza un continuum asistencial entre el propio hogar y algunos servicios externos, sin censuras traumáticas, no aptas a la fragilidad del envejecimiento, especifica el documento, observando que “las residencias de ancianos deberían recalificarse en un continuum socio-sanitario, es decir, ofrecer algunos de sus servicios directamente en los hogares de los ancianos: hospitalización a domicilio, atención a la persona individualmente con respuestas de atención moduladas en función de las necesidades personales a baja o alta intensidad, donde la atención sociosanitaria integrada y la domiciliación sigan siendo el eje de un nuevo y moderno paradigma”. Se espera reinventar una red más amplia de solidaridad “no necesaria y exclusivamente basada en lazos de sangre, sino articulada según la pertenencia, la amistad, el sentimiento común, la generosidad recíproca para responder a las necesidades de los demás”.

El encuentro entre generaciones

En cuanto a la confrontación con los

jóvenes, el documento evoca un “encuentro” que puede aportar al tejido social “Esa nueva linfa de humanismo que haría que la sociedad estuviese más unida”. Varias veces el Papa Francisco ha instado a los jóvenes a ayudar a sus abuelos, recuerda el documento, que también subraya que “el hombre que envejece no se acerca al final, sino al misterio de la eternidad” y, para comprenderlo, “necesita acercarse a Dios y vivir en relación con Él”. De ahí que sea una “tarea de caridad en la Iglesia” el “cuidar la espiritualidad de los ancianos, su necesidad de intimidad con Cristo y de compartir su fe”. El documento deja claro que “Es solamente gracias a los ancianos que los jóvenes pueden redescubrir sus raíces, y sólo gracias a los jóvenes que los ancianos recuperan la capacidad de soñar”.

La fragilidad como enseñanza

También es valioso el testimonio que pueden dar los ancianos con su fragilidad. “Se puede leer como un “magisterio”, una enseñanza de vida”, señala la reflexión, y aclara que “La vejez también debe ser entendida en este horizonte espiritual: es la edad particularmente propicia al abandono en Dios”: “a medida que el cuerpo se debilita, la vitalidad psíquica, la memoria y la mente disminuyen, la dependencia de la persona humana a Dios se hace cada vez más evidente”.

El punto de inflexión cultural

Por último, un llamamiento: “Toda la sociedad civil, la Iglesia y las diversas tradiciones religiosas, el mundo de la cultura, de la escuela, del voluntariado, de las artes escénicas, de la economía y de las comunicaciones sociales deben sentir la responsabilidad de sugerir y apoyar -en el marco de esta revolución copernicana-nuevas e incisivas medidas que permitan acompañar y cuidar a los ancianos en contextos familiares, en sus propias casas y, en todo caso, en entornos domésticos que se asemejen más a los hogares que a los hospitales. Este es un cambio cultural que debe ser implementado”.

Mentor

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'Attractive evangelization'

Emily Portillo Beltran, a freshman at John Tyler Community College and Sacred Heart parishioner, said the evening was "an eye-opener" as they talked about greed. She realized that the impetus of her pursuit of a degree in neuroscience should be her desire to cure disease rather than attain wealth.

"We always have to seek to be Christ-like, and Christ was not greedy. He did not look for the money in things. His biggest motivation was saving his people," she said. "It brought me back a little bit to how it is to be like Christ and who he is. It was a nice reminder."

Beltran said Estremera is a mentor in that he "spent a lot of a lot of his time in the military and is now spending the rest of his life working for other people." She praised him for "having the courage to do what he wants, what makes him happy and to believe in himself."

Father Goldsmith explained that getting youth involved with the Church takes "hard work and focus." He continued, "Real evangelization should be attractive. It should draw people. It should touch them in their imagination and their instincts. It should connect with them at a deeper level."

Beltran said her meeting with Estremera did connect on that deeper level. His attitude and success made her believe in herself and gave her the confidence to "take a leap to do what I believe in." It convinced her she is capable of success.

Editor's note: "Stop the Madness Latino Show" is broadcast Sundays from 6 - 8 p.m. on Ultra Radio Richmond, 94.1 FM, 1540 AM and 1480 AM.

Soup'er effort at St. Matthew School



Krissann Zoby and Abbey Vick, parishioners at St. Matthew, Virginia Beach, restock the parish pantry with some of the items students at St. Matthew School collected during its Soup'er Bowl, Feb. 1-5. Besides 1,905 cans of soup, another 2,382 non-perishable items were collected during the Catholic Schools Week event. (Photo/Elizabeth Allen)

Letters

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of the council and then implement the vision and teachings in the several parishes where he served as pastor.

He also served as the first director of ministry to the priests of our diocese, having been chosen and appointed by Bishop Walter Sullivan.

Bob had a very hearty passion and commitment for efforts to bring about peace and social justice in our world and our Church. He was also actively involved in the efforts for ecumenism, desiring a fuller Christian unity with our brothers and sisters of different faith traditions.

Robert Quirin was a good and humble priestly servant of the Lord. Perhaps at the end of a good life, the Risen Lord may have said, "Robert, good and humble servant, come join all of my holy sons and daughters at the eternal banquet table!"

— Msgr. Bob Perkins
Newport News

Denuclearization can't be done unilaterally

The commentary by Steve Baggarly (Catholic Virginian, Jan. 25) draws attention to an issue that should concern us all.

However, some of his comments inaccurately portray the "facts" and do not recognize the progress that has been made in denuclearizing the two main superpowers — Russia and the United States.

We should be encouraged by the worldwide reduction in the nuclear weapon stockpile. In the 1980s, there were approximately 70,000 nuclear warheads in existence. As a result of much effort and laborious negotiations, that number has been reduced to 14,500.

I acknowledge that more work needs to be done, but that is significant progress toward the goal to "complete nuclear disarmament 'at any early date.'" The U.S. has not conducted a nuclear test since the early 1990s, further showing resolve to reduce, and hopefully one day eliminate, all nuclear weapons. Denuclearization is a desirable goal, but it cannot be done unilaterally.

Any discussion about the ineffectiveness of "nuclear deterrence" seems to be negated by the very fact that the last nuclear weapon fired in anger occurred in 1945. Several articles point out that nations, including India and Pakistan, possessing nuclear weapons

are quite cognizant of the moral, ethical and political reasons to not fire the first shot.

In spite of the claims of the long ago debunked nuclear winter scenarios originally posed by Carl Sagan, a limited nuclear exchange would likely not cause dramatic climate effects that "would kill millions of people ... threatening 2 billion people with starvation."

— Ed Merz
Moneta

'I will wear a mask'

I would willingly wear a mask, dear Lord,

If you asked me yourself, you see.

"My will resides in the bishop," he said.

"Whoever hears him, hears me."

— Antoinette Cleary
Chesterfield

Nowhere to hide

Catholic politicians have often rationalized their support for anti-Catholic positions on issues by saying their personal and private beliefs are different from what they must support for their constituents.

But in the case of President Biden's executive orders there is nowhere to hide. These are not initiated by others;

the positions they contain originate with him alone.

His memorandum of Jan. 28, 2021 laid the groundwork to undo Title X restrictions on family planning and abortion, revoked the Mexico City Policy, which blocks U.S. funding for abortion services; resumed funding to the U.N. Population Fund; and withdrew the U.S. from the Geneva Consensus Declaration, which restricts abortion access.

As a professed Catholic, these pro-abortion positions are scandalous. That the Church has not condemned his actions is equally scandalous. Will President Biden be denied Communion? Will President Biden be excommunicated?

— Charles Ruhl
Fincastle

Editor's note: Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of the Archdiocese of Washington has already said he will not deny the Eucharist to President Biden.

THERE'S MORE!

You'll find additional Catholic news and information at www.catholicvirginian.org.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

New address, same great outreach: Birthright of Norfolk, the crisis pregnancy resource that has been saving lives and supporting families since 1971, is now located at 4101 Granby Street, Suite 201, Norfolk. Members of the Catholic Church have been longtime supporters of Birthright, not only financially, but with their time and talent. Thus, if you have the time, they would welcome you as a volunteer. Call 757-489-0222 or email norfolkva@birthright.org for more information.

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.