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Obligation to attend Mass reinstated

Effective June 26-27

The Catholic bishops of the Province of Baltimore and the Archdiocese of Washington announced Tuesday, June 2, that the general dispensation of the Sunday and holy days Mass obligation has been lifted, and that the obligation to attend Mass has been reinstated effective Saturday, June 26, and Sunday, June 27.

This decision applies to Catholics in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Dioceses of Arlington, Richmond, Wheeling-Charleston and Wilmington.

Referencing Canon Law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the bishops stated, “We welcome and encourage the faithful to return to full in-person participation of the Sunday Eucharist, the source and summit of our Catholic faith.”

The bishops also stated, “This obligation does not apply to those who are ill; those who have reason to believe that they were recently exposed to the coronavirus, another serious or contagious illness; those who are confined to their home, a hospital, or nursing facility; or those with serious underlying health conditions.”

In a letter to priests in the Diocese of Richmond that accompanied the provincial statement, Bishop Barry C. Knestout wrote, “As Catholics, we have a significant appreciation for the importance of the physical presence of the community. From its earliest days, the Church gathered and ‘devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread’ (Acts 2:42).”

“As the Body of Christ, the Church, we encounter the living God most fully in the sacraments which appeal to our whole being, through outward signs. Therefore, it is important that we continue to encourage the presence of the Catholic faithful at Mass and at the other sacraments.”

Those with questions are asked to consult their pastors.



Msgr. Walter C. Barrett Jr. imposes hands on Father Thomas Lawrence III during the Mass at which the latter was ordained, Saturday, June 5, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. Father Lawrence will serve as parochial vicar at the parishes of which Msgr. Barrett is pastor — St. Joseph, Hampton, and St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe. (Photo/Mark Gormus)

Bishop: Jesus’ concerns come first for priest

Father Lawrence’s ordination celebrated

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

If there were any questions about what kind of man Bishop Barry C. Knestout ordained as a priest for the Diocese of Richmond, Saturday, June 5, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, his parents provided the answers.

Thomas Bagley Lawrence Jr. and Elsie King Miller Lawrence, who were joined by 125 family members and friends, including members of the family’s home parish, St. Bridget, Richmond, more than two dozen priests and 17 deacons for the Mass during which their only child, Thomas “Tom” Bagley Lawrence III, was ordained.

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Why Canon Law revisions matter

Expected to improve Church efforts at safeguarding

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The new series of laws and provisions set out in the revised section on crimes and penalties in the Code of Canon Law will help the Catholic Church in its efforts at safeguarding, said two canon lawyers.

And yet, like with every new norm and measure, its success will depend on following through on enforcement, being mindful in interpreting still unclear aspects and working on remaining gaps, they said.

Pope Francis promulgated the new changes in “Book VI: Penal Sanctions in the Church,” and they will go into effect Dec. 8 — the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The revisions reflect almost two de-

cades of work in updating, adding, clarifying and strengthening what the Church considers to be crimes and what provisions for sanctioning are available.

Much damage has come from not understanding how applying sanctions is part of exercising charity and establishing justice, the pope said, as “charity and mercy require a father to commit himself also to straightening what at times becomes crooked.”

Significant change

Claudia Giampietro, a canon lawyer and project officer at the office for care and safeguarding for the International Union of Superiors General, told Catholic News Service that this mindset of respect and protection is a significant change.

The ultimate principle of safeguarding “is recognizing that a wounded humanity needs respect, and this must inform every single act performed within and outside of the Catholic Church,” she told CNS in an email response to questions June 3.

It shows how the revisions have been informed by and reflect “the voice of victims and survivors of abuse, which is making the Church aware and, therefore, responsible” in turning their requests “into canonical provisions which can support the healing process involving the entire ecclesial community,” she added.

Also, she said, by putting abuse, indecent exposure, pornography and grooming in a new chapter

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Priests are truly apostles — ‘ones who are sent’



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

This is a busy time in our diocese. Parishes are returning to full capacity for the celebration of Mass and resuming many of the activities that were put on hold during the pandemic. At the same time, some parishes are saying farewell to priests who will be going to new assignments on Monday, July 5, and preparing to welcome those who have been sent to serve them.

This can be a difficult time for the departing priest and the parishioners. During his time in a parish, the priest grows close to the faith community through celebration of the sacraments and responding to the pastoral needs of those he has been called to serve.

As the fathers of the Second Vatican Council wrote, “In carrying out their duties as pastors, parish priests should make it their special concern to know their parishioners. Since they are shepherds of all the individual sheep, they should endeavor to stimulate a growth of the Christian life in each one of the faithful, in families, in associations, especially those dedicated to the apostolate and, finally, in the parish as a whole” (“Bishops in the Church,” 30).

Because our priests are dedicated to their ministry and strive to fulfill this commitment, parishioners get to know them and to appreciate the spiritual leadership and direction they provide. Thus, when priests are given new assignments, the parting can be an emotional experience for all.

There are two important elements in the model for priesthood established by Christ. The first is the calling, which is always followed by sending them out to proclaim the reign of God and to heal the sick. In Matthew

10:1 (and Mark 6:7 and Luke 9:1), Jesus summoned the 12 apostles “and gave them authority over unclean spirits to drive them out and to cure every disease and illness.”

In John 1:35-51, Jesus calls together his first disciples. He asks some: “What are you looking for?” They answer: “Rabbi (which means teacher) where do you stay?” Jesus answers: “Come and see.”

In the millennia that have followed, bishops have called men to priestly formation. However, those coming forward already have what might best be described as an “interior stirring,” a sense and desire that they are being called, that they have a vocation to the priesthood.

Once a bishop calls a man to enter the seminary, that discernment continues during his formation — a process that develops the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of his life.

The second element in Christ’s model for priesthood is the commissioning, the sending (Mt 10:5-15). Every priest knows that his vocation, as Pope Francis described it during the Mass in which he ordained nine priests on April 25, “is not a career, it is a service.” It is one in which he is sent where he is needed, where he can use his gifts to best serve the faith community.

When you read the stories about our priest jubilarians and our retired priests, you see all the places they have served — sometimes for a few years, other times for much longer. None were on a “career path.” More likely their path of pastoral service zig-zagged across the diocese.

This is particularly true of the international priests whose presence and service have been a blessing to our diocese. They were called to priesthood by their own bishops, sent here by them and then sent again by me in order to provide for the ongoing sacramental and pastoral care of our faithful. They, like all priests, are

truly apostles, i.e., “one who is sent.”

In deciding where to assign priests, I receive input from the Priests’ Personnel Board and the deans to understand better both the needs of the priests and the needs of each parish. Ultimately, it is my responsibility to make sure the pastoral needs of a parish will be addressed by the priest who is assigned there.

Just as the document “Bishops in the Church” delineated the duties of parish priests, it also advised bishops what to consider when sending priests to parishes:

“In forming a judgment as to the suitability of a priest for governing a parish, the bishop should take into consideration not only his learning, but also his piety, his zeal for the apostolate and those other gifts and qualities which are necessary for the proper care of souls” (31).

During this time of transition for many of our priests and parishes, know of my gratitude for the generosity and dedication of all the priests serving here, as well as the great spirit among our Catholics in welcoming the priests who are being sent to their communities. Together, may you continue to grow closer to Christ and to each other.

CLERGY APPOINTMENT

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, bishop of Richmond, has announced the following clergy appointment effective Monday, July 5, 2021:

OFFICIAL

Father Thomas B. Lawrence III, newly ordained, to parochial vicar of St. Joseph, Hampton, and St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe.

Age, retirement factors for diaconate’s declining numbers

Mirrors trends in priesthood, religious life over last 50 years

MARK PATTISON
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Based on responses to a questionnaire sent to all U.S. dioceses, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate estimates there are about 19,000 deacons in the United States.

The number, though, is dropping, mirroring trends seen in religious life and the priesthood for the past half-century.

“Responding offices reported that 410 deacons retired from active ministry and 378 died. Another 587 were ordained to the permanent diaconate during 2020,” said the report, “A Portrait of the Permanent Diaconate: A Study for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops,” issued June 1. The trend goes back to at least 2014.

Deacons are getting older, too. The CARA report said 35% are 70 or older, 40% are ages 60-69, 21% are ages 50-59, just 5% are ages 40-49, and only 1% are under 40.



There are 103 deacons in the Diocese of Richmond — 19 of whom were ordained by Bishop Barry C. Knestout on Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018. The bishop will ordain 14 deacons on Saturday, Sept. 25. (Photo/Michael Mickel)

The Diocese of Richmond has four deacons aged 40-49; 23 aged 50-59; 54 aged 60-69; and 22 who are 70 and older.

“Latin rite arch/dioceses reported having 12,292 permanent deacons active in ministry. The single eparchy (participating in the

questionnaire) reported 11 active permanent deacons. Extrapolating to include dioceses and eparchies that did not respond to the survey, it can be estimated that there are 14,722 deacons active in ministry in the United States today, or about 78% of all permanent deacons,” the

report said, adding the estimated number of all deacons is 19,008.

CARA also figures that, if 78% of deacons are in active ministry, then 17% are retired, 2% are on a leave of absence, 2% have been suspended from active ministry, and 2% inactive for other reasons.

Retirement age differs from diocese to diocese. Forty-two percent of dioceses have no retirement age for deacons. Of the others, no diocese requires deacons to retire until they reach at least age 70, while 88% require retirement at ages 75-79, and 10% mandate retirement at ages 70-74. One percent does not require retirement until at least age 80.

The archdiocese with the most deacons is the Archdiocese of Chicago, with 852, exactly twice that of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles’ 426.

Other dioceses and archdioceses with at least 250 deacons are,

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Above: After being accepted by Bishop Barry C. Knestout for ordination, the congregation at the ordination Mass for Father Thomas Lawrence III applaud their assent. In the front row are his parents Elsie King Miller and Thomas Lawrence Jr. Right: During the Rite of Ordination, Bishop Knestout anoints the hands of Father Lawrence. (Photos/Vy Barto)



Left: Bishop Knestout and more than two dozen priests concelebrate the Mass during which Father Thomas Lawrence III was ordained a priest, Saturday, June 5, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. Seventeen deacons and more than 125 family members and friends attended the celebration. (Photo/Mark Gormus)



Left: Father David Stanfill vests Father Lawrence during the Rite of Ordination. Right: The newly ordained priest blesses one of the families that attended his ordination Mass. (Photos/Vy Barto)

Ordination

Continued from Page 1

"Thomas has incredible compassion for and love of people," his father said. "He has always a love of God and the Church. He is a very dedicated person, and he will serve the Church and community well."

His mother added, "I'm happy that he'll be serving God. He will serve the Church well. He will do what is in the best interest of the Lord and be there for the people."

In his homily, Bishop Knestout noted that the three Scripture readings — Numbers 11:11b-12, 14-17, 24-25; 2 Corinthians 4:1-2, 5-7; John 21:15-17 — spoke about the "call and burden of leadership as well as the distress that those called (to priesthood) may at times experience."

"Sometimes this pastoral care and service can seem overwhelming," he said. "Without a grounding in prayer and closeness to the sacraments, which is in fact closeness to Christ, we can be overwhelmed by our responsibilities and, possibly, begin to carry some resentment and bitterness, which like any corrosive element, weakens the generous love to which we are called."

Bishop Knestout noted that God doesn't abandon anyone.

"When we are struggling or in need, he comes to our aide, he refreshes us with his Holy Spirit and renews us with a deep sense of joy and the knowledge that we are participating in his sacrifice and in his salvific mission to redeem the world," he said.

The bishop said that while those who priests serve may not always express appreciation immediately, it is not unusual to hear years later how their words and deeds made a difference.

"It is in those moments, we realize that our priestly life and service is never only about what we say, or do," Bishop Knestout said. "It is about what Christ says and does, and what God calls from us as his people."

Speaking directly to Father Lawrence, the bishop instructed, "Carry out the ministry of Christ the Priest with constant joy and genuine love, attending not to your own concerns but to those of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Knestout concluded, "Keep always before your eyes the example of the Good Shepherd who came not to be served but to serve, and who came to seek out and save what was lost."

The following day, Father Lawrence celebrated his first Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Bridget. Msgr. William C. Carr, the parish's pastor since 2005, gave the homily.

He noted that in a pre-ordination interview, Father Lawrence said, "He wants to want what he (Jesus) wants. He also said that he does 'not want to stand out but to pass into the ranks of the good and holy priests of our venerable diocese.'"

"With that attitude, you will, and I am inspired by you," Msgr. Carr said.

Near the end of his homily, the soon-to-be-retired priest offered advice to the newly ordained.

"Put on Christ. Be like him in your appearance and demeanor. Empty yourself of every last vestige of accomplishment," Msgr. Carr said. "For what the Church needs most from you is a foot-washing, shirt-off-the-back-giving, extra-mile-going, life-laying-down, cross-picking-up servant which, knowing you, in all humility, you will become."

Father Lawrence's first assignment as a priest will be as parochial vicar at St. Joseph, Hampton, and St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe.

Deborah Cox, director of the Diocese of Richmond's Office of Communications, contributed to this story.

Deacons

Continued from Page 2

in descending order, the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, 367; the Archdiocese of San Antonio, 364; the Archdiocese of New York, 305; the Archdiocese of Atlanta, 299; the Archdiocese of St. Louis, 297; the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, 268; the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, 265; and the Archdiocese of Boston, 255. **The Diocese of Richmond has 103 deacons.**

But other dioceses have a much smaller ratio of Catholics to deacons. The Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky, leads the way with a ratio of 508 Catholics per deacon.

Other dioceses with ratios under 900 Catholics per deacon, in ascending order, are the Diocese of Rapid City, South Dakota, 640; the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri, 703; the Diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota, 725; the Diocese of Amarillo, Texas, 747; the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota, 779; the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Alaska, 783; the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia, 871; and the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Florida, 893.

According to CARA, 93% of deacons are married, 4% are widowed, 2% have never married, 1% are divorced and have not remarried, and fewer than 1% remarried subsequent to diaconal ordination. **Of those in the Diocese of Richmond, 98 are married, two are single, one is widowed and two are divorced.**

CARA said the racial and ethnic makeup of U.S. deacons is 72% white, 21% Hispanic, 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% Black, and fewer than 1% Native American or other.

In the Diocese of Richmond, 83 deacons are white; four are African American/Black, 12 are Hispanic/Latino and four are Asian/Pacific Islander.

The report said 93% of deacons are incardinated in the diocese in which they serve, and 6%

are incardinated in another Latin-rite diocese but serving with faculties in their diocese of residence. Fewer than 1% are incardinated in Eastern Catholic churches or as members of religious orders.

"One in nine active permanent deacons are financially compensated for ministry in 2020, a continuation of a downward trend from 27% in 2001, 26% in 2017, and 15% in 2019," the report said.

Also, "87% of responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies require post-ordination formation for deacons," CARA said. "Among those that do require post-ordination formation, the median number of hours required per year is 20."

How dioceses deal with diaconal ministry also were questionnaire topics.

Eighty percent of responding dioceses say they have a plan for placement and ministry of deacons, and 93% have an active formation program for the diaconate. Of those that don't, 78% said they were planning to establish one within the next two years.

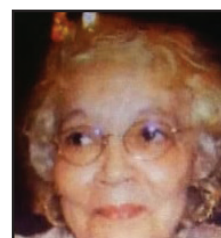
Close to two-thirds of dioceses have an active deacon council or deacon assembly, and responding dioceses were about evenly split as to whether they had a formal policy for deacons who got divorced or separated after their ordination.

"As our world continues to grapple with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, permanent deacons provide an encouraging witness to the love and mercy of Christ," said Bishop James F. Checchio of Metuchen, New Jersey, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

In a statement accompanying the release of the CARA report, he emphasized the importance of permanent deacons to the Church, saying: "They bring the light and presence of Jesus into many different areas of society — preaching the Gospel in their jobs, within their families, to the poor and among their broader communities."

IN MEMORIAM

Elizabeth Norrell Barrett



A funeral Mass was celebrated Monday, June 7, at Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Richmond, for Elizabeth Norrell

Barrett. Mrs. Barrett, 95, died on Monday, May 31.

Mrs. Barrett is survived by a daughter, Alice C. Robinson; sons, Monsignor Walter C. Barrett Jr. and Douglas J. Barrett Sr. (Iretha). She is further survived by seven grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren, and other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Walter C. Barrett Sr.

As a member of Holy Rosary Parish since 1969, Mrs. Barrett was involved in the ladies' sodality, social justice ministry and the crocheting committee. She was involved in the liturgical ministries of lector and extraordinary minister of the Eucharist.

Memorials in Mrs. Barrett's name may be made to Holy Rosary Catholic Church Debt Reduction and sent to Holy Rosary Catholic Church, 3300 R St., Richmond, VA 23223.



PROVIDING for THOSE IN NEED

Spotlight on: Fuel and Hunger Fund

In these challenging times, there has been a significant increase in demand for the basic needs of families and individuals across eastern, central and western Virginia. Those who are requesting assistance may be finding themselves in need for the very first time, or they may be enduring long-term struggle.

To live the Gospel and attend to the poor, the Fuel and Hunger Fund (primarily supported by the Annual Diocesan Appeal) makes needs based grants available to provide direct emergency assistance through meal programs and food pantries as well as utility and rent assistance.

Ultimately, the money raised for this fund is used to help our parishes and Catholic organizations respond to a wide range of needs in their own communities.

To learn more about how you can make an impact through the 2021 Annual Diocesan Appeal, please visit RichmondCatholicFoundation.org/Appeal



FIAT DAYS

JULY 22 - 24, 2021

The goal of Fiat Days is to bring high school aged women together who desire to grow in faithful discipleship and personal holiness to be better able to discover their own vocation from the Lord, with a special focus on the call to religious life.



Learn more and register by Tuesday, June 22nd at: evangelizerichmond.org

Diamond jubilarian sees priesthood as a privilege

At 86, Msgr. Shreve 'energized' by those he serves

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

Ask Msgr. Thomas Shreve when he retired, and he laughs. "I'm not really sure officially when it happened," he said.

That's understandable.

His last official assignment was at Church of the Epiphany, Richmond, where he served as pastor from 1987 to 2004. For the next six years, he remained as a "priest in residence." Then, for 15 months spanning 2011-2012, he was the parish's temporary administrator.

What his assignment history sheet doesn't show is that nine years after he "retired," Msgr. Shreve, 86, having celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination on May 1, continues to minister.

"I think of priesthood as a privilege given to me — to be able to be a part of people's lives in good times and in bad," he said. "Priesthood doesn't really make sense without people. It's not about programs and buildings and financial statements and all that sort of stuff. When we get into that, we go off track."

He exercises that privilege by visiting St. Francis Hospital in Midlothian and St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond three times a week.

"The only people who can do this kind of ministry is a priest," he explained. "I can do it, and there are people out there who need it and they're not getting it. Why don't I do it? Why don't I be a part of it?"

Noting that he is "energized" by the people to whom he ministers, Msgr. Shreve added that each type of ministry "is a variation on a theme."

"It's people, it's somebody who needs knowledge, teaching, a shoulder to cry on," he said. "It's somebody who needs to be kind to them, to say hello."

In addition to his visits to the hospitals, Msgr. Shreve, along with Msgr. Thomas Miller and Father Bob Brownell, is a help-out priest at St. Gabriel, Chesterfield. Among the three are more than 162 years of priestly service.

Exciting time

The excitement about priesthood Msgr. Shreve expresses had roots in his seminary formation.

"It was very, very exciting when I was in the seminary. You really had priest professors who were really intelligent people and really capable," he said. "Some of them certainly recognized that things are changing in the Church and things are changing the Church. They talked a lot about that."

He said they didn't know that the Second Vatican Council was coming — "Pope John XXIII took everyone by surprise," Msgr. Shreve said — but they were aware that theology was developing and growing.

"The professors would kind of keep you abreast of all that was being talked about in some of the theological circles," he said.

When Pope John XXIII called for the Second Vatican Council on Jan. 25, 1959, and opened it on Oct. 11, 1962, Msgr. Shreve was not surprised.

"We kept hearing stuff from seminarians who came from the Raleigh Diocese, and (Bishop Vincent S. Waters) was the one trying a lot of this out with them during the summertime," the priest recalled. "You heard it. And it all got



Bishop John J. Russell ordains Msgr. Thomas Shreve on Monday, May 1, 1961, in the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. Msgr. Shreve, 86, continues his priestly ministry by visiting two hospitals three times a week and by celebrating Mass at area parishes. (Photo/Diocese of Richmond Archives)

wrapped into the newness of being a priest. It didn't come as a shock."

Learning by example

Following ordination, Msgr. Shreve was assigned as the associate pastor at Sacred Heart, Winchester, for nine months before being assigned the same position at St. Peter Pro-Cathedral, Richmond, where he served from 1962 until 1965.

His pastor was Father George Gormley who he described as "a fantastic fellow," and the associate was Father John Connelly, "a real gentleman."

"They were just great with people — welcoming, hospitable and thoughtful," Msgr. Shreve said. "I learned a lot by their example. I was very, very fortunate. It was a great household."

In June 1965, six months before the close of Vatican II, Bishop John J. Russell appointed him to be his secretary. He recalled that everyone was still trying to figure out how to implement the changes brought about by the council.

"Everybody was in the same boat because we had never done it this way before," Msgr. Shreve recalled, adding that before Bishop Russell left to attend the first session, he told a gathering of priests, "Whatever the Holy Father says, whatever the council says, we will do in our diocese," and he said that when he came back as well.

Returning from that first session, Bishop Russell was true to his word, according to Msgr. Shreve.

"He was on board. We got into the whole thing about priest personnel boards and finance councils, parish councils," the priest said. "His whole thing was, 'If the council says we should do it, then that's what we will do.'"

Not everyone was as receptive to the council's work as Bishop Russell.

"Some were, some weren't. The unfortunate thing, in retrospect, with the liturgical changes, is that the parishes were not really prepared sufficiently," Msgr. Shreve said. "Parishioners came to church one weekend and the altar was turned around without input from parishioners. It wasn't the best methodology."

Nonetheless, he sensed enthusiasm among the lay faithful.

"A lot of people in the pews were really excited," he said. "Something was happening. Something was moving."

Collaborative pastor

In 1968, Bishop Russell named Msgr. Shreve rector of St. John Vianney Seminary, Richmond, where he served for six years. At the same time, he was appointed a judge in the diocesan tribunal where he would serve until 2012.

Msgr. Shreve received the first of his four pastorates, St. Bridget, Richmond, in 1974.

"I always felt good about being a pastor. I never had the problem of 'I'm the only one who can do this' or 'I have the best answer,'" he said. "I never thought going to meetings was a waste of time. It was a ministry of presence. That's what we're here for."

Msgr. Shreve said he liked the idea of talking to people at the parish, dealing with the councils.

"We have to come to a decision about things, but it can't be just my decision; you're the ones who are going to live with it; you're the ones who are paying for it," he said of the collaboration he practiced. "I never felt I was better than anybody else."

Between his next two pastorates — 16 months at St. Bede, Williamsburg, 1980-1981, and two and a half years at Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, 1983-1985 — Msgr. Shreve spent

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Our communities are better with refugees

GUEST COMMENTARY

JAY BROWN, CEO,
COMMONWEALTH CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Imagine walking quietly at night, holding your child tightly to your chest, praying he won't wake up and cry. The bag slung across your back holds a blanket, a little money and some food — maybe enough for three days if you're lucky. You're exhausted and the bag is heavy. Your shoulders and legs ache, but you keep walking toward safety.

This must be similar to what the Blessed Mother experienced 2,000 years ago. Knowing her homeland was no longer safe for her newborn, Jesus, she packed what she had and fled to safety in Egypt. One of Jesus' first earthly experiences was that of a refugee.

The Holy Family's flight into Egypt is a path that millions of families follow today, forced from their homes in search of refuge and safety. The United Nations estimates that over 80 million individuals worldwide have been forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations.

For over a decade, Commonwealth Catholic Charities has offered a welcoming embrace for these families on behalf of the local Church, providing hospitality and professional support as newly arrived refugees rebuild their lives.

Refugees arrive with very little, having left homes, possessions, livelihoods and even family members behind in search of safety. CCC's refugee resettlement services help refugees find a home, learn English, understand local culture, enroll in school, secure employment and much more.

On Sunday, June 20, countries across the globe will commemorate the 20th anniversary of World Refugee Day. This is a day to celebrate the beauty, diversity and richness that refugee families add to our communities while recognizing the urgent needs of refugees and displaced persons across the globe. It is a day for hospitality, compassion and empathy. It is a day for action.

The need for additional financial support for refugees is greater than ever, as last month the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced 62,500 refugees are now allowed into the country this year — an increase

from 15,000. As the pandemic restrictions on international travel are lifted, we anticipate a surge in refugee families arriving in our communities.

As we prepare for this increase and to commemorate World Refugee Day, CCC is creating a welcoming and hospitable environment for those fleeing the unimaginable. Through the support of our parishes and our communities, CCC can continue to fulfill the biblical command to welcome the stranger. Our experience has taught us that our communities are better, stronger and more vibrant when we open our hearts to refugees.

As we look ahead, may we continue to challenge ourselves to support our refugee brothers and sisters. May we practice hospitality, embrace the beautiful diversity of experience and remember Mary's journey so long ago by opening our hearts in compassion to those seeking refuge and safety in our diocese.

To support refugee services throughout the Diocese of Richmond, visit www.cccofva.org/donate.

Guest commentary was badly needed reminder

The guest commentary by Richard Doerflinger (Catholic Virginian, May 17) about the agenda of the "right to die" advocates was a badly needed reminder that right to life issues involve more than the abortion battle.

Those advocating medical suicide-assistance and even medical "mercy killing" (not always voluntary) also pose threats to our human life, valuable all the way from conception to natural death.

Those who want to be kept abreast of news on the end-of-life front might like to know about the Patients Rights Council, PO Box 760, Steubenville, OH 43952; phone 740-282-3810; <http://www.patientsrightscouncil.org>.

Among other materials, they have draft forms for advance directives more pro-life in orientation than those offered by most hospitals.

— Fletcher Bingham
Bridgewater

Abortion, euthanasia top 'grave matters' list

Re: "Vatican advises U.S. bishops on handling difficult matter" (Catholic Virginian, May 17): Looks like more gibberish to defend the right of pro-choice supposedly "Catholic" politicians to publicly present themselves for holy Communion. What a travesty!

In a letter to Archbishop

Jose Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cardinal Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, clearly stated that dialogue must occur in two stages. First among the U.S. bishops, and then among the bishops and the pro-choice politicians within their jurisdictions.

The letter stated that it would be "misleading" to present abortion and euthanasia as the only grave matters of Catholic teaching that demand the fullest level of accountability on the part of Catholics.

I would argue that abortion and euthanasia are indeed at the top of the "grave matters" list because they are the taking of a God-given human life — what could be more grave?

In a 2004 statement titled "Catholics and Political Life," the USCCB wrote in part:

"The Eucharist is the source and summit of Catholic life. Therefore, like every Catholic generation before us, we must be guided by the words of St. Paul, 'Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the Body and Blood of the Lord' (1 Cor 11:27). This means that all must examine their consciences as to their worthiness to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord. This examination includes fidel-

ity to the moral teaching of the Church in personal and public life."

— Ted Cors
Williamsburg

Act upon pastoral letter on racism

In "Racial Justice and the Catholic Church," Father Bryan N. Massingale states, "American Catholic Social Teaching on race suffers from a lack of passion. As a corporate body and as individuals, Catholics espouse a number of beliefs, but not all of these are held passionately. For example, no one can doubt the passion with which the Catholic Church opposes abortion."

This passion is demonstrated in the May 31, 2021, edition of The Catholic Virginian with a front-page article and five letters to the editor devoted to abortion. I pray for the day when other pro-life issues, including racism, generate the same passion.

Father Massingale also notes, "despite the bold words of 'Brothers and Sisters to Us' (the USCCB pastoral letter on racism which preceded 'Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love,' which was issued in November 2018), we must conclude that racial justice is not now — and never has been — a passionate matter for most American Catholics."

How can we address this lack of passion? "Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring

Call to Love — A Pastoral Letter Against Racism" provides several recommendations. As parishes return to normal, this document needs to be studied and acted upon.

Catholics should also read Father Massingale's book to better understand the sad history of racism in our Church. DREs should consider offering JustFaith Ministries modules on racial equity.

Only by forming and informing ourselves can we become agents for change in this important area.

— Jimmy Culpepper
Chesapeake

More global Church coverage needed

It was so mind expanding to read "Myanmar cardinal calls for peace after church bombing" (Catholic Virginian, May 31).

Although diocesan events are important to

know about, our connection in the Body of Christ to our brothers and sisters in many parts of the world where they struggle should be included in The Catholic Virginian more often. These types of articles could help us be more mindful in our thoughts and prayers that we belong to a global Church and need to remember one another all over the world.

An example of this inclusive awareness was mentioned in that same publication in the wonderful article about Msgr. Michael Schmied in which he said, "I had become increasingly aware and concerned about what was going on in Central America."

The Catholic Virginian could be a tool to promote, in all of us in the Diocese of Richmond, a more expansive concern for the struggles and needs of our community on all continents.

— Maureen Marroni
Norfolk

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Msgr. Rush relishes opportunities priesthood has provided

Golden jubilarian retiring; looking forward to 'brand new experience'

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Significant moments are sure to stand out over a 50-year vocation. For Msgr. J. Kenneth Rush, who will officially retire from active ministry on July 5, those moments are the opportunities he has been given in his priestly life.

"The opportunities that the parishes afforded me to learn what it means to be a priest and a pastor, and what it means to be Church... It's been surprising and challenging and full of opportunities and really good," he said.

Msgr. Rush first felt the call to priesthood when he was a child and attended Sunday Mass with his family at Sacred Heart Church in Winchester, Virginia. The parish was part of the Diocese of Richmond at that time.

"Growing up in the parish in Winchester – this may sound strange – but going to Mass and everything, I thought it would be really neat to be a priest and say Mass," he said.

Influences

The influence of Msgr. Rush's maternal grandmother, Ida Nitsche,

helped foster that desire to become a priest when he and his parents visited his mother's family in Rochester, Pennsylvania. He recalls his grandmother walking to the 5 a.m. daily Mass so she could be home to cook breakfast for his uncles, who worked in a steel mill.

"I remember walking with her to go to that daily Mass," he said. "That was a long time ago, and I was very young, but she was just special."

His involvement with Boy Scout Troop 45, run by the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, who were also in charge of a seminary just outside of Winchester, was influential to Msgr. Rush.

"The brother who ran the Boy Scout troop was a very smart man, and when we were camping on a weekend or something like that, he would take us into the chapel where all the seminarians were," he recalled. "They were all dressed in cassocks and surplices, and it was very, very impressionable for a young kid."

Msgr. Rush attended St. John Vianney Minor Seminary in Richmond when it opened and was a member of the seminary's first graduating class in 1963.

He graduated from St. Bernard in Cullman, Alabama, in 1967 and then attended the Catholic University of America and Theological College in Washington, earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's degrees in theology in 1970 and 1971, respectively.

"Nowadays, seminarians have a pastoral year. They didn't have that back in the dark ages, so it was just four years, but they assigned you to parishes, especially after you were ordained a deacon. So I was at St. Thomas More," he said, noting that that parish later became the cathedral of the Arlington Diocese.

Time for adaptation

Msgr. Rush was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond on May 15, 1971, by Bishop John J. Russell.

He said that "all sorts of things were going on" during those first years of his priesthood – for everyone due to the Second Vatican

Council, not just the newly ordained – so "one of the things you had to do, at least I think, was adapt to the needs of the Church, and the needs of the diocese, and the needs of the parishes."

His first assignment was secretary to the bishop and associate pastor at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. As the bishop's secretary, the priest said he was responsible for driving the bishop to "confirmations and things."

"He was absolutely wonderful to me," Msgr. Rush said of Bishop Russell.

Parish work

In 1973, Msgr. Rush was assigned as assistant pastor of Sacred Heart, Richmond.

Msgr. Rush earned a master's degree in counseling from Old Dominion University in 1975 and a Doctor of Ministries degree from St. Mary's Seminary and University in 1980.

See Msgr. Rush, Page 10



Msgr. J. Kenneth Rush

Msgr. Miller's priesthood has been 'joyful journey'

Liturgy, 'the folks' were at the heart of golden jubilarian's ministry

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Pope John XXIII, who convened the Second Vatican Council, and Pope Francis are Msgr. Thomas Miller's favorite pontiffs. They are two men the priest sees as "radiating joy."

Msgr. Miller, who celebrated his 50th anniversary of priesthood on May 15, has made finding and experiencing joy "in the fullest sense of the word" a hallmark of his vocation.

"I hope, if nothing else, that when people interact with me, in particular, perhaps, through a liturgical celebration, that I, in some way, contribute a spirit of joy. Even if it's a funeral," he said. "Joy isn't some giddy happiness; joy is a deeper kind of thing. I just delight in the gift of life and all that comes with it, and I just hope that I convey that in some way."

Msgr. Miller grew up in the "pretty small" Catholic community at Sacred Heart of Jesus in Winchester, Virginia. He said his family was "quite involved" with the parish.

"Catholics were a distinct minority at the time," Msgr. Miller said,

but that parish community in what is now the Arlington Diocese has since grown significantly.

The liturgy, said in Latin when Msgr. Miller was a child, captured his attention.

"It was really the liturgy that I just... as a child, I was enthralled in the church, watching. The Mass was so different then, of course, but I was just enthralled by it and then became an altar server," he said. "And so, from very early on, I said to myself, 'I think this is something I would enjoy

doing.'"

After 50 years of priesthood, Msgr. Miller still loves the liturgy.

"The liturgy still brings me the greatest joy. Even though the liturgy that first enthralled me as a child has changed dramatically, I have become a great lover of the liturgy as we celebrate it now," he said.

Love of every parish

Msgr. Miller was "a public school guy" through elementary school and the first half of high school, as there were no Catholic schools in Winchester. He began attending St. John Vianney Minor Seminary in

Richmond for his junior year of high school and was a member of the seminary's first graduating class in 1963.

He attended St. Charles College Seminary in Catonsville, Maryland, and then went on to St. Mary's Seminary in downtown Baltimore. He completed his formation at the Theological College in Washington, and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond on May 15, 1971, by Bishop John J. Russell.

The priest's first assignment was as associate pastor at St. Bridget, Richmond, from 1971-1975. He served in that role at St. Jerome, Newport News, from 1975-1976.

"I would say I've fallen in love with every parish community I've ever been assigned to, and some of them I've actually been assigned twice," he said.

He became pastor of St. Mary, Blacksburg, in 1976 and served there until 1983. He was then rector of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Richmond for 12 years before returning as pastor at St. Bridget from 1995-2002.

Msgr. Miller became pastor of St. Andrew, Roanoke, in 2002. He remained there until retiring from active ministry in 2015.

"Each (assignment) was very

different and, of course, each one in a different time – what was going on in our world and in our nation at the time, and our Church for that matter," he said.

'Most fertile times in Church history'

"I think this has been one of the most fertile times in our Church history," he said of the post-Vatican II Church. "That's a pretty big boast, but I'll try it anyway."

The jubilarian noted that he and his classmates who went on to become priests have lived through what he calls "exciting times" thanks to Vatican II.

"We were seniors in high school, October 1962 at St. John Vianney, when the Second Vatican Council opened," he said. He added that he was in seminary while the council was convened and throughout the beginning of its implementation in the Church.

"By the time I was ordained, basically the format of the liturgy of the Mass as we have it today was pretty much in place. It was entirely in English," he said, and explained that when the changes were first being implemented, the Mass was "part

See Msgr. Miller, Page 10



Msgr. Thomas Miller

Words of consecration are to be said as written



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. I was taught that for a valid Mass, the priest must pray the exact prayer of consecration as written in the approved liturgical books, raise the host and chalice high, and either bow deeply or genuflect.

Our priest barely raises them above his chest, does a quick perfunctory bow and basically makes up the words as he goes along. No two consecrations are the same. He doesn't use the book, and the words he says are not the words of Jesus at the Last Supper.

When confronted about this, he says that he speaks from the heart and that the Mass is more meaningful that way. I'm not sure that I'm even receiving the body and blood of Christ after his consecration — or if Jesus is truly present in the tabernacle afterward. Many of our parishioners are wondering the same thing. (City and state withheld)

A. I wouldn't worry about how high the priest holds the host and chalice. As an older priest who has had rotator cuff surgery on both shoulders, I can barely get my arms above the top of my head — and this does not affect the validity of the Masses I celebrate. But the

words of consecration are a different matter entirely, and on this the Church has spoken specifically.

In the papal bull "De Defectibus," issued by St. Pius V in the 16th century when ratifying the Council of Trent, we read: "If the priest were to shorten or change the form of the consecration of the body and blood, so that in the change of wording the words did not mean the same thing, he would not be achieving a valid sacrament. If, on the other hand, he were to add or take away anything which did not change the meaning, the sacrament would be valid, but he would be committing a grave sin" (No. 20).

In the instruction "Redemptionis Sacramentum," issued in 2004 by the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, we are reminded: "It is not to be tolerated that some priests take upon themselves the right to compose their own eucharistic prayers or to change the same texts approved by the Church, or to introduce others composed by private individuals" (No. 51).

And the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, the Church's official "guidebook" on the liturgy, repeats that same caution: "The priest will remember that he is the servant of the sacred liturgy and that he himself is not permitted, on his own initiative, to add, to remove or to change anything in the celebration of Mass" (No. 24).

Q. I am a retired Catholic school principal and the product of 18 years of Catholic school education. It troubles me greatly that the Church routinely "assigns" sins to people. Missing Mass on Sunday is one example.

Catholic teaching says that the subject matter of a mortal sin must be gravely immoral, the individual must agree that the action is gravely immoral, and the individual must choose the action with full freedom while agreeing that it is gravely immoral.

In my experience, any number of people may not agree that attending Mass on Sunday is a grave matter. In these cases, they cannot be assigned a mortal sin. (Ballston Lake, New York)

A. The Church has spoken clearly on the obligation of a Catholic to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants). ... Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin" (No. 2181).

I agree with you that gravity of matter is just one of the three necessary conditions for a mortal sin — the

others being complete consent of the will and full knowledge of the sinful character of the act or omission.

Where I disagree with you, though, is your apparent belief that an individual can ignore the Church's teaching and simply decide for himself what is a sin and what isn't.

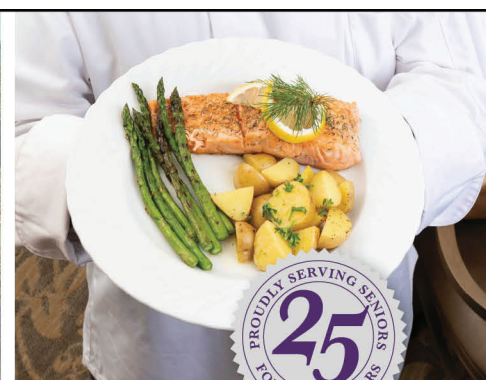
A Catholic has to be guided by the Church, and the Church has already spoken on the gravity of missing Mass.

Perhaps No. 1859 of the catechism is relevant here: "Mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent. It presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God's law. It also implies a consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin."

I shudder to think what would happen if your worry about "assigning sins" were applied to such matters as fidelity in marriage. Certain circumstances, of course, can excuse one from attendance at Mass on a particular Sunday.

The current pandemic is a notable example, and the catechism mentions illness and the care of infants, but others might be unavoidable work obligations, lack of transportation or inclement weather sufficient to put one's safety at risk.

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



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Why St. Joseph is a perfect example for all fathers



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

As we celebrate Father's Day during this Year of St. Joseph, it is fitting to offer a few words about the man who serves as a perfect example for all fathers.

Though little is known about the man himself, we know from Scripture that he was a "just and upright man" and that his obedience to God was unwavering. His steadfast faith in God helped him move through one crisis after another, trusting in divine providence to lead the way.

When he discovered that Mary was pregnant, his only concern was directed toward protecting her from shame. Rather than subjecting her to a divorce which was mandated by Mosaic Law, he was intent on putting her away quietly.

His love for Mary won out over strict observance of the law, which signaled Jesus' teaching about the spirit over the letter of the law. His kindness was rewarded by an angelic visit assuring him that Mary's pregnancy was of the Holy Spirit and that he should take her for his wife, and so he did.

According to Jewish law, naming a child was a public confirmation of fatherhood, and we know from Scripture that when the infant God was circumcised, Joseph named him Jesus as directed by the angel. In so doing, Mary understood that Joseph gave legitimacy to their union. Legally married, Mary and Joseph shared the responsibility of parenting the child Jesus.

And yet, no sooner had one crisis been

averted than another surfaced when Joseph was told in a dream to flee to Egypt because Jesus' life was in danger. Once again Joseph's obedience, rooted in his unwavering faith, was swift and unquestioning.

Surely, he recognized the irony in being told to flee to the very land from which the Israelites had fled, yet rather than argue the point, Joseph demonstrated by example that God's ways are not our ways. Like Abraham before him, Joseph trusted that God's will would be revealed in time, despite what seemed like insurmountable obstacles.

It's a lesson that every father can take to heart. How many abortions might be avoided if unplanned pregnancies would be embraced rather than terminated?

St. Joseph is a perfect example that fatherhood is more than a biological reality. It's about recognizing that God is present in every aspect of our lives, even when pregnancies are unplanned or when they occur without benefit of marriage.

When we place our trust in God, we give credence to the words of St. Paul that "all things work together for good for those who love God" (Rom 8:28).

It seems that every circumstance surrounding the birth of Jesus was unexpected, yet Joseph remained faithful in the wake of every hardship. We know from Scripture that the Holy Family went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover every year, which was beyond what the law required. As a poor family, the sacrificial dimension of their commitment is a lived example of the centrality of God in their life.

To live in the physical presence of the mother of God and God's own son was an

extraordinary gift with which only St. Joseph was favored. Yet his silence about the role he was chosen to play in salvation history speaks volumes about his humility and trust in God — a lesson we can all take to heart.

We may not be visited by angels of the celestial variety, but God continues to send his messengers in ways that we can choose to obey or ignore. They speak to us through Scripture, the teaching of the Church and the lives of the saints — those who preceded us and those who share the journey with us.

During this year dedicated to St. Joseph, we do well to reflect on the angels in our life. Who are the people, events or means that God uses to guide us, which may often go unnoticed?

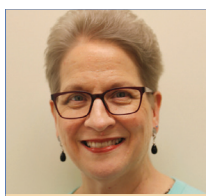
In her poem, "In a Cloud of Angels," Jessica Powers (Carmelite Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit) offers food for thought, which always reminds me of St. Joseph. Though I doubt she had the saint in mind when she composed the poem, it calls attention to the sacred within our midst.

The beginning verse: "I walk in a cloud of angels. God has a throne in the secret of my soul" is worth pondering. If we truly believe this, then, like St. Joseph, we will direct our attention to the angels that surround us, that are sent by God when life's obstacles seem insurmountable, and that we can turn to in prayer.

During this year in particular, St. Joseph is one of those guides.

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

Trust in God's love grounds us in the faith of Jesus



BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY
MELANIE CODDINGTON

Here and there in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Lord God manifests his power as a mighty storm rising out of the sea. Projecting such authority, God addresses Job "out of the storm" in today's first reading.

The opening line launches a series of rhetorical questions, comparing the power of God with the wisdom of Job, demonstrating who God is and who Job is not. Though the sharp words seem to portray the Lord God as the ultimate tough guy, such rhetoric finds its rightful place within the Hebrew Wisdom tradition. It means, "You don't know everything, human. Reflect on nature and realize how much is beyond your ken."

In The Book of Job, we find these verses in the Lord's response to Job's lament. By this point, the Most High, listening from the heavenly court, has endured 36 chapters' worth of puffed up proclamation from Job's friends, who have dared to judge Job, presumably in God's name, and to demand his repentance for sins he did not commit. True, Job complains to God

at length, but his lament reveals his trust in God, not the lack of it.

The Lord's words (chapters 38-41) penetrate the fog of Job's suffering and pierce his heart. His response to God reflects his attitude adjustment from anguished resentment to holy terror:

"I know that you can do all things, and no purpose of yours can be hindered. I have dealt with great things that I do not understand; things too wonderful for me, which I cannot know. I had heard of you by word of mouth, but now my eye has seen you. Therefore, I disown what I have said, and repent in dust and ashes."

Interestingly, in the epilogue of The Book of Job, the Lord rebukes Job's friends, extolling Job's righteousness and restoring his good fortune.

Jewish history boasts no tales of naval power. The great sea, the Mediterranean, inspired fear, being the source of chaos

and the home of a powerful god, Leviathan. Even the small Sea of Galilee, where sudden storms could erupt without warning, terrified the fisher folk who dared to test its capricious nature.

Today's selection from Psalm 107 plucks the seafaring section out of a longer poetic prayer, depicting people in distress delivered by the Lord. As in Job, the Lord God calls up the perfect storm.

The waves mount up to heaven and sink down to the depths, taking fragile ships along for the ride. With melting hearts, hapless sailors cry out to the Lord and witness the wonder of his power in hushing the storm and stilling the billows. They rejoice in their rescue, fulfilling the psalmist's call: "Let them give thanks to the Lord for his kindness."

In a remake of this classic story, the Gospel casts the disciples as the distressed sailors crying out for rescue. Jesus himself wields the power of the Most High over sea and storm, silencing the chaos with, "Quiet! Be still!" and inspiring yet another rhetorical question: "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

On a basic level, this stormy tale reveals the divine nature and authority of Jesus, a reality that has not yet dawned on his disciples. On a more personal level, it speaks of their relationship with Jesus, growing yes, but in fits and starts.

They ask, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" forgetting his love for them.

He asks, "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?" reminding them to trust in him, even as he trusts in his Abba.

Jesus' trust in the Father's love for him enables him to rest in the boat, even as the storm rages. Trust in the love of God, for each of us and all of us, grounds us in the faith of Jesus, the faith we enter through the waters of baptism.

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

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Jb 38:1, 8-11;
Ps 107:23-24, 25-27, 28-29, 30-31;
2 Cor 5:14-17;
Mk 4:35-41

Priesthood involves closeness with the faithful, pope says

CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis told a group of priests studying in Rome that if they do not want to be pastors, spending time with the faithful, they should request dismissal from the priesthood and concentrate on academics instead.

“Be pastors with the scent of your sheep, persons able to live, laugh and cry with your people — in other words, to communicate with them,” the pope told the priests June 7.

The priests, who are studying at pontifical universities in Rome, live at the city’s St. Louis of France residence.

The priesthood cannot be understood without its essential connection to “the holy people of God,” the pope told them. “The ministerial priesthood is a consequence of the baptismal priesthood of the holy faithful people of God.”

“If you think of a priesthood isolated from the people of God, that is not a Catholic priesthood,” he said. A Catholic priest puts God and God’s people at the center of his daily concerns, setting aside self-interest and “dreams of greatness.”

“To put God’s holy faithful people at the center, you must be a pastor,” he said.

A priest who would say, “No, I would like to be an intellectual only, not a pastor,” would be better off asking for “a reduction to the lay state,” the pope said. “But if you are a priest, be a pastor.”

Obviously, there are many ways to be a pastor, he said, but all those ways involve being “in the midst of God’s people.”

During the ongoing year dedicated to St. Joseph, Pope Francis asked the priests “to re-discover the face of this man of faith, this tender father, a model of fidelity and trusting abandonment to God’s plan.”

St. Joseph is a reminder that “having faith in God also includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties, our weaknesses,” he said. “We must not leave frailty aside: it is a theological place.”

“My fragility, the fragility of each one of us, is a theological place of encounter with the Lord. The ‘superman’ priests end up badly, all of them,” Pope Francis said. “The fragile priest, who knows his weaknesses and talks about them with the Lord, he will be fine.”

To be the “apostles of joy” that the Church and its people need, priests also must have a sense of humor, he said, and they must cultivate gratitude for being called to serve people and the Church.

“To put God’s holy faithful people at the center, you must be a pastor.”

— Pope Francis

Msgr. Miller

Continued from Page 7

in English, part in Latin” until the revised missal was printed.

The priest feels that “wonderful things have come from the council and the subsequent years,” including the “dramatically increased” amount of Scripture that is available to people through the liturgy.

“I just love, love the Scriptures and feel we’re so blessed with the liturgical renewal,” he said.

Msgr. Miller said that throughout his priesthood, he has appreciated the support of and good relationships with his brother priests, but “it’s the folks” – the laity, lay ministers, and the “wonderful” women religious with whom he has worked – that have made his vocation so rewarding and fulfilling.

“The relationships with the folks, that’s been the joy of my life,” Msgr. Miller said. “That flowing from the celebration of the liturgy has been the opportunity to share in the lives of people in all kinds of different ways – certainly sacramentally and sharing with them in their joys and in their sorrows.”

Gratifying time

Msgr. Miller marked his golden jubilee by celebrating the Saturday evening Mass at St. Mary, Richmond, on May 15. The following weekend, he presided at a Mass at St. Andrew, Roanoke.

A further celebration was held on May 25 when Msgr. Miller concelebrated the 12:05 p.m. daily

Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart with the 1971 ordination class.

He said they try to get together around their anniversary date, but since this year is a major anniversary, they decided to have something special in Richmond.

“There were seven of us ordained on the same date at the cathedral, and we had an additional classmate who had been ordained at the end of the previous year in Rome, where he studied,” Msgr. Miller said.

Although he is no longer in active ministry, Msgr. Miller continues to regularly celebrate the sacraments.

While attending the Chrism Mass during Holy Week this year, he looked through the program, which listed all the parishes of the Diocese of Richmond.

“I said, ‘Where have I presided at a Mass – and sometimes many – at a particular parish?’” he recalled, and said he discovered that he has celebrated Mass at 40 parishes since his retirement six years ago.

“I’ve gotten to see more of the diocese in my retirement than I ever saw when I was actively engaged and involved,” he said.

Looking back on his 50 years as a priest, Msgr. Miller said that although he has encountered challenges, priesthood has been a “joyful journey” overall.

“To watch life unfold during these 50 years, to have a front row seat to watch life in the Church unfold, has been certainly not boring, very exciting, and very gratifying for me,” he said.

Msgr. Rush

Continued from Page 7

While serving as pastor of Christ the King, Norfolk, which the priest described as a “wonderful, spectacular place to work,” Msgr. Rush also served as the chaplain of Norfolk Catholic High School for six years.

“Gosh, that was a great experience with the faculty and other folks teaching at the school,” he said.

Msgr. Rush became pastor for the first time in 1980 when he was assigned to Blessed Sacrament, Harrisonburg, where he served until 1992. He was then assigned to Holy Cross, Lynchburg, where he has served as pastor for 29 years.

While at Holy Cross, Msgr. Rush has also served as pastor of other parishes during times of transition. Those assignments include Our Lady of Peace, Appomattox, and St. Victoria, Hurt (2005-2007), and St. Joseph, Clifton Forge, and Sacred Heart, Covington (2010-2011).

He also served as assistant chancellor (1971-1973), chair of the Priest Personnel Committee (2006-2008) and episcopal vicar of the Western Vicariate (1998-2012). He said he has been a judge in the tribunal for many years.

‘Happy to be a priest’

When looking back on his varied experiences as a priest in the Diocese of Richmond, Msgr.

Rush said that the vocation itself has brought him happiness.

“You know, I like being a priest. This may be a truism, but if you’re not happy with what you do (with your life), then you’re not happy no matter what you do... And some people are very unhappy with what they do,” he said. “Well, I’ve always been very happy to be a priest. This has been something that I wanted to do, I had the opportunity to do, and people have supported me and prayed for me over the years to make it all possible.”

To celebrate his golden jubilee, Msgr. Rush and parishioners of Holy Cross had a small celebration at the parish during the weekend of May 15.

On May 25, he joined his brother priests from the 1971 ordination class to celebrate the daily Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. They went to lunch afterward to catch up.

“It was just so nice to see people,” Msgr. Rush said. “It was really nice seeing them and talking, especially the ones I hadn’t seen in a little while.”

He said the ordination class, which included priests who had been incardinated into the Arlington Diocese after it was established in 1974, mentioned to each other the “rather amazing feat” of them all still being priests after 50 years.

“That is not true of classes in the past and maybe even in the present,” he said. “We all per-

severed, we all worked in the Catholic Diocese of Richmond in parishes and other things, we’re all still Catholic priests.”

Open to possibilities

After retirement, Msgr. Rush hopes he will be able to fill in to celebrate weekend Masses where he is needed, “but it won’t quite be the same,” he said. “When you’re at a place for a long time, you get to know people well, and so I’ll miss that.”

Msgr. Rush said that while priesthood “hasn’t always been a bed of roses,” he has enjoyed working with people in different areas of the life of a parish.

“What I’m going to miss a great deal in retirement is working with people,” he said. “For instance, sitting down and preparing folks to get married. Or working with parishioners on a project and whatever it may be. I’ve been really very fortunate over the years to be in parishes that have had just absolutely great people to work with. Not only the people in the parish, the parishioners, but also the staff members.”

Although he is yet unsure what exactly they will be, Msgr. Rush is prepared for the new opportunities that retirement will bring him.

“For me, it’s a brand new world and a brand new experience, so I’m just going to have to be open to all brand new possibilities that are there,” he said. “I’ll discover that as this whole thing unfolds for me.”

Eucharist is bread of sinners, not reward of saints, pope says

Church is place ‘with open doors that celebrates around Christ’

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People’s hearts and the entire Church must be wide open to wonder and devotion to Christ and ready to embrace everyone — sinner and saint alike, Pope Francis said.

“The Church of the perfect and pure is a room where there isn’t a place for anyone; the Church with open doors that celebrates around Christ is, on the other hand, a large hall where everyone — the righteous and sinners — can enter,” the pope said in his homily during Mass June 6, to mark the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

“The Eucharist is meant to nourish those who are tired and hungry along the journey, let’s not forget this!” he said during the early evening Mass, which was celebrated at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter’s Basilica with about 200 people, who wore masks and maintained social distance.

It was the second year the Mass was held with a reduced congregation and without the traditional outdoor Corpus Christi procession afterward as part of the ongoing efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

The ceremony instead concluded with a long moment of silent eucharistic adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The feast of the Body and Blood of Christ celebrates the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

In his homily, Pope Francis looked at the meaning of the images presented in the reading from the Gospel of St. Mark, which detailed Jesus’ instructions for preparing and finding a place for Passover and the Lord’s Supper.

“...if our heart is less like a large room and more like storage closet where we regretfully keep old things, like an attic where we have long stored away our enthusiasm and dreams, like a cramped and dark room where we live alone, with ourselves, our problems and bitterness, then it will be impossible to recognize this silent and humble presence of God.”

— Pope Francis

Pope Francis said the image of a man carrying a jar of water reminds people that humanity is thirsty, “always seeking a source of water that satisfies and restores.”

“All of us journey through life with a jar in our hands” as “each one of us is thirsty for love, joy, a successful life in a more humane world,” he said, adding that only God can satisfy that real thirst for something more — that hope in an eternal life that sustains people in life.

Because that thirst is often not acknowledged, with fewer people seeking or asking about God, Christians must evangelize, the pope said.

It is not enough for the Church to be a small group “of the usual people who gather to celebrate the Eucharist. We have to go into the city, encounter people, learn to recognize and reawaken the thirst for God and yearning for the

Gospel,” he said. It will be that renewed thirst that brings people to the altar to encounter God in the Eucharist, he added.

The other important image is the grand upper room they find for the Passover meal, he said, a meal that will be significant because of a tiny morsel of bread.

“God makes himself small like a piece of bread,” so humble, hidden and sometimes invisible, that it is necessary that one’s heart be large, open and vigilant to recognize, welcome and adore him, the pope said.

“Instead, if our heart is less like a large room and more like storage closet where we regretfully keep old things, like an attic where we have long stored away our enthusiasm and dreams, like a cramped and dark room where we live alone, with ourselves, our problems and bitterness,” he said, “then it will be impossible to recognize

this silent and humble presence of God.”

The Church also must be a large, welcoming space, “not a small exclusive club, but a community with its arms wide open, welcoming to everyone,” and willing to lead to Christ the wounded, the wayward and those who have done wrong, he said.

“To celebrate and live the Eucharist,” he said, “we, too, are called to live this love, because you cannot break Sunday’s bread if your heart is closed to others, you cannot eat this bread if you do not give the bread to the hungry, you cannot share this bread if you do not share the sufferings of those in need.”

Earlier in the day, the pope greeted hundreds of people spread out in St. Peter’s Square for the noon recitation of the Angelus prayer.

The Eucharist, he said, shows “the strength to love those who make mistakes” because Jesus gave the world the bread of life on the night he was betrayed.

Jesus reacts to the evil of Judas’ betrayal with a greater good, responding to Judas’ “no” with the “yes” of mercy, he said. “He does not punish the sinner, but rather gives his life for him, he pays for him.”

“When we receive the Eucharist, Jesus does the same with us: he knows us; he knows we are sinners; he knows we make many mistakes, but he does not give up on joining his life to ours,” the pope said. “He knows that we need it, because the Eucharist is not the reward of saints, but the bread of sinners. This is why he exhorts us: ‘Do not be afraid! Take and eat.’”

Effort to end human trafficking takes shape in West Africa

DAMIAN AVEVOR
Catholic News Service

ACCRA, Ghana — Clergy, women religious and laypeople pledged to strengthen existing networks and build new partnerships to fight human trafficking in West Africa during a five-day conference.

Recognizing that the coronavirus pandemic has not slowed the work of traffickers who force young people into prostitution, pornography, erotic entertainment and forced labor, more than two dozen participants agreed to strengthen efforts that stress Church teaching on human dignity and the need to protect people who are most vulnerable to trafficking in the region.

Conference participants from Ghana, Nigeria and Burkina Faso, who are members of Talitha Kum, an international network of women and men religious fighting trafficking, said the work was crucial because people are being trafficked into dehumanizing conditions.

In a seven-point “Action Plan,” the group resolved during the June 1-5 gathering to improve

communications and expressed a desire to connect with conferences of major superiors in their respective countries. They also planned to regularly convene online to pray to end trafficking.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the scourge of human trafficking. Traffickers prey upon the most vulnerable and look for opportunities to exploit them,” participant Sister Monica Onwunali, a member of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles in Nigeria, told Catholic News Service.

“As the whole world stood still, traffickers did not shut down. They continued to harm people, finding ways to innovate and even capitalize on the chaos,” Sister Monica said.

Seeking to escape dire poverty, most people are unaware that they are being recruited by traffickers, she explained to the conference, which was organized by the Ghana Network of Talitha Kum.

Migrant people are particularly vulnerable because they “view the services of smugglers as

an opportunity to move from impoverished conditions in their home countries to more stable, developed environments,” she added.

Sister Philomena Okwu, a member of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul and coordinator of the Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women in Nigeria, told participants that steps to boost networking among religious communities can lead to long-lasting professional relationships that strengthen efforts to disrupt trafficking networks.

“Networking helps you craft your story to use in your daily communication and social channels,” she said.

In another session, Spiritan Father Richard Acheampong of the Archdiocese of Kumasi, Ghana, described how Catholic Social Teaching stressed the importance of human dignity, saying that trafficking violates the sacredness of life.

Human life, he said, deserves to be protected and nurtured. “We each have a responsibility to fight against violation and degradation of our brothers and sisters,” he said.

Canon Law

Continued from Page 1

that adds the term “dignity,” — under the heading “Offences Against Human Life, Dignity and Liberty” — this shows an understanding that such crimes “harm the inalienable dignity of human beings acknowledged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” and are not just a violation of the Sixth Commandment.

“I believe that this choice of language expresses at its best the mind of a legislator (the pope) who has been always defending the inestimable value of every human life in his pontificate and in his entire life,” Giampietro said.

‘Must’ instead of ‘can’

Msgr. Robert Oliver of the Archdiocese of Boston and formerly of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors told CNS that “the one thing that stands out for safeguarding is that the Holy Father has introduced legal requirements that suspected offenses be reported and that bishops respond to these reports by making use of the Church’s penal procedures” for the restoration of justice, the reform of the offender and the repair of scandal.

In other words, where previous canons suggested what “can” be done when an offense has been committed, now the rules are what “must” be done and making sure the law is applied.

Giampietro said all the changes and new provisions created over the years “needed to be codified in the universal law to give clear normative directions to the whole Church.”

It also includes changes “that had to be included in the code more permanently,” she said, such as those found in “Vos Estis Lux Mundi,” which was promulgated “ad experimentum,” for greater accountability of Church leaders.

Establish safe environments

Another significant change is expanding

the application of canons dealing with abuse to religious and laypeople who have a role, office or function in the Church — not just to clergy, she said.

“It was a very much needed change as religious always felt that there was a gap in the legislation concerning them in relation to abuse cases,” she said, underlining how the women’s UISG has a safeguarding office and organizes online formation together with the men’s Union of Superiors General and the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

Here, “Canon Law is being studied and discussed as one of the instruments which can help to establish safe environments,” she said, and “it is encouraging, as a laywoman, to see how much superiors general work together for the care and protection of minors and vulnerable persons.”

One critical element still needing attention, Msgr. Oliver said in an email response to questions June 4, is “clarifying the definition of ‘vulnerable persons,’ a process that will include deciding individual cases of people, who were ‘limited in their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense.’”

‘Tackle clericalism’

Other issues needing work to further help the Church in its response to abuse, he added, would be publishing how cases are decided and explaining the reasoning behind those decisions.

“Now the task is to implement these principles and norms effectively and to work out areas that still need to be better related to one another,” he said, saying “the size of this task can easily be underestimated.”

“It will require that dioceses, eparchies and conferences of bishops and of religious build the necessary organizational structures, especially by investing in the training of experts to carry out the investigations and penal processes,” he said.

Giampietro said she was “very hopeful that

more positive changes concerning (laypeople) will be implemented in Canon Law” in the future. For example, “we would need a greater balance with the inclusion of more ecclesiastical lay judges. This would help to tackle clericalism in the Church, which Pope Francis has always discouraged.”

Every document and decree drafted over the years, she said, are pieces compiling a larger picture of what it looks like to “care for humanity.”

It shows “the will to learn from mistakes of the past and make sure that they are not repeated. Once we see these changes within this picture, we acquire the right disposition necessary to follow a path of universal healing,” she said.

More revisions than expected

The Code of Canon Law, first published in 1917 and revised in 1983, is still subject to alterations between revisions, according to Benedictine Sister Nancy Bauer, an associate professor of Canon Law at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

Unlike legislatures in many nations, “the legislator is the Roman pontiff. It is the pontiff who can revise a canon or abrogate it,” Sister Bauer said. “It’s not like the Synod of Bishops can get together and do this.”

Between the 1917 and 1983 codes, “the code revision started in the late 1960s, went through the ‘70s, and was pretty much done by 1980. It was pretty much done by the time (St.) John Paul II promulgated it in 1983,” Sister Bauer told CNS in a June 4 phone interview.

Has the pace of Canon Law revision picked up?

“I think Pope Francis has revised more than I expected he would,” she replied. “He has a very pastoral heart, and I didn’t expect that he would be as involved in the law, the legal part. But I think it’s his pastoral heart that has prompted him to do this in many ways — the concern for the faithful, certainly the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.”

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Richmond • Roanoke • Newport News

Msgr. Shreve

Continued from Page 5

two years in Rome studying Canon Law. Bishop Walter F. Sullivan appointed him vicar general of the diocese in 1985 — a position he held for nearly 25 years.

During that time, he continued to work in the tribunal, chaired the diocesan Building and Renovation Committee and served two years as chancellor, but he did it with the mindset of a pastor.

“When I was here (Pastoral Center) as vicar general, I used to walk around the building a couple of days a week just to say hello to people,” Msgr. Shreve recalled. “You’re the ones who make this place work, not me.”

Grateful for good fortune

Reflecting on all that he’s experienced and witnessed — enjoyable and challenging — during his priesthood, he expressed gratitude.

“I think about how fortunate I have been,” he said. “I’ve been blessed health wise.”

As for his priestly journey, he noted how faith and hope in God have been “wrapped together.” He said that when he thinks about priesthood, he thinks about John 13:1-17.

“I think a lot about that — Jesus at the Last Supper instructing the apostles to wash one another’s feet,” Msgr. Shreve said. He also finds solace in the Prayer of St. Theresa of Avila:

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.

“That’s how I treated a lot of difficulties,” he said.

Concerns, perspectives

Having seen the Church from different angles, i.e., as pastor and in diocesan administration, he has concerns about the institution.

“My greatest concern is the divisiveness in the Church, in particular the divisiveness that happens now among the clergy,” Msgr. Shreve said. “You really do have a pretty wide swath of people who are clergy who are in it for the control. It’s power and money. Those destroy anybody who goes after them, whether it’s in Church or not.”

He echoed Pope Francis’ admonitions about clericalism.

“This whole business that ‘I’m better than you are because I’m a priest and don’t you ever forget that’ and ‘Whatever I say, you do’ is so anti-Christ and anti-Church,” Msgr. Shreve said.

“That’s turning a lot of people off.”

He had advice for seminarians.

“Keep in mind why you are here. You are here to prepare for a life of service to people in a parish. You’re here to learn how to celebrate the sacraments in a sensible fashion — to realize these sacraments are for the good of people; they’re not just for you to perform,” Msgr. Shreve said. “They’re life-giving for people. You have to do the best you can to involve them in it so it means something to them.”

He is concerned about how well the laity are integrating faith into their lives.

“I’m concerned about the sense they have

of what Church is all about, what faith is all about, that they see the Church as important, as something vital,” Msgr. Shreve said.

One of the dangers from COVID, according to the priest, was reliance on viewing Mass electronically.

“It’s very easy to say, ‘I can turn it on like another TV show. I can turn it off just as easy,

too,’” he said. “They’re losing sense of where living our faith comes in, the notion that their faith is one of the things that keeps them alive — a living thing that gives direction to their life, whatever their career or profession might be.”

Preferencing his Baltimore Catechism reference as possibly being “a simplistic thing,” Msgr. Shreve asks the catechism’s sixth question: “Why did God make me?” and answers, “To know, love and serve him in this world and to be happy with him in the next.”

He continued, “I’m not sure, in some places, we’re doing such a hot job on the first part, much less to be with him in the next.”

When it comes to their faith, there is at least one thing to which Msgr. Shreve wants people to hold fast.

“That when God says that he loves us, he means it. God is not there waiting to slap us on the knuckles or head for doing something wrong, but he understands the wrong stuff we do and is willing to forgive the wrong,” he said. “Everybody does things that are wrong at times, but you don’t have to stay stuck there.”



Msgr. Thomas Shreve

Joint eucharistic procession is ‘sign of unity,’ healing

DAVE HRBACEK
Catholic News Service

ST. PAUL, Minn. — A stiff southwest wind whipped over the Interstate 94 bridge at Lexington Avenue June 6, as Jesuit Father R.J. Fichtinger of St. Thomas More Parish in St. Paul raised a monstrance holding the Eucharist and offered a blessing for St. Paul’s Rondo neighborhood.

The short stop on the bridge was part of a joint event by St. Thomas More and St. Peter Claver parishes to celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi, the body and blood of Christ.

As he stood looking down at the freeway from the overpass, he was well aware of the fallout that took place more than 50 years ago when a thriving African American community in St. Paul was geographically split by the construction of an interstate highway that many in the community did not want — a move that still stirs emotions today.

Awareness of that history is precisely why the march south from St. Peter Claver to St. Thomas More just over a mile away paused briefly on the bridge: so people could pray for peace and

healing.

“It’s a good drop in the bucket,” Father Fichtinger said of the overpass prayer. “There’s a lot of work that needs to be done, and no single action will be the action that undoes years of challenges and fighting and pain. But it is a good step in the right direction.”

The idea for the two parishes to come together for Mass at St. Peter Claver and a eucharistic procession afterward came from the pastor of St. Peter Claver, Father Erich Rutten, who called the event “a gift of the Holy Spirit.”

“We have been working with St. Thomas More for several years on racial reconciliation,” Father Rutten told The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. “And so, it came to me that this (procession) ... could be a sign of unity. ... It’s for Rondo, but it’s also for our country — for racial reconciliation and peace. We want to just ask the Lord to bless us with unity and peace.”

Dozens of people from both parishes, ranging from toddlers to the elderly, joined the procession, with St. Peter Claver’s Cameroon choir providing lively

music all the way through. It ended on the steps of St. Thomas More, where Father Fichtinger raised the monstrance and blessed the crowd.

“I loved the procession,” said Nicola Alexander of St. Peter Claver, whose daughter joined her and was an altar server at Mass. “It shows the joy. I think it’s about the joy of the body of Christ.”

Two months earlier, the two parishes hosted prayer gatherings during the trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who was convicted of murder April 20 in the death of George Floyd May 25, 2020. The two parishes also have shared book studies and discussion sessions focusing on racial justice. Alexander, who has been a member of St. Peter Claver for the past 21 years, has participated in the discussions.

Teklay Hashel, also a St. Peter Claver parishioner, attended the Mass and procession with his wife and daughter, Inedi, who marched near the front with two other young girls, all of whom wore white dresses. He recalled taking part in eucharistic processions in his native country of

Eritrea, and is glad to be continuing the tradition in the U.S.

He moved to the United States in 1993 and joined St. Peter Claver shortly after he arrived.

“I’m really so happy to see it,” he said of the procession. “It felt like Jesus was with us. ... It was good to see two churches united and celebrated for one aim — for Jesus.”

Father Fichtinger said processing with Catholics from the two parishes was “an incredible experience of just witnessing the body of Christ, being able to see how our one tradition can still unite us, even though we have some cultural differences.”

“There’s so much in our current events that makes us feel helpless,” Father Rutten added. “We don’t know what to do. It (racial injustice) seems bigger than anything we can do.”

But, coming together to pray and bring the Eucharist into the Rondo neighborhood “is a big way to say, ‘Lord, we ask for your blessing, we ask for your power, we ask for your intervention to bring peace and healing,’” he said. “I don’t know what the result of that will be. I just give it to the Lord and ask God’s blessing.”

OPPORTUNITIES

St. Mary Star of the Sea School, Hampton, is seeking applications for teaching and staff positions for the 2021-2022 academic year. Our mission is to educate and form the whole child in virtue and intellect.

Teacher qualifications are: 1) Be an enthusiastic and creative teacher with a minimum of two years of teaching experience; 2) Preference is given to active, practicing Catholics committed to joyfully witnessing the faith to young people; 3) Possess excellent speaking and writing skills and have the same high expectations of students; 4) Have an up-to-date/in-process teaching license.

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For application: <https://www.saintmarystarofthesea.com/about/join-the-mission-employment-opport.cfm>.

Send résumé and cover letter to: admin@saintmarystarofthesea.com.

St. Matthew Catholic Church, in Virginia Beach is seeking a full-time youth minister that will develop and implement a comprehensive ministry to the youth (grades 6-12) of the parish community. This includes faith formation programs, evangelization and community building activities for the youth and young adults. The youth minister will plan and implement Edge for middle school youth as well as LifeTeen for high school students. They will prepare and teach confirmation. The youth minister will be responsible to recruit, train and supervise program volunteers. They will also create and facilitate leadership opportunities for the post-confirmation discipleship team. In addition, the youth minister will update and schedule all social media posts, maintain the parish website and app.

Qualifications: A bachelor's degree in theology, ministry or religious education and one to three years of experience in youth ministry is preferred. The applicant must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. They must also adhere to Catholic teaching and demonstrate a commitment to the Church. This position is full-time and exempt from the overtime/time-keeping provisions of the FLSA and will include weekend hours. Pay is commensurate with experience and in keeping with classifications and guidance from the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.

Interested candidates should send a résumé to Bobbi Lane via email: blane@saintmatts.net.

SHORTAKES

Norfolk Catholic High School Class of 1970, 50 Years (+1) Reunion, weekend of Oct. 22-24, 2021. Contact racmac3@verizon.net or reunion50@groups.io if interested in finding out more information.

Father Nicholas Habets Assembly 1505, the patriotic degree of the Knights of Columbus in Virginia Beach, is hosting the 2021 USO Warrior Classic Golf Tournament at the Sewells Point Golf Course, Friday, Oct. 8. The tournament is open to the public. Net proceeds will be donated directly to the USO-HRCV to support LOCAL programs. For more information, visit <https://birdeasepro.com/2021usowarriorclassic>.

World-Famous Oberammergau Passion Play! St. Therese, Chesapeake, has a few spaces left for a special journey, June 13-23, 2022, to the world-famous Oberammergau Passion Play, as well as Budapest, Vienna, Prague and Munich. Due to the pandemic, the Passion Play, which is held only every 10 years, was moved from 2020 to 2022. Save \$300 if reservation and down payment are made before Friday, April 30. To register or for more information, contact Megan Malhiot at mmalhiot@sttheresechesva.org; 757 488-2553.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Gratitude: Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA recently thanked Bishop Barry C. Knestout and the faithful of the Diocese of Richmond for their \$51,570.58 contribution to the national collection that, among other things, supports priests serving as military chaplains.

Honored: Lydia Madelyn Stumpf and Melania Elaine Lambert, students at St. Bridget School, Richmond, have each received a \$1,000 scholarship from the St. Bridget Knights of Columbus Council 5476 to attend a Catholic high school. They will be attending Saint Gertrude High School this fall.

State's best: Having already earned first place in the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court of the Redeemer's Angels #2456's and the CDA's state art and music contests, respectively, the work of Mercy Grapes and Julia Jacobs, students at St. Mary School, Richmond, has qualified for national competition.

Other Court of the Redeemer's Angels #2456 winners who qualified for state were Caleb Tan, poetry; Cazin School and Timothy Dowdy, essay; Katie Brown, poetry; and Savannah Edge, art. All are St. Mary School students.

Error on the sports editor: In the May 31 What We've Heard, it said that Benedictine College Prep won its second consecutive VISAA Division I state baseball championship. That they did, but they defeated St. Christopher's — not St. Catherine's as reported — 8-7.

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.

Follow the U.S. bishops' meeting

The public sessions of the bishops' spring assembly are scheduled for: Wednesday, June 16, from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, June 17, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; and Friday, June 18, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. They will be livestreamed on the USCCB website — www.usccb.org/meetings.

The vote tallies on the action items, news updates, texts of addresses and presentations and other materials will be available on the USCCB website. Stories from Catholic News Service will be posted on The Catholic Virginian website — www.catholicvirginian.org.

Those wishing to follow the meeting on social media should use the hashtag #USCCB21 and follow on Twitter (@USCCB) as well as on Facebook (www.facebook.com/usccb) and Instagram (<https://instagram.com/usccb>).

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El Papa en la catequesis: debemos ser conscientes de que Jesús reza por nosotros

“Sostenidas en la oración de Jesús, nuestras tímidas oraciones se apoyan en alas de águila y se elevan al cielo”: lo aseguró el Santo Padre en la Audiencia General del miércoles 2 de junio, en su catequesis dedicada a la oración. Francisco exhortó a no olvidar que Jesús reza por nosotros al Padre, “aún en el momento de la prueba y en el momento del pecado”. Debemos “ser conscientes”, pidió el Santo Padre, de que “Jesús reza” por nosotros.

Jesús siempre dispuesto a esperar la conversión del discípulo

Haciendo presente que eligió a sus discípulos tras una noche de oración y diálogo con el Padre, a pesar de los errores y las caídas que ellos mostrarían en el futuro, el Santo Padre puso en evidencia cómo Él esperó “con paciencia” su conversión rogando a Dios por ellos, para que permanezcan a su lado en las pruebas y no pierdan la fe. Esto porque el Maestro, incluso en sus errores y caídas, “así como los recibió del Padre tras Su oración, así los lleva en Su corazón”.

Es impresionante saber que, en el momento del desfallecimiento, el amor de Jesús no cesa. “Pero Padre, si estoy en pecado mortal, ¿el amor de Jesús sigue ahí? – Sí - ¿Y Jesús sigue rezando por mí? - Sí - Pero si he hecho cosas feas y cometido muchos pecados... ¿Jesús sigue amándome? – Sí”. El amor de Jesús, la oración de Jesús por cada uno de nosotros no cesa, no se detiene, al contrario, se hace más intensa y nosotros estamos en el centro de su oración. Esto debemos tenerlo siempre presente: Jesús está rezando por mí, está rezando ahora ante el Padre y le está mostrando las heridas que lleva consigo, para hacer ver al Padre el precio de nuestra salvación. Es el amor que nutre por nosotros.

Rezar intensamente, Jesús no nos abandona

Como escribimos, Jesús espera “con paciencia” la conversión de los discípulos y “ruega” por ellos al Padre, “para que permanezcan a su lado en las pruebas y no pierdan la fe”. Lo hace, recordó el Papa, “en un momento crucial de su camino”, es decir, en la verificación de su fe, cuando les dice: «Y ustedes, ¿quién dicen que soy yo?». Haciendo presente cómo “las grandes decisiones” de la misión de Jesús están siempre precedidas por la oración “intensa y prolongada”, y no por una oración pasajera, afirmó que Él es el “modelo perfecto de la persona que ora”, pero que además “quiere que aprendamos a orar como Él”, enseñándonos “con sus palabras y su ejemplo”.



Siguiendo con el repaso del Evangelio, el Santo Padre señaló que, aunque “la verificación de la fe” de los discípulos parecía ser una meta, fue “un punto de partida renovado” para ellos porque, a partir de entonces, fue como si Jesús “subiera de un tono en su misión”, hablándoles abiertamente de su pasión, muerte y resurrección. Y en esta perspectiva de la Pasión, muerte y Resurrección de Jesucristo, “que suscita instintivamente repulsión, tanto en los discípulos como en nosotros que leemos el Evangelio”, es cuando la oración “es la única fuente de luz y fuerza”. De ahí que, según el Sumo Pontífice, sea necesario “rezar más intensamente, cada vez que el camino se hace cuesta arriba”.

Jesús nos asegura que, aun cuando sentimos que nuestras oraciones parezcan vanas o ineficaces, Él no nos abandona, está siempre a nuestro lado. Reza en nosotros y con nosotros. Intercede a nuestro favor, nos alienta a que perseveremos en la oración, sobre todo en los momentos más difíciles de nuestro camino, porque Su oración es la que hace que nuestras humildes peticiones sean eficaces y lleguen al cielo.

En la manifestación anticipada ante Pedro, Santiago y Juan de la gloria del Señor, que tuvo lugar en la oración (cfr. Lc 9,28-31) surge una “Palabra clara” para los discípulos, a saber, la voz del Padre que les dice: “Este es mi Hijo amado; escúchenlo”. Por eso Francisco recalcó: “de la oración surge la invitación a escuchar a Jesús”, “siempre desde la oración”.

Seamos conscientes, Jesús reza al Padre por nosotros

El Obispo de Roma finalizó su catequesis pidiendo hacer un ejercicio de memoria: recordar que “Jesús reza” por nosotros.

Jesús no sólo quiere que recemos como Él reza, sino que nos asegura que, aunque nuestros intentos de oración fuesen completamente vanos e ineficaces, siempre podemos contar con su oración. Debemos ser conscientes: Jesús reza por mí.

No olvidemos que lo que nos sostiene a cada uno en la vida es la oración de Jesús por cada uno de nosotros, con nombre, apellido, ante el Padre, mostrándole las llagas que son el precio de nuestra salvación.

“Aunque nuestras oraciones fueran sólo balbuceos, si estuvieran comprometidas por una fe vacilante, nunca debemos dejar de confiar en Él: yo no sé cómo rezar, pero Él reza por mí.”

En el salutar a los fieles de lengua española, invitó a pedir al Señor en este mes de junio dedicado al Corazón de Jesús, y también en vísperas celebrar la Solemnidad del Corpus Christi, que nos conceda tener un corazón orante, lleno de confianza y audacia filial, así también como la gracia de permanecer siempre unidos a Él y también unidos entre nosotros por la participación en el sacramento de su Cuerpo y de su Sangre.



How a 93-year-old retired farmer stays fit

SAM LUCERO
Catholic News Service

CHAMPION, Wis. — John Slood, 93, a retired farmer from Winthrop, Minnesota, lives by the adage of his late brother, Vincent, a marathon runner, who preached: “When you get near the end, you have to throw everything out of the closet.”

The adage loses some meaning translated from his native Dutch, but Slood uses the marathon runner’s expression to describe how he maintains his physical activity. The older he becomes, the more active Slood seems to have gotten.

In May, Slood and daughter Bernadette Quist of St. Cloud, Minnesota, took part in the Walk to Mary in the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. They walked the final two miles of the 21-mile pilgrimage from the National Shrine of St. Joseph in De Pere to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion.

According to Pat Deprey, organizer of the May 1 Walk to Mary, Slood was the oldest person to ever participate in the event, held each year (except in 2020) since 2013.

Slood has maintained a healthy lifestyle throughout his senior years — as well as a sense of humor.

“People ask me, ‘How do you do it?’” Slood told The Compass, Green Bay’s diocesan newspaper, in an interview before the Walk to Mary. “I say, ‘I will tell you the secret. Just keep on breathing.’”

When he was in his 70s, Slood said he read in Reader’s Digest about the benefits of jogging. So he decided to start jogging around the yard of his 385-acre farm. “I did it in the yard because we have some old-fashioned neighbors,” he said. “If I’m walking on the road and jogging, he’d think I’m (crazy).”

But after tracking his progress, he decided to jog in public.

“I was doing up to a mile and I felt pretty good. I said, ‘I’m going to go one mile out on the road and then turn around and come back ... and the neighbor can think what he wants,’” he recalled. “I did that day after day.”

Slood said that he jogged two miles every other day for 20 years. “I never in my life felt



John Slood, 93, a retired farmer from Winthrop, Minn., and his daughter Bernadette Quist, left, join other Walk to Mary pilgrims along a rural road near Champion, Wis., May 1, 2021, while praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet. (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass)

better,” he said. “I was so healthy and I could jump out of bed, put my shoes on and do my two miles. No problem. Then I had some health problems and backed off.”

To remain physically active, Slood said, it’s important to have some motivation. “I figure I want to be fit and healthy because I ride horses and, in the winter, I do ice skating,” he said.

Ice skating is a hobby he acquired growing up in Holland. When he was in his 50s, he heard on the radio that Minnesota’s New Ulm Figure Skating Club was looking for new members, so he decided to join.

He performed in community ice skating shows in New Ulm until 2019, when he was 91. Last year’s events were canceled due to COVID-19.

Spiritual health, like physical activity, is important to Slood, a member of St. Francis de Sales Parish in Winthrop. Growing up in Herwen, Holland, he recalls praying the rosary with his family.

“When World War II started and when it got hot near the end ... we were in the cellar every night. We would pray the rosary,” he said.

Slood immigrated to the United States in 1953 at age 25. He settled in Minnesota Lake to work on the farm of a family who had sponsored his move from Holland.

Two years later, he returned to Holland and on Feb. 16, 1955, he married his childhood sweetheart, Minnie.

The Sloods became U.S. citizens in 1964. After renting a farm from their sponsor for 11 years, they bought two farms on 240 acres in Winthrop and later added 145 more acres. They mostly grew corn and soybeans and raised hogs.

John and Minnie raised 11 children on their farm, which they sold to their son, Harry, in 1994. Minnie died in 2015.

“Now I’m a retired farmer, but I still get involved in the farming a little bit,” said Slood. “I spend more time riding a horse than riding a tractor.”

In 2017, Quist accompanied her father to Holland to celebrate his birthday with relatives.

“It was the start of a pilgrimage to Fatima and then to Lourdes,” she said. “That was a time of reuniting with his devotion to the rosary. We would pray the rosary as a family, especially during Christmastime and during Lent, but then after Mom had passed, he said he would like to do this pilgrimage.”

Slood has been one of the rosary leaders at St. Francis de Sales Parish and promotes the devotion to Our Lady of Fatima.

As he reached the finish line at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help with his daughter, Slood said he was sure he could have completed another mile. “But now, we need lunch,” he added.

“A lot of people my age, they walk with walkers and wheels,” Slood said. “I can still walk and jog a little ways. I don’t think I could beat you, but I can give you a run. Life is fun if you make it that way.”

Nun slain by 3 teens in satanic sacrifice beatified as martyr

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A nun who was brutally stabbed in a satanic sacrifice was beatified a martyr June 6 in the northern Italian city where she served.

Pope Francis commended the beatification of Sister Maria Laura Mainetti, a 60-year-old member of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross, after praying the Angelus the same day with visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square.

“She was killed 21 years ago by three young women influenced by a satanic sect. Cruelty. She, who loved young people more than anything, and who loved and forgave those same girls imprisoned by evil, leaves us her program for life: do every little thing with faith,

love and enthusiasm,” the pope said.

The beatification ceremony was held in Chiavenna in the Diocese of Como where Sister Mainetti had been serving as a teacher, catechist and head of her religious community.

Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, presided over the beatification ceremony and Mass. On the altar was a reliquary holding a rock stained with Blessed Mainetti’s blood; the rock was found where she had been killed.

The cardinal said the nun prayed to God for the grace of “true charity,” which means loving God more than oneself and loving others as much as oneself.

Born Aug. 20, 1939, near Milan, she felt called to a religious voca-

tion after a priest told her, “You must do something wonderful for other people.”

She began teaching in 1960 at elementary schools run by her congregation in different cities in Italy. She dedicated her life to helping those excluded by society, particularly drug addicts, juvenile delinquents, the poor and sex workers.

Her killers were three teenage girls who knew Sister Mainetti from catechism class when they were younger. The young women wanted to sacrifice a religious person for Satan, according to their testimony in court, and chose the sister, rather than the parish priest, because she was slender and easier to attack.

The three girls had planned to stab her six times each to indicate

the biblical “number of the beast” on June 6, 2000, the sixth day of the sixth month.

When they ambushed and attacked her, she prayed for the girls, asking that God forgive them.

The young women were found guilty of murder, but they were given reduced sentences because the court determined they were partially insane at the time of the crime. They have since been released from prison and given new identities, living in different Italian cities.

In June 2020, the pope recognized the martyrdom of Sister Mainetti as someone killed “in hatred of the faith.” While a miracle attributed to a candidate’s intercession is not needed for beatification as a martyr, a miracle is required for canonization.