



The Catholic Virginian

Serving the People of the Diocese of Richmond for 90 years

Vol. 96, No. 21

www.catholicvirginian.org

August 9, 2021

Close-to-home mission trip helps Newport News residents

St. Jerome parishioners serve own community

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

Seeing God in everything: In everyone. In every place. All the time.

Such was the theme for this year's mission trip at St. Jerome Parish, Newport News. Forty-eight parishioners, 27 of whom were youth and young adults, spent nearly a week in July helping impoverished people in the city, and they were challenged to notice God everywhere.

Delaine Botelho, mission trip coordinator, said that while adults participated in the mission, organizers were particularly interested in recruiting youth – which included rising sixth graders.

Over the past 20 years, hundreds of St. Jerome parishioners have gone on mission trips, first to West Virginia and a few years later to Buckingham County.

Botelho said youth on mission trips are normally away from their homes for a week, are stripped of their electronics and thrust out of their comfort zones so they can focus on serving others, building community, beginning and strengthening friendships and living their faith.

Tammy Castagna, kitchen leader and core team member, said the youth “need to get unplugged and get outside of their own world and just see how other people live and how just little things can make a difference in someone else’s life.”

They’ve made such an impact on the community over the years that Buckingham County issued a proclamation that the parish’s service week will be “St. Jerome’s Mission Week,” said Max Lindsey, core team member who helped establish the ministry in 2001.

See Service, Page 11



Members of a mission trip team at St. Jerome, Newport News, remove and replace a rotted porch column at a residence in their community on Friday, July 9. From left are Andrew Lombardi, Tommy Harrington, Leonardo Barreto and Hally Hallare. (Photo/Rich Arnold)

Bishops’ agency helping resettle Afghan translators

Commonwealth Catholic Charities assisting at Fort Lee

CAROL ZIMMERMANN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and its Migration and Refugee Services “are proud to have the opportunity to welcome and assist those who have kept Americans safe in Afghanistan,” said the USCCB president and the chairman of the bishops’ migration committee July 30.

Other agencies resettling these newcomers include Catholic Charities USA and other non-governmental organizations.

“By working with the United States, each of these individuals has put their lives and those of their family and friends at risk. As they now leave everything behind to begin new lives here, the many sacrifices they’ve made should not go unacknowledged,” the two prelates said.

The statement was issued by Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, USCCB president, and Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of

Washington, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Migration.

Locally, Commonwealth Catholic Charities (CCC) and other non-profit organizations are assisting the U.S. government in relocating Afghan nationals who are in the final stages of approval for special immigrant visas (SIV) and seeking refuge in the United States.

“Commonwealth Catholic Charities is proud to support these brave men and women who have worked side-by-side with our soldiers and diplomats, risking their lives and contributing so much,” said CCC CEO Jay Brown. “It is a privilege to be part of the effort to provide them with a warm, hospitable welcome as they reestablish lives here in the United States.”

In the coming days, special immigrant applicants and their immediate family members will arrive at Fort Lee in Virginia where CCC and community partners will assist with completing paperwork, coordinating appointments, and

providing childcare.

“I am most grateful for the work of Commonwealth Catholic Charities as they partner with the government and other agencies to provide safe relocation and resettlement for those individuals who supported the U.S. government,” said Bishop Barry C. Knestout.

“CCC’s work is well known for its long history of welcoming families fleeing violence and persecution. I am proud of CCC’s effort as they give witness to the Gospel (Mt. 25:35) to see Christ in the stranger and to welcome them with compassion, dignity and hospitality.

“Within our diocese, we recognize this good work,” continued Bishop Knestout, “as Pope Francis calls us to be a Church that reaches out to the periphery — especially for those who are most vulnerable.”

According to The Associated Press, a flight landed just after midnight July 30 at Dulles In-

See Assist, Page 11

Inside This Edition

Jubilant’s ministry focuses on healing the broken
Page 2

How to market your parish effectively
Page 5

Senate support for Hyde Amendment protections needed
Page 12

The Catholic Virginian
7800 Carousell Lane
Richmond, VA 23294

Jubilant's ministry focuses on healing the broken

Msgr. Muench has served in tribunal for 31 years

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

For Msgr. R. Francis Muench, his 40 years of priesthood have been, among other things, a time of discovering what works and doesn't work in his life.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, his call to priesthood was to the Benedictines. They served his home parish, his uncle was a Benedictine and they taught at the high school he attended.

"I liked the common prayer and work of the community," he said.

For six years prior to and following ordination on May 2, 1981, he taught in the Benedictines' Delbarton School — a boys' residential middle and high school in Morristown, New Jersey.

"I taught religion to juniors, English to freshmen," he said, adding with a laugh, "and for my sins, advanced placement music theory to seniors. Perhaps I discovered I was not the best teacher."

'Come and see'

Following what Msgr. Muench termed "a falling out" with the headmaster at Delbarton, the Benedictines sent him to Rome in 1982 where he earned a licentiate in Canon Law at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas. Returning to Delbarton in 1986, he chaired the religion department for two years, followed by two years as director of the school library.

Even though he wanted to stay with the Benedictines, he began wondering if he was being called to something else. None of the ideas he wanted to try and which he presented to the abbot worked out.

"I began to wonder if community life was where I was meant to be," Msgr. Muench said. "The community had been nothing but gracious and generous, so the problem was me — in the sense you think that if you take 15 years to figure something out, I'm a slow learner."

During a retreat at St. Anselm in Washington, the abbot asked him, "Have you ever thought about Richmond?" He hadn't, but when the priest wrote to the diocese in 1990, "Bishop (Walter F.) Sullivan himself wrote back, 'Come and see.' So I did."

What attracted Msgr. Muench to the Diocese of Richmond was that there was a need for priests, something, he said, that was not so obvious with dioceses in the Northeast at that time.

"It was not a matter of 'I'll save you, Nell,' like something out of Dudley Do-Right, but more, 'Let's see what happens. Let's see if it works,'" he said.

"For me the confessional is much more like the work in tribunal. It's a place where you hope people will come seeking healing. You hope carrying out the Lord's ministry of forgiving makes a difference for them."

— Msgr. R. Francis Muench

In Richmond, Msgr. Muench was assigned to a parish (St. Augustine) and the Marriage Tribunal.

"I was weekend help, but I had never been assigned to a parish. I taught but had never just been there with people. With Canon Law, I never dealt with parishes," he said. "I had been ordained nine years, but it (being in the Diocese of Richmond) was all new."

Healing for the broken

Msgr. Muench has served in the tribunal for 31 years, first as defender of the bond, then as a judge, adjutant judicial vicar and, since 2007, judicial vicar. He was also episcopal vicar for the Eastern Vicariate (2005-2011) and, since 2011, episcopal vicar for the Central Vicariate.

He sees his work in the tribunal as an opportunity to bring healing to people who are broken.

"Outside of confession, it is a place where people can, in the context of a confidential hearing, attempt to look at something that was meant to be a very beautiful point in their lives, but whether they perceived it or not at the beginning, it was something very problematic," Msgr. Muench said, adding that it might have taken months or years for that problem to have played out.

He likened the rewarding part of tribunal work to Simon of Cyrene in helping people carry the cross, noting that the tribunal provides people with "a chance to find God again after they've been disappointed."

"That may sound arrogant, but it's just the chance to look at their lives and, despite the fact that a judgment is issued at the end of the process, it's not judgmental," Msgr. Muench said. "Hopefully, we send them away with at least a little more peace of mind, not necessarily happy, but maybe a little more peace. That's our prayer anyway."

Parish ministry provides balance

During his time in the Diocese of Richmond, Msgr. Muench has served as pastor at St. Rose of Lima, Hampton (1994-1998); St. Pius X, Norfolk (1998-2005); Prince of Peace, Chesapeake (2005-2007); and St. Mary of the Annunciation, Ladysmith (2011-2012). He said parish ministry "provides a real balance."

"You might imagine if you're doing (tribunal work) that when people come in, it's in brokenness and upset all the time," he said. "In pastoral work you see the full gamut of families — the happy, the sad, every moment of life."

He drew a similarity between the two aspects of his ministry.

"For me the confessional is much more like the work in tribunal," Msgr. Muench said. "It's a place where you hope people will come seeking healing."

You hope carrying out the Lord's ministry of forgiving makes a difference for them."

Moving toward the ideal

That the sacrament has fallen into disuse is "a real sorrow" for Msgr. Muench.

"The real challenge of being a Catholic is that we always posit ideals and working toward the ideal. From the pulpit, you're going to talk about the ideals, often tempered with some experience, as to why we need to move or how we might move," he said. "In the confessional, you can deal with the essential holiness of people moving toward that even though that at a certain point they seem pretty much stuck."

Msgr. Muench isn't sure how to bring people back to the sacrament, but he would like them to "come and seek."

"You hope that the people are not jaded or jaundiced, that they will continue to see the efforts that continue to be made — in spite of our failings and our foolishness," he said.

Msgr. Muench said Romans 8:35-39, in which St. Paul writes about what can separate people from the love of God, needs to be emphasized.

"That is the message we can bring to people and to keep repeating because there's always going to be somebody who's going to do the dichotomous thing: 'We're safe, you're not' or 'What does any of it matter because after all, it won't make any difference,'" he said. "Well, you can look around the Church, and in the Church, and see plenty who speak to those kinds of things. But if you believe in the grace of God and you recognize your own shortcomings then you can say, with St. Paul, 'But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been ineffective'" (1 Cor 15:10).

'God makes something out of the damage'

Asked about the path of the last 40 years that has included community life as a religious,

diocesan priesthood, teaching, advanced studies and service to the diocese and parishes, Msgr. Muench replied with a laugh, "I don't recommend the via negativa (the negative way) as the way of going through your life — the Old Testament experience of seeing the presence of God but you don't recognize

it until after the fact. It feels like that's been the story of my life, like the road to Emmaus in the sense that after he stopped talking to you, 'Oh yeah, that must have been him.'"

He said that those experiences can be helpful to and relatable for people who hear about them.

"It's nice to have one of the plaster saint priests who has the obvious sanctity and who seems to have it all together, glistening and brightly shining. And then you get somebody who comes along and looks like a dented fire hydrant with all the things hydrants have happen to them and you say, 'Oh,

See Msgr. Muench, Page 5



Msgr. R. Francis Muench



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

Bishop Knestout's column is scheduled to return in September.

Jubilant doing what God has planned for him

Father Ssebalamu says being present to people 'is my purpose'

KAREN ADAMS

Special to The Catholic Virginian

While growing up in central Uganda, a boy named Charles witnessed how his parents, George and Immaculate, planted seeds of faith in their eight children by serving their Catholic parish and walking with their family to daily Mass.

That child, their eldest – now known as Father Charles Ssebalamu, pastor of St. Jude, Christiansburg – celebrated 25 years of priesthood on Aug. 3.

Besides the powerful faith example of his parents, Father Ssebalamu said, the community spirit of his hometown of Kyotera guided him toward his vocation.

"In Uganda, a child doesn't belong to just one family; many people support the child," he reflected. "I was no exception. I was supported by many people."

He recalled the family's daily walks to church, about two miles away, and how that taught him the importance of making time each day for worship.

"I developed a special admiration for priests and the priesthood at an early age," recalled Father Ssebalamu, now 55.

After three years of specialized training, his father, a farmer, also is an assistant to the parish priest as a catechist — "the next best thing to being a priest," Father Ssebalamu said. Both of his parents had once hoped to enter religious life when they were younger.

"By taking us every day to Mass, that helped me to love it," Father Ssebalamu said. "They instilled in me a love for that vocation that they missed."

'This is my purpose'

Young Charles eventually became an altar server, often returning home to "play Mass" with his siblings. "I would make pretend vestments and altar cloths out of plantain leaves and would gather my siblings to be my congregation for Mass," he recounted.

He was deeply impressed by the parish priests who visited people near and far, often by motorcycle.

"When I was very young, I wanted to be a priest so I could ride a motorcycle," he said with a laugh. "They would ride to different places, anointing people."

As he got older, he watched how the priests cared for people, a holy way of life that became more important than motorcycles.

"They were very loving, and that touched me," he said. "Also, they were friendly to us kids. They took care of people, visiting and comforting them. To watch someone give their time to people is inspiring, even to children."

For the past 25 years, Father Ssebalamu said, he has tried to emulate those priests.

"Being present with people is critical," he said. "Even if you are tired, when you are with someone, you find the energy to listen to them. This is my purpose."

Pastoral life: 'the zeal to serve'

Since his ordination in 1996, Father Ssebalamu has served in a variety of places. He began in the rural Ugandan parish of Lwebitakuli for two years, followed by 13 years as priest secretary for the late Bishop John Baptist Kaggwa.

He was then asked to come to the United States, to join Father John Kazibwe and Father

Matthias Lusembo in the Diocese of Richmond. Father Francis Xavier Musolooza, now pastor of Christ the King, Abingdon, and Bishop Kaggwa accompanied him to Virginia.

His first assignment was as parochial vicar for the cluster parishes of Good Shepherd, South Hill; St. Catherine of Siena, Clarksville; and St. Paschal Baylon, South Boston, working with Father Kazibwe as his pastor.

"It was a lot of fun," Father Ssebalamu said.

Following that, he was assigned as parochial vicar at St. Bede, Williamsburg, working with Msgr. Michael McCarron and Father Sean Prince. He later became pastor of the cluster parishes of Good Shepherd, Lebanon; St. Therese, St Paul; and St. Mary, Coeburn, while serving as chaplain for the Catholic Campus Ministry at the University of Virginia – Wise.

Since 2016, Father Ssebalamu has been pastor of St. Jude, Christiansburg, as well as chaplain for the Catholic Campus Ministry at Radford University. He also was recently appointed chaplain for St. John Neumann Academy in Blacksburg.

"St. Jude and the CCM are known for their welcoming spirit, and they welcomed me and accepted me," he said, adding that the students have inspired him with their dedication to the Catholic faith and their eagerness for the sacraments. They have kept him energized with "the zeal to serve."

After 25 years, he noted: "I owe it all to God's graciousness and to all the people who have journeyed with me."

God's help in difficult times

Throughout the years and through many changes, Father Ssebalamu's faith has been his rock.

"In any walk of life, even the priesthood,

you find challenges," he said.

One dark time was when news of the abuse scandals in the Catholic Church began to emerge.

"Those were such challenging moments for me, but God helped me to be strong and to remember who I am serving," he said. "There are so many holy priests in the Church, and people were very supportive."

Another difficult time was during the shutdown due to the COVID pandemic.

"I had never been by myself, celebrating Mass on a Sunday and being in the church all alone," he said. "That was so strange. But I felt God was there with me, and I felt the faith of all the people who were watching Mass from home."

In good times and bad, he said, "It has always been God's love and mercy that have held me up."

'Always pray'

His main piece of advice to everyone: "Always pray."

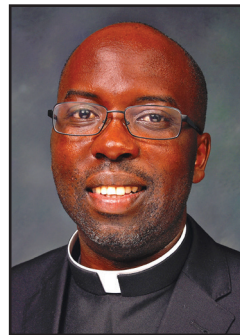
Prayer gives people strength and encouragement in all things, he said. Most of all, it's a way to simply be with God.

"It's a conversation with the Lord," he said. "Even if you don't pray traditional prayers, you talk with your God as you talk to a friend."

A rich prayer life, his own and others', helped lead him to his vocation.

"A strong devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to the Uganda Martyrs have really helped me in my greatest joy of serving the people," he said, noting that he was named after Charles Lwanga, one of the 22 Ugandan Martyrs who died in 1886.

"We must always remember that God has a plan for our life," he said. "We may not always know what it is, but God knows. He has a plan."



Father Ssebalamu

IN MEMORIAM

Father Louis 'Lou' William Ruoff



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Thursday, Aug. 5, at St. Mary, Richmond, for Father Louis "Lou" William Ruoff. Father Ruoff, 75, died unexpectedly Monday, July 26, while recuperating

from recent heart surgery.

A native of Philadelphia, Father Ruoff was orphaned as an infant and adopted into the family of George and Anna Ruoff. Following studies at Shippensburg State College, Father Ruoff began discerning a vocation to the priesthood and joined a religious community.

He became a seminarian for the Diocese of Richmond in 1980, studying at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore where he earned a Master of Divinity degree. Bishop Walter F. Sullivan ordained him a priest in 1984.

For the next 32 years, Father Ruoff served as an associate pastor, administrator and pastor at 12 parishes throughout the diocese. In 2016, at age 70 and having completed 10 years as pastor of St. Ann, Colonial Heights, he retired from active ministry.

Father Ruoff, a tough, tenacious and tender man, will be remembered for a very generous spirit, his love for the poor and an intense commitment to redeem the world from war and injustice. He loved to teach and preach, write and publish. Feverish about newspapers and the daily news, Father Ruoff daily challenged the news of violence, deceit and corruption with Gospel's "Good News" of integrity, honesty and reconciliation.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Human Concerns Ministry of St. Mary Church, 9505 Gayton Road, Richmond 23229.

Father Ruoff will be buried next to his parents in Roslyn, Pennsylvania, at a later date.

Permanent diaconate inquiry sessions planned for fall

Next cohort will include new academic component, more pastoral work

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

“We’re taking it to a different level” might sound like a slogan professional sports teams would employ to promote optimism to potential season ticket buyers. But in the Diocese of Richmond, that is the mindset and goal of Deacon John Kren, director of the Office for the Permanent Diaconate, as he prepares to form the next cohort of men studying for the permanent diaconate.

What Deacon Kren calls “the start of a revamp” in formation for the permanent diaconate includes a “more intense” academic component — “We’ll be more focused on the spiritual and pastoral sides,” with an increase in the number of retreats and pastoral projects.

“We are investigating the beginning of a new academic program. We’re leaving St. Leo College and going to Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology,” he said. Twelve (arch)dioceses in the United States have Saint Meinrad provide the academic component for the formation of its permanent deacons.

First step

Men who might have a calling to ordained service to the Church and the bishop as a permanent deacon, and who are interested in discerning that calling while learning about the commitment it involves, are invited to contact their pastors.

This is the first step in the diaconate office’s process for establishing a new cohort of men to be formed for service as permanent deacons.

After a brief meeting with a man who expresses interest, the pastor will forward his name and contact information to the Office for the Permanent Diaconate by Friday, Sept. 24.

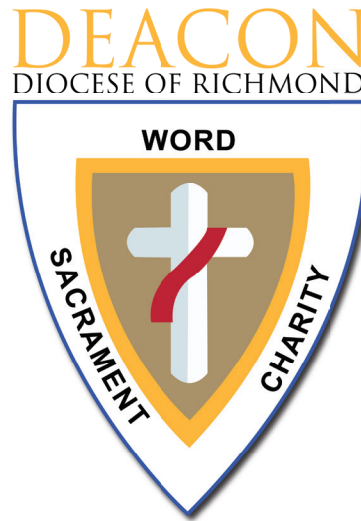
“We are setting up information sessions — one each in October, November and December,” Deacon Kren said. “These meetings will address what the diaconate is, what are the responsibilities of the deacon and what is involved in the formation program.”

If the number of those expressing interest warrants it, three meetings will be held in each of the diocese’s three vicariates.

At each of the two-hour meetings, Deacon Kren will speak, as will the vicariate deacons — Michael Johnson, Eastern; Chris Malone, Central; and Michael Ellerbrock, Western. In addition, Deacon Kren will invite deacons from each vicariate to be present for one-on-one conversations with attendees.

Ongoing discernment

“Between those sessions the man would be asked to continue praying about this calling, establish a habit of attending Mass and talk to his wife about the diaconate because it impacts them and their



family,” Deacon Kren said. “The spouses of married men are expected to attend the meetings.”

That impact comes in the form of what he termed “a large time commitment” one makes to the formation program.

“It commits that person and his wife and family and impacts them for the next four to five years,” Deacon Kren said.

He noted that the last time the office held the inquiry sessions, 70 men came forward for the initial meeting.

“After the inquiry meetings, the cohort started with 20,” Deacon Kren said.

Basic qualifications

Qualifications for formation to the permanent diaconate include, but are not limited to the following:

- A Roman Catholic for a minimum of five years at time of application;
- Registered parishioner within the Diocese of Richmond for five years at the time of application, and active in the parish community;
- Between the ages of 30 and 59 at the time of application;
- Committed to and living out values of justice, charity and service;
- Demonstrates grateful fidelity to all that the Church teaches, openness to formation and has demonstrated leadership.

Process continues

Following the initial inquiry, those who are interested in continuing their discernment will be asked to “capture their spiritual journey” in writing.

A group will review it, those discerning will be interviewed, and formation teams will start meeting with them.

“With those who move beyond that, we start the application process,” Deacon Kren said. “The candidate will be screened by a canon lawyer, complete psychological tests and, if married, he and his spouse will meet with a professional counseling service for an evaluation of their marriage.”

Depending upon when the academic component will begin, those who have applied will know by Aug. 22, 2022, or Dec. 22, 2022, if they have been accepted for formation.

UPCOMING

Foster the GOOD

A LUNCH SPEAKER SERIES

AUGUST 24, 2021

Deacon Frank Nelson, Holy Rosary-Richmond
“A Christian Response to Suicide Prevention and Intervention”

This talk will identify suicide information and statistics among various groups in the United States and explore pastoral responses toward prevention and intervention.

OCTOBER 26, 2021

Chris West, Catholic Relief Services
“Understanding Migration: Push & Pull Factors & the Catholic Response”

This talk will look at some of the factors that compel people to leave their homes, the impact of migration on families, and how the Church through CRS is intervening to improve the lives of our sisters and brothers. We will also look at how participation in CRS’ Lead the Way on Migration campaign will offer actions that we can take to have a positive impact for people on the move.

LEARN MORE AT EVANGELIZERICHMOND.ORG

SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

Jay Brown, CEO, Commonwealth Catholic Charities
“Housing to Respect Life and Protect the Family”

Learn about how Commonwealth Catholic Charities innovative Seton Housing Project promotes life affirming decisions for women facing crisis or unintended pregnancies. Using an evidence-based intervention, CCC supports women making the decision to parent or adopt through permanent housing and supportive services.

DECEMBER 2, 2021

Dr. Ed Sri, theologian, author and well-known Catholic speaker
“How to Defend the Faith without Losing People & How to Teach Others to Do So”

As parish staff members & volunteers, we are often put into positions of being asked hot-button questions about why the Church believes, teaches, or acts a certain way. It can be hard to know how to balance truth & pastoral sensitivity in the moment! In this presentation, we will consider techniques for how to answer these tough questions without losing people as well as how to help teach others how to do so.

Emphasize loyalty to God in marketing your parish

Invitation to join Church must be precise, consistent to be effective

MARK PATTISON
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — How do you market somebody you can't even take a lunch with?

Fortunately, if you remember the Baltimore Catechism, there's no need for lunch since God, after all, is "everywhere."

But another issue persists in religious circles. How do you advertise God, and your church, without coming off like some kind of huckster? Talk about a camel passing through the eye of a needle!

Some take umbrage to "the idea of marketing God," but "the point of marketing is to help create loyalty, and we need to create people who are more and more loyal to God," said Donna A. Heckler, who has written a book called "Marketing God: Inspired Strategies for Building the Kingdom," published by Our Sunday Visitor.

Heckler, who was long the brand manager for Energizer batteries — think "bunny" — shares in the book some secrets from the world of brand marketing on how to get people to join your church and your parish, and to keep them there.

"You have to be precise in your promise and you have to consistently say it over and over and over again," Heckler told Catholic News Service in a July 21 phone interview from Venice, Florida, where she now advises a handful of parishes, as well as Ave Maria Law School, on marketing matters.

But what's this about a promise? "Instead of the word 'brand,' which is what we say (in the marketing milieu), we would use 'promise,'" she replied. "What do we say? What's your promise? Make it compelling, make it simple."

Heckler added, "It really is a promise: What is the promise of the parish to the parishioners? How is the parish going to bring the parishioners closer to God?"

"You cannot be loyal if it's not available. You have to know that a particular product or service — God — is available. You need to try it. You need to try Mass. You need to try God, you need to try God on. And you need to do that over and over again. And then you become loyal to it."

— Donna A. Heckler

More than a slogan

Snazzy slogans are one thing, but Heckler said she looks for three things in a marketing campaign.

"It has to be meaningful" to the person you're trying to reach, she said. "It's got to be motivating. And it has to be relevant in their lives. If you talk about the thing that's not meaningful to them or relevant to them, it's not going to motivate them." The kiss of death in marketing, according to Heckler, is that "you don't want to put something out there and not have anybody do anything about it."

How long should a parish stick with its marketing plan? "One of the challenges that we see in marketing in general," she said, is that "those who work in a company or those who work in a parish get tired of the message far earlier than anyone. So they shift from message to message," diluting its impact.

"If you can identify a core promise. The core promise of what you do and how you're going to risk them with that, and you use God well and consistently over several years, these messages will build on each other," she said.

Yes, years.

"Most people are so busy they don't really pay attention to these messages," she added. "If you put something in the bulletin one day

and you don't mention it again for three months, it's in one ear and out the other."

Parishes need a campaign that lasts several years "because it's now permeating their consciousness," Heckler said.

Brand loyalty for God

There is a path to creating brand loyalty, even when that brand is God, according to Heckler.

"You cannot be loyal if it's not available," she said. "You have to know that a particular product or service — God — is available. You need to try it. You need to try Mass. You need to try God on," she added. "And you need to do that over and over again. And then you become loyal to it."

Heckler didn't even need to have lunch with God to come up with the idea for "Marketing God." It was just the power of prayer.

"After Mass, you always say the rosary. After saying the rosary, this thought came to me: 'If you can make people loyal to batteries, why can't you make

them loyal to me?'"

Heckler said, "We can bring some things if we removed the veneer of money, money, money" that deters many suspicious people from considering God, equating it with a cash grab by the clergy. In fact, she added, "to me, marketing is possible without the enormous expenditure" common in today's advertising campaigns.

"Where do you start? For me, you start at the smallest common denominator, and I see that as the parish. It may be in a particular (parish) ministry," Heckler told CNS.

"Marketing starts with understanding a few things. One is understanding what your target audience is. If we don't understand who the parishioner is," she said, "it's going to be difficult to engage with them. Loyalty begins at the parish. We would ultimately see, down the road, all the parishes are going to ladder up, ultimately, to God."

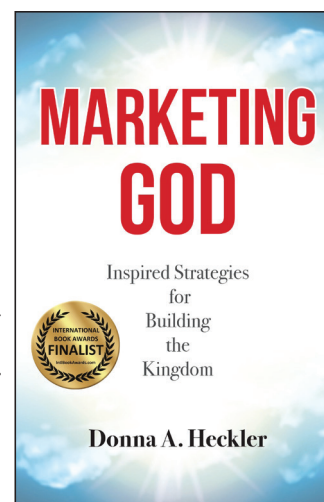
Heckler acknowledged that marketing is not a typical seminary class. "There's just not a lot of

course work and information. But I will also say that because of COVID, there are some universities and some organizations (that can provide marketing education). Are they certificate programs, are there ways we can help our staff be more effective?"

She added, "I'm just one person. The issue is bigger. Our parishes don't know what to do."

If a pastor understands the need for marketing, "it makes it so much easier," Heckler said. "I will say this is new for parishes. They have

not had to think about this before but COVID has forced a reconsideration of we engage."



In "Marketing God: Inspired Strategies for Building the Kingdom," Donna A. Heckler offers a crash course in corporate strategies critical for faith-based organizations. (CNS photo/courtesy Our Sunday Visitor)

Msgr. Muench

Continued from Page 2

why did they send us that?" he said. "Well, maybe Lazarus meant more when he came out of the tomb than when he went in."

Msgr. Muench said that the older people get, they like to know that somebody has been through the same thing in their life.

"I have not experienced the loss of a child or the failure of a marriage, but I can say I have

experienced the failure of one's perception of a vocation," he said. "You hope God is able to make something out of the damage one has created."

'Blessed'

The Eucharist, prayer and reading of Scripture — "and not just the parts that are in the missal and the Liturgy of the Hours," he said — fortify Msgr. Muench.

"There's a lot there that's instructive, and you go back to them time and time again, knowing

that every time you hit them, the same passages hit you differently," he said.

As for those who have helped him throughout his life, especially during his priesthood, Msgr. Muench, citing family, friends, mentors, colleagues, the people in parishes and the tribunal, said, "I've been blessed. I couldn't have done better if I were chasing around for some kind of misplaced perfection. A lot of people showed me what that could be."

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

'Trad' movement misrepresented

Re: "Why Pope is restricting use of pre-Vatican II Mass" (Catholic Virginian, July 26):

I am 26 years old and started attending the Traditional Latin Mass (TLM) every Sunday a year ago. Archbishop Di Noia has massively misrepresented the "Trad" movement.

The archbishop quoted Pope Francis as saying that his predecessors intended that the TLM be celebrated in order to "correct abuses" in the Novus Ordo, but this is an admission that the TLM is better than the new Mass in some way.

However, simultaneously both men regard those who attend the TLM as quasi-schismatic rebels. By this they implicitly admit that the Novus Ordo is a drastic break from the TLM, which is somehow bad. But why must we break with it, on pain of schism?

Did the Church get its Lex Orandi wrong for well over a thousand years, and thus fail to preserve the faith, then suddenly "get it right" after Vatican II?

Both of these men tacitly admit that post-Vatican II Catholicism is a break from the faith of the past, and that the legitimacy of a liturgy is determined by the whims of the hierarchy, instead of by its status as part of tradition. That is why "Trad" cling to the TLM. It is the well-loved heritage passed on to us from ancient times.

Where did Vatican II call for an overhaul of the Mass? That is what the new Mass is, and both of these men just assume that the council wanted an entirely new Mass.

– John Mason
Lynchburg

Editor's note: What the bishops of Vatican II decided regarding the Mass can be found in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy <https://bit.ly/sacrosanctum-concilium>

Worshipping at TLM not cause for disunity

The Catholic Virginian (July 26) featured two articles on "Traditiones Custodes" concerning the Traditional Latin Mass (TLM). TLM impacts my priestly ministry by having a better awareness of Christ's sacrifice and using the same liturgical rite that generations of saints have used. These

articles overlook the genuine reasons why Catholics go to the TLM and how fruitful this liturgical expression is.

TLM has shown me an increasing number of reverent and welcoming communities who worship this way. People worship at the TLM not out of bitterness but rather out of an immense love of Jesus Christ and the Church. Parishioners of TLM parishes embrace the Church's teachings, its councils and traditional forms of piety.

Why all the interest in the TLM? The rubrics of the TLM have limited options and provide a stability people invest in. The theocentric emphasis of the TLM brings lapsed Catholics back to the faith, helps individuals mature in the spiritual life and increases zeal to share the Good News. These reasons show the TLM to be a great source for evangelization and motivation to grow in the spiritual life.

Catholics worshipping at the TLM is not cause for disunity. Holy Mother Church has multiple liturgical rites found in the Eastern Catholic Churches and multiple rites within the Latin Church. While most Catholics are familiar with the Roman Missal promulgated by St. Paul VI, there are other liturgical rites that unite Catholics together. These various liturgical rites unite us to the one eternal liturgy.

I encourage everyone to view the upcoming documentary "Mass of the Ages" by Cameron O'Hearn to answer questions regarding the TLM.

– Rev. James P. O'Reilly,
Parochial Vicar
St. Bridget, Richmond

Don't give up on Latin Mass

My heart grieves at the current mindset in the Church, from the Vatican down, to restrict and foreseeably eliminate the Tridentine Mass. How many even knew that it existed?

The Latin Mass has for centuries defined us as Catholics. Its beauty, awe, knowledge, reverence, and yes, tradition, will be lost! Should it be given up so easily?

Have you ever wondered why the Mass was said in Latin? Latin was considered a unifying factor, but, even more so, a holy language – one of the four found on



the cross, which our Lord suffered and died on for us. Jesus made it a holy language for it was present with him during his crucifixion and death.

Take time to research the Tridentine Rite. Look for the differences and the similarities. Ask yourself why the changes were made and should they have been. Did the changes bring unity, or did they cause a huge rift bringing hurt and confusion still present and growing in our Church.

Pope Francis' restricting proclamation is supposed to bring unity but is actually destroying what little unity was left in the wake of Vatican II. Our true unity as Catholics prior to Vatican II was the traditional Mass – not an ecumenical, watered down "celebration."

Pray hard and know what we are being told to give up. A huge spiritual battle is culminating. Will the Mass bring the blessings and necessary graces from God to prevent the loss of so many souls?

– Marijo Heitman
Chesapeake

Seeks clarification about reception of the Eucharist

Regarding the USCCB's debate regarding a eucharistic document and several related letters to the editor: Three issues have not heretofore been articulated:

First is the sin of scandal that is at the forefront of the discussion regarding elected officials who are also Catholics. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil" (CCC 2284).

Especially serious is scandal caused by persons

with authority over those led into sin. Elected officials who vote for legislation that permits immorality in such forms as abortion and embryonic stem cell research are guilty of scandal and are responsible for all the sins committed as a result.

Second, for those who use the argument that a politician should not bring their religion into their political representation, being Catholic is succinctly expressed by the profession of faith that is recited at every Mass.

We cannot parse ourselves from our faith out of convenience; one is or is not a practicing Catholic. The free will choice is a God-given right that comes with consequences.

Finally, the Code of

Canon Law states, "A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate Mass or receive the body of the Lord without previous sacramental confession unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess" (CL 916).

I look forward to the USCCB articulating any clarification as to what is required to present oneself for receiving the Eucharist.

– Robert "Scott" Jack II
Mineral

Pray for the bishops

It used to rightly be taught that reception of the Eucharist in mortal sin is sacrilege. Yet politicians promoting the slaughter of innocents thumb their nose

See Letters, Page 7

CV letters policy

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

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

Publisher: Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout

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

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

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

Eastern Correspondents: Wendy Klesch and Jennifer Neville

Western Correspondents: Karen Adams and Joseph Staniunas

Central Correspondents: Kristen L. Byrd and Rose Morrisette

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

Pilgrimage links churches' past to present, future

Catholic News Service

SIOUX RAPIDS, Iowa — Parishioners and supporters braved hot and humid weather with a heat index close to 100-plus degrees to participate in an almost 100-mile pilgrimage to recognize the sacrifice made by previous congregations.

In preparation for the September dedication of a new church in Sioux Center, Iowa, walkers and riders took part in the Christ the King Cross-Carrying Pilgrimage over a five-day period, July 27-31, trekking anywhere from 14 to 24 miles each day.

The newest church for the Diocese of Sioux City, Iowa, is the culmination of about eight years of evaluation and assessment of the needs of a burgeoning congregation in Sioux Center, while surrounding churches were experiencing a decline in congregant numbers, paired with a shortage of priests.

Ministry 2025, pastoral planning for the Diocese of Sioux City, was implemented in 2016 to address parish vibrancy.



Gene Bartels drives a tractor carrying a crucifix from Sacred Heart Church in Laurens, Iowa, July 29, 2021, to the new Christ the King Church in Sioux Center, set to be dedicated in September. Father Doug Klein, Christ the King's pastor, and parishioners are seen walking what was a 24-mile leg of a 100-mile pilgrimage through rural Buena Vista County. Walkers and riders took part in the Christ the King Cross-Carrying Pilgrimage over a five-day period, July 27-31, carrying items to the new church. (CNS photo/Jerry L. Mennenga)

cy. About 40 churches in small towns and rural areas moved to oratory status or were closed over the next several years.

According to Father Doug Klein, pastor of Christ the King Parish, which includes the church in Sioux Center and St. Mary Church in Rock Valley, Iowa, the pilgrimage aspect was important, as the new church was nearing completion.

"As a pastor, I wanted to transport as many items as possible from the closed churches, in the communities along the route of the pilgrimage, that had previously been in our cluster to our new church," he said. "I thought the pilgrimage would also illustrate the sacrifice that our ancestors would have made on their journey to establish their churches."

About 15 individuals were on hand to begin the pilgrimage July 27, in Mallard, Iowa, and Father Klein explained a reason for that.

"The majority of the items for the new Christ the King Church are coming from the

See Pilgrimage, Page 13

Letters

Continued from Page 6

at Catholic law, using the Eucharist as a photo-op pandering toward the Catholic vote.

True, at the Last Supper, Christ offered the first Eucharist even to Judas, this before being handed over to death, betrayed with a kiss. Let us not forget, though, that just days earlier Jesus whipped and drove the money changers from his Father's house. Our Lord was no wimp. He fought evil unto death.

Let us pray the bishops of the USCCB rise to the challenge to be brave in fighting the evil of abortion.

— **Martin P. Harpen**
Suffolk

Provide guidance for members to become sanctified

Much has been written about the Church denying the Eucharist to the president and other Catholic politicians who facilitate and fund ready access to abortion. It is startling to me that this decision is open to debate.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church clearly states the Church's position: "Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable" (2271).

"The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation" (2273).

Denial of the Eucharist to Catholic politicians who support abortion is clearly justified by the requirement to be free from mortal sin when receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Any public retaliation, financial or otherwise, would be a small price to pay to protect these politicians from receiving the Eucharist unworthily.

If the Church believes what it teaches us as Catholics — that dying in a state of mortal sin results in eternal separation from God — it is imperative that the Church provide these politicians, and all its members, the guidance and the means to become sanctified so they can spend eternity with God in heaven.

— **Robert S. DeMauri**
Keswick

Commentary was 'on point'

Regarding Stephen Reardon's excellent commentary (Catholic Virginian, June 28), Linda Tucciarone (Catholic Virginian, July 12) questions whether "his career (a lawyer) gives him more credence." Presumably, because of her analogy, she means more credence than Sen. Tim Kaine (also a lawyer), who is an abortion advocate. Reardon's profession is not relevant, but his position was directly on point.

Catholic doctrine states unequivocally that, since life begins at conception, abortion is consequently morally and spiritually wrong. Tucciarone is mistaken in her understanding of the duty of elected officials. She is correct that the senator indeed does represent all of his constituents, but in so doing, he does not relinquish his moral beliefs or discard his spiritual conscience.

As a professed Catholic, Sen. Kaine by implication accepts established Church beliefs, which expressly include the denunciation of abortion. This same standard applies to President Biden and Speaker Pelosi. They cannot identify as Catholics if they denounce Church precepts. The simple solution would be to leave the Church for a denomination that views abortion as acceptable.

Tucciarone writes that "[a]ll Catholics are not conservatives." Since the concept of "conservative" is quite broad, this is not germane. Conversely, not all conservatives are anti-abortion. However, because Catholic doctrine opposes abortion, all true Catholics are anti-abortion.

Moreover, her warning that opposition to abortion "make[s] it much easier to leave the Church" and that "leaving results in less income" recalls Jesus' own concept of the importance of money. In Matthew 21:12-13, he expelled the money changers from his Church, admonishing them for making his house a "den of thieves."

— **Carol Daugherty Rasnic**
Richmond

Appreciates commentary in defense of archbishop

Thank you, Stephen Reardon, for defending Archbishop Gomez in your guest commentary.

Tim Kaine has had a long political career, so the public record is clear on where his funding comes from, the laws he supports (and doesn't) and whether or not he's ever walked in the March for Life with fellow Catholics.

We know what his values are. As such, I do not need a lecture from him on the Blessed Sacrament of the holy Eucharist — the Bread of Life. It is ironic that Kaine accuses Archbishop Gomez of doing what he does every day in his political life: cherry-picking which truths he will abide by and which he will not.

Tim Kaine, come join your fellow Catholics (as imperfect as we are) and follow all of the eternal truths of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ — not just the politically expedient ones.

— **M. Bridget Provost**
Midlothian

'In God We Trust' shouldn't be motto

Coming from a Judeo/Christian (Catholic) background, it is well past time we remove "In God We Trust" from our money and stop using it as a national motto. It simply is not true, and by using it we do little more than mock God. (I cannot speak for atheists, agnostics or those

from other faith traditions. I can only imagine what they may think about that motto.)

President Teddy Roosevelt summed it up well during discussions before the motto was adopted in the early 20th century: "As a Christian, I find it sacrilegious. As a citizen, I find it unconstitutional."

Theoretically, we are a Christian nation, and our laws are presumably based on the Ten Commandments. However, at every level of government we have laws that allow us to disobey, disregard and in some cases threaten to punish us if we insist on obeying those commandments.

Jesus Christ narrowed those 10 down to two — love God and love one another. How do we, as a nation, follow those two commandments?

A more honest motto could be "In This Currency We Trust." Or we could also adopt "In the Seven Deadly Sins We Trust" as many in our nation tend to glorify those over any type of morality. One of those mottos would be more honest than "In God We Trust."

Individually and collectively, we all most certainly should trust in God, but as a national motto it just isn't true. I certainly encourage any/all organizations within our nation to adopt that motto as long as those organizations strive to practice it.

— **Philip Knoll**
Chesapeake

Cremains must be placed in sacred ground, columbarium



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. I understand that Catholics can't spread ashes over the ocean after cremation — and that ashes can only be buried or kept at home. My sister and her daughter are Catholics. My sister told me that she has instructed her daughter to use her ashes as fertilizer on plants or trees after cremation. Is this allowed? (Honolulu)

A. This question — and many similar ones that I receive — reflects readers' continuing fascination with the disposition of bodily remains. You are correct in your understanding — almost!

The Church teaches that ashes from cremation should be buried in sacred ground or entombed in a columbarium — but not kept at home! In the Church's mind, cremated remains should be treated with the same reverence as the body of a deceased person.

In 2016, the Vatican issued an instruction regarding burial practices for Catholics. That document specified that either the body or the ashes of the deceased should be buried in sacred ground and that cremains should not be kept in private homes or scattered on land or at sea, nor "preserved in mementoes, pieces of jewelry or other objects."

Burial in sacred ground, said the Vatican, prevents the deceased from

being forgotten and encourages family members and the wider Christian community to remember the deceased and to pray for them.

The Church's Code of Canon Law continues to express a preference for burial over cremation because it more clearly expresses the Christian belief in an eventual resurrection when the person's body and soul will be reunited. As for using the cremains for fertilizer, that is in no way envisioned in Catholic teaching — or permitted.

Q. Some years ago you reminded us that receiving the Eucharist at Mass is valid regardless of who distributes it — so a family should not disrupt the congregation's flow to Communion just to receive from a priest, rather than from an extraordinary lay minister.

Because I have several young children who do not yet receive Communion, we try to sit where our priest will distribute the Eucharist — since it seems more valuable for my children to receive the blessing of a priest rather than a non-uniform "good wish" from a layperson.

I know that there are scriptural references to parents blessing their children, but we once heard a priest friend say, "If you're not a priest, you're just shooting blanks." Whose duty is it to offer prayers of blessing and to whom? What has the most merit and efficacy? (Indianapolis)

A. Normally, it is the priest who imparts a Catholic blessing. But your friend who made the remark about

laypeople "shooting blanks" is way off base. There are many blessings that are done properly — and perhaps more appropriately — by laypeople. The most common example is the blessing of food, which many families do each evening at the dinner table.

The Church's Book of Blessings lists several blessings that are normally done by laypeople — including the blessing of sons and daughters by their parents (especially when leaving home or embarking on a new venture). Another particularly touching example recommended by the Book of Blessings is the blessing of a newly engaged couple by both sets of parents.

I have sometimes seen extraordinary ministers of holy Communion — laypeople — give a blessing to children too young to receive Communion, but technically that is improper.

The website of the Archdiocese of New York answers the question, "Should an extraordinary minister of holy Communion give a blessing to one who comes forward in the Communion procession, but who does not wish to receive the Eucharist?" in this way: "No. In this case, an extraordinary minister of holy Communion should direct the individual who wishes to receive a blessing to the nearest priest or deacon."

I can understand that. Logistically, this might result in some confusion, but that is the correct technical answer. (Actually, no one needs a "blessing" at that point since, a few minutes later, the entire congregation will be blessed by the priest at the end

of Mass.) One possibility is just for the extraordinary minister to say to the child, "Jesus loves you," without giving a blessing.

Q. My dad died during the COVID-19 pandemic. His request was to be cremated. We decided to wait to have his memorial Mass when all family members could attend. Our family is scattered throughout the U.S., and a weekend (Saturday) would be the most convenient, with work and school scheduling.

However, the pastor of the parish will not have a funeral Mass on a Saturday. Is this traditional, or just his personal preference? If it's just a preference, can I insist on a Saturday? (Northampton, Pennsylvania)

A. There is no universal prohibition of funeral Masses on Saturdays. In fact, in the parish from which I retired after 24 years as pastor, we probably had more funerals on Saturdays than any other day — largely because, as you say, Saturdays were more convenient for families to gather.

If your parish chooses not to do Saturday funerals, it may be that they are short-staffed, and the pastor feels he should retain his energies for the Saturday vigil Masses. It wouldn't be productive for you to "insist" on a Saturday funeral.

Have you tried explaining to him that people are coming from great distances, and a Saturday funeral is the only day that permits that? If this is not successful, I would try a neighboring parish/pastor.

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

A COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO EDUCATE AND INSPIRE

The Auschwitz Violin, Germany, c. 1850

Violins of Hope

Richmond

A COLLECTION OF VIOLINS THAT SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST

FEATURED CONCERTS
with
RICHMOND SYMPHONY
VALENTINA PELEGGI, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Members of the Richmond Symphony will perform music evoking the Holocaust era on selected violins from the collection.

SEPT 9 | 7:30 P.M.
Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
Richmond, VA

SEPT 10 | 6:00 P.M.
St. Mary's Catholic Church
Richmond, VA

TICKET INFORMATION AT:
violinsofhopeva.com

EXHIBITS
of the
Violins of Hope
will be on display
AUG 4 – OCT 24
Virginia Holocaust Museum
Virginia Museum of History & Culture
Black History Museum & Cultural Center

vhm VIRGINIA HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

BHMVA
Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia

ViolinsofHopeRVA.com
[#ViolinsofHopeRVA](https://twitter.com/ViolinsofHopeRVA)

What the Assumption of Mary says about our future



Wondering what life after death will be like is as old as it is ongoing. When the Sanhedrin questioned Jesus regarding the resurrection, he explained that after the resurrection those who die will no longer eat or drink, marry or be given in marriage, for they shall live like angels. This subject is one Brant Pitre points out in his book, "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of Mary: Unveiling the Mother of the Messiah":

"After the resurrection, death will be no more, so there will no longer be a need for offspring. Earthly marriage, bound up as it is with death through procreation, is a temporary part of 'this age' or 'this world'; it will have no place in the 'that age,' the age of the bodily resurrection."

As Christians, we believe that human marriage is a sign of the heavenly marriage that awaits us when we will be united with Christ the Bridegroom of our soul. This is one reason why we celebrate the Assumption of Mary into heaven, which was proclaimed a dogma by Pope Pius XII on Nov. 1, 1950.

Mary's assumption is significant because it prefigures the final resurrection when souls of the just will be reunited with their bodies. Like Mary, they will enjoy the fullness of the beatific vision of God.

Only the spotless Virgin was deemed worthy to be assumed into heaven body and soul; yet her assumption into heaven remains a sign of what is to come for all who are found worthy.

Christian tradition affirms that she was lifted up by God and admitted to the supernatural realm of heaven. Surely, the soul of Mary, who is the fairest flower of our race, was like perfumed incense rising to the throne of God.

Although we stand in awe of our Blessed Mother, we remain hopeful that one day, we too will know the realization of the fullness of our being and be united with the heavenly Bridegroom for all eternity. As pilgrims on the journey, we look to Mary, chosen for our sakes for Christ's first coming, to clear the path and lighten our way when we meet Christ when he comes again.

We give thanks to God, who gave himself to us through Mary, who is the most perfect of all human beings. Throughout the ages, works of art have proclaimed her glory. Clothed in the blue mantle of baptismal waters in which she was immersed from the moment of her conception, Mary's purity pervades and penetrates all things.

Nothing in this bride is corruptible. In her person is revealed the infinite majesty of God, for when God created his mother, she became the manifestation of the fullness of his grace.

The reflection of eternal light,

Mary is the spotless mirror of God working in and through her to further our understanding of God's own glory. In return, Mary was so consumed with love for God, that it would seem that her death was a death of love as St. John of the Cross describes in his poem, "A Gloss (with spiritual meaning)":

I went out seeking love
and with unfaltering hope,
I flew so high, so high,
that I overtook the prey. (P 11.6)

Not only was Mary assumed into heaven, where she reigns as mother of all peoples, her queenship extends to every nation, though her title as queen honors her Jewish roots. It's not readily apparent to most Christians today why Mary is called "Queen," since she is not the spouse of Christ the King.

However, when we consider that in biblical times the woman sitting on the throne in the kingdom was not the king's wife, but the king's mother, this makes perfect sense. In the Hebrew Scripture kings had large harems.

In the First Book of Kings, we read that King Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kgs 11:3). Therefore, it would have been impossible to bestow the queenship on a thousand women. Yet, while the king had multiple wives, he had only one mother, which explains why queenship was given to Mary.

Mary is the "eschatological icon of the Church" (CCC 972), meaning the Church contemplates in Mary her own end of times. When we look to Mary, we can surrender ourselves to God in complete trust, knowing that the God who is Love will raise us up as he did his mother.

In that way, the Assumption of Mary into heaven prefigures the ascent into heaven of all the faithful. And so, we ask Mary to intercede for us: Mary, Queen of Heaven, pray for us.

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

Mary's message: God is here

KEVIN PERROTTA
Catholic News Service

On the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I think of my uncle, Nick. Since he was a barber, he was, naturally, my barber when I was growing up. His barbershop was a quiet place, and we had many relaxed one-on-one chats as he cut my hair. I don't recall that we ever discussed religion, and I'm certain we never talked about what he did in the Navy.

So when, some years after Nick died, my cousin Paul made me a gift of his father's World War II memorabilia, there were some revelations. Black-and-white snapshots of guys standing in front of tents on beaches in Italy where landings had been made gave me an idea of what my uncle had been involved in.

Along with the photos — and here was a real surprise — was a brown scapular: two pieces of brown cloth the size of large postage stamps, joined by strings, for hanging around the neck. To one of the pieces a little picture of Mary and Jesus is attached.

Apparently my uncle had it on him when he wasn't swimming reconnaissance of the beaches before the landings. I wonder what was in his mind as he wore this expression of devotion through three dangerous years.

It is at least possible to say what the scapular means. Like everything to do with Mary, it communicates the basic message that her life speaks — a message symbolized in an odd way by the first reading — 1 Chr 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2 — of the vigil for the Feast of the Assumption.

The Old Testament text describes King David bringing the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem. The ark was an elaborate box containing signs of God's dealings with the Israelites. It was a tangible focal point of the Israelites' worship. In a mysterious way, it bore God's presence.

Even more mysteriously, the ark prefigured a greater reality to come. God was going to make himself present in the human world as a human person. The ark foreshadowed the one who was to bear this

See Assumption, Page 13

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for August 15, 2021

Luke 1:39-56

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Cycle B. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

MARY SET OUT	HILL COUNTRY	ELIZABETH
GREETING	FRUIT	LORD
JOY	BELIEVED	SOUL
SAVIOR	FAVOR	SERVANT
GENERATIONS	CALL ME	GREAT THINGS
HIS NAME	STRENGTH	ARM
THRONES	THREE	MONTHS

MARY SET OUT

```

H I L L C O U N T R Y O
T T G N I T E E R G M G
G T E D W E M L L A C E
N A H B M R A T R N A N
E S F R A M N Y O J M E
R E D A E Z S A V I O R
T N D E V E I L E B N A
S O W L T O H L W K T T
O R J O L O R D E F H I
U H U T L T I U R F S O
L T N A V R E S H J O N
I G R E A T T H I N G S
    
```

© 2021 TRI-C-A Publications; tri-c-a-publications.com

**If you enjoy word searches, let us know.
Email akrebs@catholicvirginian.org or call 804-359-5654.**

Sioux educator honored for leading Church renewal

Black Elk aiding healing between Native Americans, Jesuits

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Maka Akan Najin Black Elk, a leader in Native American and Catholic education for truth, healing and reconciliation, was unanimously selected by FADICA's board of directors as the recipient of the organization's Distinguished Catholic Leadership Award.

The Distinguished Catholic Leadership Award recognizes those who have demonstrated outstanding initiative, a spirit of service and visionary leadership in contributing to the renewal and vitality of the Catholic Church.

Black Elk, a citizen of Oglala Lakota Nation in South Dakota, is expected to receive his award during FADICA's 2021 symposium and spiritual retreat, to be held Oct. 7-8 in Minneapolis.

FADICA, an acronym for Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities, noted Black Elk's leadership in addressing historical trauma and racial justice through "the significant truth and healing process" at Red Cloud Indian School, a Jesuit institution on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

The FADICA board also identified his faith-filled and inclusive approach to healing and reconciliation, and his leadership in the American Indian Catholic Schools Network and the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.

"Black Elk is a person of deep faith, who

is putting Catholic values into action to build a future of hope and healing," said a July 30 statement by Alexia Kelley, president and CEO of FADICA. "Black Elk is leading ground-breaking and critical work at the local and national level for truth and reconciliation in our Church and our country."

Black Elk graduated from the University of San Francisco and then earned a master's degree in peace and human rights education at Columbia University's Teachers College, and a second master's in educational leadership from the University of Notre Dame.

He is a descendant of survivors of the abusive system of boarding schools and a graduate of Red Cloud Indian School. Black Elk later served as a teacher and educational administrator at Red Cloud before assuming his current role there as executive director for truth and healing.

Black Elk's responsibilities include organizing, planning, supporting and guiding Red Cloud in engagement with the community in a truth and healing process related to oppression caused by the historical boarding

school experience. He provides professional development, training, and dialogue opportunities on a range of topics including racial reconciliation, and works with community groups, tribal governments and nonprofits to develop a network of support.

"I am truly humbled and honored by FADICA's vote of confidence for the work I support," Black Elk said in a July 30 statement. "I strongly believe that the Catholic Church should broadly recognize the need for us as a faith community to engage in the sacramental calling for reconciliation. My hope is that we more closely live out a faith that does justice."

An estimated 100,000 American Indian children attended boarding schools, many of which were run by religious orders, as part of a

federal policy to assimilate the population into white American culture.

The Jesuits offered an official apology to the Lakota people in 1993 for their role. At the schools, students were prohibited from speaking their language or practicing their culture.



Maka Akan Najin Black Elk

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

Do You Find Joy In Helping Another Grow Closer To Christ?

Experience a strong professional spiritual director identity, with our Spiritual Direction Certificate (SDC)

Integral Theological Content

Interpersonal Skills

Supervision to offer a deep and transformative learning experience

APPLY TODAY

For more information:
SDC@DIVINEMERCY.EDU | TEL: (703) 574-1114

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION CERTIFICATE
DIVINE MERCY UNIVERSITY

Diocesan Young Adult Retreat

10.22.21-10.24.21 | NAGS HEAD, NC
\$150 PER PERSON

RECHARGE & BREATHE.

LEARN MORE AT:
EVANGELIZERICHMOND.ORG

Service

Continued from Page 1

Due to COVID, the parish didn't have a mission trip last year, and this year they stayed in Newport News. In lieu of the mission, the parish collected food and distributed it to 50 households in Buckingham County last year and plan to deliver 25 boxes later this summer.

This year, from July 6 through July 11, the volunteers toiled by day, had a retreat experience each evening and slept overnight in parts of the church building. They discussed where they noticed God's presence during the day.

Games and activities re-enforced the concept and built community. They celebrated Mass each morning and prayed the rosary together each night. One evening they had the opportunity for eucharistic adoration.

Throughout the week, volunteers performed a number of tasks at eight worksites: They did yard work, painted a room, repaired a rotting deck, fixed a screen door, cleaned a fence and replaced decaying columns on a deck. They trimmed trees on a trail by a high school, built a GaGa Ball Pit behind the church and replaced carpeting with linoleum in a center where food is distributed to the poor. They also repaired a shed whose roof was crushed by a fallen tree.

Previous years' projects included painting, building a ramp, skirting a trailer and installing siding on a home.

"This is a perfect opportunity for them to be the hands and feet (of Christ), to take what they've read and they've heard and actually use it in a practical manner," said Barbara Lynch, a core team member.

Lindsey said youth who go to the retreats tend to be "more charismatic in their faith and more involved in Church and activities. They realize that generosity is more than clicking 'like' on social media, that true works are not through oral support; true works are actually, physically being the hands and feet of Christ."



John Botelho and Bridget Rourke measure and cut a fascia board on Saturday, July 10, at one of the residences that received help from members of St. Jerome, Newport News, during the parish's local mission trip. (Photo/Delaine Botelho)

The mission trip is a time to bond with each other and also a time to bond with the people they served. Hannah Nelson, 20, said she learned "that serving isn't just doing manual labor" but also "really loving" the people served.

On the last night, the volunteers traditionally eat dinner with the people they've served and discuss their experiences together.

At the onset of the week, the youth think they will help others, but by the end, they realize those they served helped them, said Jan Gehrki, a former parishioner living in Florida. She added that the residents have "hearts of gold" and have

helped the youth "view the world though different eyes."

Gehrki's granddaughter, Isabella Volini, 17, went on the mission trip in 2018 at her grandmother's prodding. She "met so many kind people" and enjoyed helping others so much that she has commuted with Gehrki to mission trips from Tampa ever since.

Chase Imoru, a seminarian who attended the mission trip, said the youth were "appreciative" of the opportunity to reflect on what their faith calls them to do, to realize they have the ability to give someone a helping hand, to "receive from them the love of Christ" through interactions with them and know that "God is always present."

Father George Prado, parochial administrator of the parish, said, "The mission trip aside from its transformative effect, taught the young ones to understand that the heart of our mission is to love Jesus and find him with least, the last and the lost."

Castagna said the mission trips show the youth "how other people live and how little things like a conversation can change someone's life."

Several youth said the most beautiful part of the trip was seeing the smile on the individual's face when a repair was completed. Vanessa Barreto, 13, said she learned that she can have an impact on others' day-to-day lives. Likewise, Maggie Nelson, 18, said seeing the excitement and joy of the individual made her grateful for what she has and for what she is able to do for others.

Youth said a favorite part for them was hanging out with friends and making new ones. Mission trip leaders agreed that building community was important, and that being involved in the mission may prevent the youths and young adults from leaving the Church.

"The more involved people are in their Church, the more connected they are. Then they are more likely to stay Catholic and to remain and become stronger Catholics," Botelho said.

IN MEMORIAM

Bon Secours Sister Katherine Ann Durney



A funeral Mass was celebrated for Bon Secours Sister Katherine Ann Durney at the Sisters of Bon Secours chapel in Marriotsville, Maryland, on Wednesday, July 28. Sister Katherine Ann, 97, passed away on Friday, July 23.

A native of Wilmington, Delaware, Sister Katherine was a registered nurse when she entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in 1946. She received her nursing home administrator license in 1977.

In 1987, she became a certified pastoral care chaplain. Among the places she served as chaplain were Bon Secours DePaul Hospital and Provincial Place of Norfolk.

After Sister Katherine retired in 2000, she volunteered at Bon Secours Assisted Living Facility in Norfolk before continuing her retirement in Marriottsville.

On the occasion of her 75th anniversary of religious profession, Sister Katherine said, "My community has always been a source of strength and inspiration to me and has given me many opportunities to grow spiritually and professionally. My primary life source has been and continues to be prayer. What a wonderful life I have experienced as a Sister of Bon Secours for 75 years."

Per her request, Sister Katherine was buried next to her biological sister, Bon Secours Sister Elizabeth Durney, on Aug. 4 at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Richmond.

Assist

Continued from Page 1

ternational Airport in Virginia, in suburban Washington, with 221 Afghans who have been allowed into the United States under a special visa program. AP said an internal U.S. government document it had obtained said the group included 57 children and 15 babies.

Nationals who provided translation, interpretation, security, transportation and other vital services to the U.S. troops in the last two decades have feared reprisals from Afghanistan's Taliban, even more so now as its fighters advance around the country in the absence of the U.S. military.

In 2006, the U.S. Congress first authorized a bipartisan humanitarian program to provide Special Immigrant Visas, or SIVs, for nationals from Afghanistan and Iraq that include resettlement services and legal permanent residence for the approved principal applicants, their spouses and children.

Since the creation of the program, a USCCB news release said, MRS has worked with the U.S. Department of State, the Office of Refugee Resettlement and other nongovernmental organizations to provide resettlement services to some of the over 73,000 Afghan SIV holders and their families.

The USCCB also has advocated periodically before Congress to extend and improve the program.

On July 14, the White House announced the emergency relocation of Afghan SIV applicants in their final stages of processing to the United States, with the first of that group arriving in the United States July 30.

In addition, Congress passed a bipartisan emergency supplemental appropriations bill July 29, allocating over \$1 billion for humanitarian support and assistance; authorizing an additional 8,000 visas for the SIV program; and making some changes to streamline the application process.

The USCCB said it supported the measure and similar ones that Congress considered in recent weeks.

Archbishop Gomez and Bishop Dorsonville said in their statement it is important for the USCCB and MRS to join with other faith-based agencies and her NGOs "to ensure the warm welcome, safe relocation and resettlement of those who have already contributed greatly to our nation."

"We also applaud Congress for coming to an agreement on the emergency supplemental appropriations bill to help ensure that all Afghans who are in danger because they assisted the U.S. receive protection and welcome," they said.

The prelates added the Catholic Church teaches that "each person is created in the image and likeness of God and that we must uphold the inherent dignity of every person."

Bishops call on Senate to restore Hyde protections

JULIE ASHER
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The refusal by the U.S. House to include the Hyde Amendment and other pro-life riders in appropriations bills before lawmakers passed the measures is an “injustice” that overshadows the provisions that help “vulnerable people,” said the chairmen of two U.S. bishops’ committees.

Late July 29, the House voted 219 to 208 in favor of H.R. 4502, a package of appropriations bills that currently exclude the Hyde, Weldon and Helms amendments and other longstanding, bipartisan-supported pro-life language.

Eliminating these provisions would force taxpayers to pay for elective abortions and would have the effect of forcing health care providers and professionals “to perform and refer for abortion against their deeply-held beliefs, as well as forcing employers and insurers to cover and pay for abortion,” said the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in a news release issued after the vote.

The release included a joint statement on the House actions by Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee for Religious Liberty, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

“The House has voted in a way that is completely out of step with the will of the American people who overwhelmingly oppose taxpayer-funded abortion,” the prelates said.

“The Hyde Amendment has saved at least 2.4 million lives since its enactment. Without it, millions of poor women in desperate circumstances will make the irrevocable decision to take the government up on its offer to end the life of their child,” they said.

The now-approved package of spending bills “includes provisions that help vulnerable people, including pregnant moms,” they acknowledged, but “as we have said before, ‘being “right” in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life.’”

The Hyde Amendment, first enacted with strong bipartisan support 45 years ago, outlaws federal tax dollars from directly funding abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the woman would be endangered.

Congress must reauthorize the Hyde Amendment annually as an attachment to the appropriations bill for the Department of Health and Human Services. Hyde language also has been part of a dozen spending bills for decades. Until this year, Hyde has been reauthorized every year since 1976.

“The injustice in H.R. 4502 extends to removing conscience protections and exemptions for health care providers who believe abortion is wrong, or whose faith drives them to serve and heal lives, instead of taking them,” Cardinal Dolan and Archbishop Naumann said, referring to the Weldon Amendment, first passed in 2005.

The cardinal and archbishop called on the Senate “to redress this evil in H.R. 4502, and for Congress to ultimately pass appropriations bills that fully support and protect human dignity, and the most vulnerable among us.”

On July 28, the House voted 217-212 to pass the appropriations bill for the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development, H.R. 4373, without the Helms Amendment. Called “the Hyde Amendment for the rest of the world,” it has prohibited using U.S. taxpayer funds to directly pay for abortions in other countries since 1973.

Bishop Knestout’s statement

After the U.S. House of Representatives voted in favor of H.R. 4502 on July 29, Bishop Barry C. Knestout issued the following statement:

“H.R. 4502, appropriations legislation passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, represents an attack on the unborn as it excludes the protections the Hyde Amendment has provided for the last 45 years. If this bill were to become law, not only would taxpayers be forced to pay for elective abortions, but it would force health care providers to refer for and perform abortions against deeply-held beliefs that are rooted in their faith. Further, employers and insurers will be required to pay for abortions.

“I ask all people who are guided by the Gospel of Jesus Christ — the Gospel of Life! — to give witness to their faith and to contact our U.S. senators, asking them to vote against the Senate version of this appropriations bill if it does not include protections for the unborn and for health care professionals provided by the Hyde Amendment and the Weldon Amendment, which prohibits states that receive federal funds from discriminating against health plans based on their decision not to cover or pay for abortions.”

For further information, visit <https://vacatholic.org/action-center/save-hyde/>.

Van Mueller presents

Faith, Family and Financial Security



Join us for an informative online presentation by Van Mueller, one of the top speakers in the insurance and financial industry.

Van Mueller is an author and dynamic speaker known for helping clients plan successful insurance and retirement strategies. He is a global speaker that has presented in all 50 states and every province in Canada, inspiring his audience to take control over their financial future.

Join us as Van helps us think through our answers to these questions, and many more!

Sponsored by Your Knights of Columbus

The Abbate Agency

Date: September 29, 2021

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Registration link: sept29.abbatekofc.com



Life Insurance • Disability Income Insurance • Long-Term Care Insurance • Retirement Annuity

© Knights of Columbus, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510



Knights of Columbus
The Abbate Agency
www.abbatekofc.com

Visit our website for more information:
www.abbatekofc.com or call: 1-866-868-1492

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/Abbatekofc

PENINSULA CATHOLIC ANNUAL D.B. BRACKIN GOLF TOURNAMENT

This tournament is held in our great friend's honor and memory with all the proceeds going directly to advancing the athletic program at Peninsula Catholic.

Friday, September 10, 2021

SLEEPY HOLE GOLF COURSE

7:00AM Registration

8:00AM Shotgun Start

11:00AM Lunch & Winner Ceremony

Register online at

www.peninsulacatholic.org/giving/



Young Vincentians undertake social outreach



As part of its three-day leadership and training program at Holy Spirit, Virginia Beach, the newly-formed Young Vincentians, an offshoot of the parish's St. Vincent de Paul conference, undertook social outreach projects in their community on Tuesday, July 6. Above: Caroline Hetman and Brian Laurence move a table into a room at Spirit House — the parish's temporary home for women with mental disabilities who are without shelter. Right: Mason Somers and Brian San Martin paint one of the rooms. (Photos/Erin Laurence)



WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Striking the right chord: OK, retired garage band guitarists and parents who acquiesced to their child's "All I want for Christmas is a guitar" request years ago and now find said instrument taking up space in a closet: Cristo Rey Richmond High School is building up its music program with an after-school guitar club. Students will be learning notes, technique and building their skills. What they need are guitars. If you have one to donate, please contact Laura Wright at advancement@crstoreyrichmond.org or call 804-447-4865. They also need volunteers to help with the club.

Honored: Knights of Columbus Council 11042 recently awarded scholarships of \$1,000 each to Mary Birmingham and Lauren Schenack, parishioners at Church of the Redeemer, Mechanicsville, and members of the Class of 2021 at Mechanicsville High School, for their involvement in parish activities during high school. This fall, Mary will study elementary education at Belmont Abbey College, while Lauren will attend Tulane University and pursue a career as a cardiologist and medical correspondent.

Good people doing good things: After the July 26 issue of The Catholic Virginian went to press, we learned that Mary's Choice RVA, whose long-term help for moms and their babies was featured in that issue, was awarded a \$10,000 Respect Life grant from the diocese's Office of Social Ministries and Respect Life.

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.

Pilgrimage

Continued from Page 7

former Mallard St. Mary Church," he said of the building which is now used as a funeral home. "The marble altar, many of the statues, and the Stations of the Cross won't be on the journey, but smaller items will be."

Robyn Van Venrooij, director of faith formation at Christ the King, added that a 200-pound crucifix from Mallard also would be used in the new church.

"That would be too much weight, so we are simply transporting the corpus from the crucifix on the pilgrimage," she said. "Stained-glass windows were previously removed from the church in Sutherland (Iowa), so we will be stopping there on Day 4, to acknowledge that."

Each day of the pilgrimage began with a short prayer service.

"O God, who brought your servant Abraham out of the land of the Chaldeans, protecting him in his wandering across the desert, we ask that you watch over us, your servants, as we walk in the love of your name to Christ the King in Sioux Center," prayed Father Klein

July 29 in Sioux Rapids, the site of the former St. Joseph Church, now Sliefort Funeral Home and Cremation Center.

After the prayer, seven people grabbed their water bottles, tightened the laces on their tennis shoes, and donned their brimmed hats to begin the 24-mile trek to Peterson, Iowa.

Pilgrims had the option of walking, jogging or riding in a covered wagon, propelled by a bright orange Minneapolis Moline tractor, owned by parishioner Gene Bartels of Sioux Center.

"The tractor goes about two miles per hour," he said. "It will go up to 16, but I thought we'd have people thrown all over the covered wagon if I had it go that fast."

The covered wagon was followed by the "Safety Support Vehicle" — Van Venrooij's personal car, which had beverages, snacks and a first aid kit.

"I think the average age of our walkers is about 60 years old," she quipped.

However, Van Venrooij pointed out the 400 families in the congregation were younger and that the congregation is about 96% Hispanic.

"That's another reason why this pilgrimage is important," she said. "It brings to mind the immigrants who traveled to this area to establish churches are much like our immigrants today. It puts things in perspective."

The Christ the King worship community was initiated with 13 families in 1992 when permission was granted for weekly Masses at Hope Lutheran Church in Sioux Center. In 1995, Christ the King became part of the Trinity Cluster with Rock Valley and Sacred Heart Church in Alford. In 2000, the former Kempers Flower House and property were purchased for the church.

The parish was established in 2010, and Father Klein was named pastor. A "Coming Together in Serving Christ Our King" campaign to raise \$1.5 million for a new 1,800-square-foot church that would seat 400 kicked off in 2018. A ground-breaking ceremony was held in August 2020. Dedication is set for Sept. 19 this year.

Father Klein, who planned to walk all five of the days, thought the heat, humidity, and northerly winds which brought smoke, from

wildfires out west into Northwest Iowa, didn't daunt the walkers.

"I did pretty well yesterday," insisted parishioner Vickie Ryan of Sioux Center.

Then with a huge grin and twinkle in her eye, she added, "But I think my hips are a little tight; some WD-40 might help them out."

Fox is the retired managing editor of The Catholic Globe, former newspaper of the Diocese of Sioux City.

Assumption

Continued from Page 9

person, his mother, Mary. She is the ark, the one in whom God has truly become present. Her entire being testifies to her son, Jesus, God with us.

This is her message to all of us, whether we are on a field of battle or in a barbershop, in a classroom or a living room or a hospital room. God, Mary declares, is here.

Perrotta is the editor and an author of the "Six Weeks With the Bible" series, teaches part time at Siena Heights University and leads Holy Land pilgrimages. He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

OPPORTUNITIES

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, is seeking a full-time business manager.

Responsibilities: The overall management of the facilities, human resources and finances for the parish. This includes managing payroll, implementing budget processes, book-keeping, preparing financial reports, interfacing with vendors and contractors, maintaining access information and personnel files. The business manager reports to the pastor.

Qualifications: At least a bachelor's degree in business administration, finance, accounting or related field, or equivalent experience is required. Required skills include strong interpersonal and communication skills, organization, knowledge of accounting principles and budget preparation.

To apply: Please send a résumé and diocesan application (richmonddioocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CDR-Application-For-Employment-11-17-16.docx) to Father Danny Cogut (Pastor) at dcogut@richmonddioocese.org or 314 Turner Road, Salem, VA 24153.

Musician needed: St. Jude Parish, Mineral, Louisa County, near Lake Anna, seeks a musician to provide liturgical music for weekend Masses during the year. Masses are Saturday Vigil at 5 p.m., Sunday at 11 a.m., and for funerals. Proficiency on organ and piano required. Ability to work with choir and train cantors. Inquire at the parish office 540-894-4266 weekdays, or email: office@louisacatholics.org.

SHORTTAKES

"BSCC's Got Talent!" — Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Harrisonburg, will host a talent show to raise funds for an acoustic audio system for the sanctuary and overflow spaces. A wide variety of dance and music genres, stand-up comedy and unique talents will be presented by parishioners, family and friends on Sunday, Aug. 15, 7-9 pm at James Madison University Memorial Hall Auditorium, 395 S. High St., Harrisonburg, with free, general admission, a freewill offering and online donations at www.bscvva.org. Call Masters of Ceremonies Bob Corso at 540-746-1998 or Donna Lou Shickel at 540-478-3730 for more details.

Resurrection Parish, 15353 Moneta Road (Route 122), Moneta, will hold its Summer Joyous Junque sale Friday, Aug. 27, and Saturday, Aug. 28, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. Anything you could use inside and outside your house: toys, linens, dishes, electronics, small appliances, computers, flowers, pots, pans, collectables, jewelry and some furniture inside the building. Outside are tools, lawn/garden, sporting goods, electric ranges, fans, miscellaneous hardware and construction material. For more information go to Joyous-Junque.org.

Mark your calendar! St. Michael is having its annual rummage sale to support our friends in Dos Palais, Haiti. Join us for this amazing sale

Saturday, Sept. 11, 7 a.m. to noon at St. Michael Catholic Church, 4491 Springfield Road, Glen Allen.

The Blessed Sacrament Golf Classic will be held on Friday, Oct. 22, at Sewells Point Golf Course. This year the church celebrates 100 years of faith and service in Norfolk. Proceeds from this event benefit the church's ministries and outreach programs such as the Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team, youth mission trips and work camps and the new Centennial Community Garden. Check-in starts at 11 a.m. for a Florida Best Ball format starting at noon. Participation includes a cart, range balls, complementary beverages, a cookout dinner and awards. Please see the website at www.blessed-sacrament.com/golf-tournament or call 757-550-4793 for more information regarding player registration, sponsorships, donations and volunteer opportunities.

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, located in the Highland Park area of Richmond, will celebrate its centennial anniversary in 2023. Bishop Knestout will celebrate Mass on Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022, and kick off the parish's centennial year. We will conclude with a celebration on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2023. In between, you will have plenty of opportunities to share the history of the parish and recognize the people involved over the past century. If your family has ties to St. Elizabeth Parish, St. Elizabeth Catholic School, St Joseph Parish and/or Van De Vyver School, then you are who we are celebrat-

ing. Please join us! Register online at https://bit.ly/STECC_Bulletin. Or contact the parish office by emailing Mary Rose Purcell at mpurcell@stelizcc.org or calling 804-329-4599. If no one answers, leave a message with your information.

"Walking with Jesus" trip to the Holy Land. Join Father Kevin J. O'Brien, pastor at Church of St. Therese, Chesapeake, as the spiritual director for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land (with an optional two-day excursion to Petra and Jordan) Nov. 30 – Dec. 10, 2021. Walk in the footsteps of Jesus as you explore Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem and other important biblical sites. Cost is \$3,695 (double occupancy) with an additional \$1,045 for the excursion to Petra and Jordan. To register or for more information, contact Megan Malhiot mmalhiot@sttheresechesva.org; 757-488-2553 as soon as possible.

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.



Director of Human Resources Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina

The Catholic Diocese of Charlotte, N.C., a rapidly growing region, is seeking an experienced professional for the position of Director of Human Resources and Safe Environment. The position develops, plans and executes initiatives based on a strategic vision for HR aligned with the mission of the Diocese of Charlotte. The position supervises a department of five and is responsible for oversight of all HR functions, including the development of personnel policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legal and diocesan requirements, consultation with diocesan entities regarding HR matters, and management of employee benefit programs. The Human Resources Director also has oversight responsibility for the administration of the diocesan Safe Environment programs, including training, screening and recordkeeping functions.

Candidate Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Human Resources Management, or a related field; HRCI and SHRM certifications preferred;
- Have a minimum of ten years' professional experience in Human Resources management and benefits planning and administration, including three years supervising, managing and evaluating staff;
- Knowledge of applicable employment laws, rules, regulations and payroll practices;
- Knowledge of the Catholic faith and the structures of the Catholic faith;
- Strong verbal, written, analytical, public presentation, computer and interpersonal skills;
- Ability to maintain confidentiality.

For more information about the Diocese of Charlotte and this position, please visit <https://bit.ly/3r90NRj>.

Interested candidates are invited to send a letter of interest with resume and salary history to employment@charlottedioocese.org. The letter of interest should elaborate on why the candidate is interested in this position with the Catholic Church and explain (with examples) why they are uniquely qualified for the position.

Applications accepted through August 16, 2021

El Papa en el Ángelus: El verdadero milagro es el compartir

A la hora del rezo del Ángelus, Francisco reflexionó sobre el episodio de la multiplicación de los panes y los peces narrado en el Evangelio de hoy. Para Jesús, lo poco o nada que podemos dar es suficiente para hacer grandes cosas, explica el Pontífice. La lógica del don está, pues, en la base del milagro realizado por Cristo que, con sólo cinco panes y dos peces ofrecidos por un joven, pudo alimentar a las cinco mil personas reunidas para escucharle

VATICAN NEWS

“El verdadero milagro, no es la multiplicación que produce orgullo y poder, sino la división, el compartir, que aumenta el amor y permite que Dios haga prodigios”: lo afirmó el Papa Francisco a la hora del Ángelus de este 17º Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario dedicado a los Abuelos y las Personas Mayores del mundo.

Reflexionando sobre el Evangelio de la Liturgia que narra el célebre episodio de la multiplicación de los panes y los peces, con los que Jesús sacia el hambre de cerca de cinco mil personas que se habían congregado para escucharlo (cf. Jn 6,1-15), Francisco evidenció el modo en el que se produce este prodigio: “Jesús no crea los panes y los peces de la nada, sino que obra a partir de lo que le traen los discípulos. Dice uno de ellos: ‘Aquí hay un muchacho que tiene cinco panes de cebada y dos peces; pero ¿qué es esto para tantos?’ (v. 9). Es poco, no es nada, pero le basta a Jesús”.

El Pontífice invita a continuación a ponernos “en el lugar de ese muchacho”. “Los discípulos le piden que comparta todo lo que tiene para comer. Parece una propuesta sin sentido. ¿Por qué privar a una persona, sobre todo a un muchacho, de lo que ha traído de casa y tiene derecho a quedárselo para sí? ¿Por qué quitarle a uno lo que en cualquier caso no es suficiente para saciar a todos?” Y explica:

“Humanamente es ilógico. Pero no para Dios. De hecho, gracias a ese pequeño don gratuito y, por tanto, heroico, Jesús puede saciar a todos. Es una gran lección para nosotros. Nos dice que el Señor puede hacer mucho con lo poco que ponemos a su disposición. Sería bueno preguntarnos todos los días: ¿Qué le llevo hoy a Jesús?”

Jesús puede hacer mucho con nuestras oraciones, añade el Papa, con nuestro gesto de caridad hacia los demás. “A Dios le encanta actuar así - dice - hace grandes cosas a partir de las pequeñas y gratuitas”.

La pequeñez y el don

El Santo Padre evidencia cómo todos los grandes protagonistas de la Biblia, desde Abraham hasta María y el muchacho de hoy, muestran esta lógica de la pequeñez y el don, que es muy diferente de la nuestra:

“Nosotros tratamos de acumular



El Papa Francisco saluda a la multitud mientras dirige el Ángelus desde la ventana de su estudio con vista a la Plaza de San Pedro en el Vaticano el 25 de julio de 2021. (CNS photo / Vatican Media)

y aumentar lo que tenemos; Jesús, en cambio, pide dar, disminuir. Nos encanta añadir, nos gustan las adiciones; a Jesús le gustan las sustracciones, quitar algo para dárselo a los demás. Queremos multiplicar para nosotros; Jesús aprecia cuando dividimos con los otros, cuando compartimos. Es curioso que en los relatos de la multiplicación de los panes presentes en los Evangelios no aparezca nunca el verbo “multiplicar”. Es más, los verbos utilizados son de signo opuesto: “partir”, “dar”, “distribuir”

La invitación de Jesús a “dar”

Seguidamente, haciendo una comparación con el mundo de hoy, asegura que tampoco hoy la multiplicación de los bienes resuelve los problemas sin una justa distribución, y subraya la tragedia del hambre y la desnutrición:

“Me viene a la mente la tragedia del hambre, que afecta especialmente a los niños. Se ha calculado que alrededor de siete mil niños menores de cinco años mueren a diario en el mundo por motivos de desnutrición, porque no tienen lo necesario para vivir”

Ante escándalos como estos, - prosigue el Obispo de Roma - Jesús nos dirige también a nosotros una invitación, una invitación similar a la que probablemente recibió el muchacho

del Evangelio, que no tiene nombre y en el que todos podemos vernos:

“Ánimo, da lo poco que tienes, tus talentos y tus bienes, ponlos a disposición de Jesús y de los hermanos. No temas, nada se perderá, porque, si compartes, Dios multiplica. Echa fuera la falsa modestia de sentirte inadecuado, ten confianza. Cree en el amor, en el poder del servicio, en el poder de la gratuidad”

En la conclusión, Francisco dirige su invocación a la Madre de Dios, para que Ella que “dijo ‘sí’ a la inaudita propuesta de Dios, nos ayude a abrir nuestros corazones a las invitaciones de Dios y a las necesidades de los demás”.

Un saludo especial para los Abuelos

Tras finalizar la oración mariana, al saludar a los fieles presentes congregados en la Plaza de San Pedro, el Papa regaló el aplauso de la plaza a los abuelos y ancianos en su día y dirigió una invitación a todos los fieles: vayan a buscar a quienes están solos, llevando el abrazo del Padre que consuela y da fuerza.

Abuelos y nietos, jóvenes y ancianos juntos, han mostrado uno de los bellos rostros de la Iglesia y han demostrado la alianza entre las generaciones. Los invito a celebrar esta Jornada en todas las comunidades y a ir a visitar a los abuelos y a los ancianos, a los que están más solos, para darles mi mensaje inspirado en la promesa de Jesús “Yo estoy con contigo todos los días”. Pido al Señor que esta fiesta nos ayude a los mayores a responder a su llamada en esta etapa de la vida y a mostrar a la sociedad el valor de la presencia de los abuelos y de los mayores, especialmente en esta cultura del descarte.

Dialogar con los abuelos, para que la historia continúe

La relación entre abuelos y nietos debe alimentarse constantemente, dice el Papa, porque sólo desde esta conexión de vida y diálogo, desde este compartir experiencias, desde el cuidado mutuo, la historia sigue adelante.

Los abuelos necesitan a los jóvenes y los jóvenes necesitan a los abuelos: ¡deben hablar entre ellos, deben encontrarse! Los abuelos tienen la savia de la historia que sube y da fuerza al árbol que crece. Me recuerda -creo que lo cité una vez- aquel pasaje de un poeta: “Lo que tiene el árbol tiene de florido, vive de lo que tiene sepultado”. Sin el diálogo entre los jóvenes y los abuelos, la historia no avanza, la vida no avanza: necesitamos [retomar] esto, ya que ... ¡es un reto para nuestra cultura! Los abuelos tienen derecho a soñar mirando a los jóvenes, y los jóvenes tienen derecho al valor de la profecía tomando la savia de sus abuelos. Por favor, hagan esto: reúnanse abuelos y jóvenes y hablen, dialoguen. Y eso hará feliz a todos.



Simone Biles' Olympics decisions

Witnessed to faith in advocating mental health

CAROL ZIMMERMANN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — When Simone Biles, described as the world's greatest gymnast, announced July 27 she would not be competing in a team event with the U.S. women's Olympics gymnastics team and the next day withdrew from the all-around final, many people were shocked, but many supported her decision to prioritize her mental health.

Counselors and spiritual directors at Catholic colleges and ministries who spoke with Catholic News Service echoed a similar view and also said her action opened up a broader and much-needed discussion about the importance of mental health care.

Biles, the four-time Olympic gold medalist, told reporters she was not in the right state of mind to continue the competition after she completed one fewer than planned midair twists in the team's first event and uncharacteristically stumbled on her landing.

Later, she said she had experienced as a "little bit of the twisties," an almost quaint term used by gymnasts that belies its meaning of losing control of one's body while in the air.

That particular sensation is one most Olympics viewers likely can't even begin to relate to, but the feeling of "fighting all those demons," which Biles said she had been doing along with a sense of the "weight of the world" on her shoulders, is something non-Olympic stars can grasp on one level.

'Spiritual director'

"Even if we aren't carrying around the pressure of performing as one of the greatest athletes of all time, we are all susceptible to the undercurrents in our culture that preach grit, grind and pushing through," wrote Zac Davis, associate editor of America magazine.

In a July 28 column he said Biles' decision put her in a "new public role of spiritual director" by showing that "impulses to be the best do not need to rule over our lives."

It also places her on a platform with other high-profile athletes who also have spoken about mental health including Michael Phelps, Olympic gold medal swimmer, and Japanese tennis player Naomi Osaka, who recently withdrew from the French Open.

"In some ways (these athletes) are 'coming out' to educate those who work with them" — parents, coaches and administrators — that mental health is an issue that needs attention, said Jason Parcover, director of the Counseling Center at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore.

"I think athletes in our society experience a lot of pressure and are expected to be really tough — and to be almost immune to weakness and struggle — and when they are in pain to play through it. That certainly has led to significant stigma around seeking help for mental health issues," he told CNS.

"When we see professional athletes, especially those we revere in so many ways, acknowledge they too have a mental health issue and it's important to get help for it and learn to manage it, that really gives everyone else more permission to do the same," he added.

Based on his own work on a college campus, he said, college athletes historically are among the least likely to seek help, but that is starting to change.



U.S. gymnast Simone Biles, holding the bronze medal she won in the balance beam as she stands on the podium Aug. 3, 2021, during the Olympics, has been praised for making her mental health a priority. (CNS photo/Mike Blake, Reuters)

Using gift from God

Thomas Wurtz, founder of Varsity Catholic, a division of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students with a specific outreach to student athletes, said the spotlight on mental health in sports should be a "good gut check" even at the youth level in Catholic schools and CYO programs where so much emphasis can be placed on winning and coaches' demands can often drown out other voices in kids' lives.

He said athletes can find their self-worth wrapped up in how they perform, which can make it hard to accept an injury or defeat. When they are in touch with the spiritual side, he said, they gain a different perspective recognizing that if they win or lose, "God willed me to be in this moment in this time."

Biles, who is Catholic, has spoken of her dad's constant reminder not to waste God's gift of her talent and to use it to the best of her ability.

In her autobiography, "Courage to Soar," written in 2016, she mentions that her confirmation name is Sebastian, from the patron saint of athletes. That same year she told US Weekly magazine that she sometimes has a statue of St. Sebastian in her bag along with a rosary from her mom.

St. Sebastian, who lived in the third century, was said to be shot by multiple arrows during a Roman emperor's persecution of Christians. He survived and was nursed back to health only to go and confront the emperor and be clubbed to death.

The martyred saint is held up as an example of physical strength, resiliency and bravery.

'Huge blessing'

Wurtz said he was a "great witness" to the faith by speaking of his beliefs from his platform as a soldier and then having the courage to personally challenge the emperor.

That image could come in handy for Biles, who also has faced some criticism for not competing with the team. She withdrew from the individual floor event, the uneven bars and the vault, but she competed in the balance beam event Aug. 2 and took the bronze. It was the final event in women's gymnastics in Tokyo.

Wurtz, who acknowledged Biles needed to step back, was among those who expressed concern about her announcement's timing amid the

competition. But he said that does not take away from her personal suffering and if Biles can sense her worth isn't just in her performance, then "that's a huge blessing in her life."

She did seem to experience just that, tweeting July 29: "The outpouring love & support I've received has made me realize I'm more than my accomplishments and gymnastics which I never truly believed before."

Praise from mental health professionals

Responding to her tweet on social media, Catholic Charities USA thanked Biles for taking care of her mental health.

Sister Joanne Belloli, a Sister of the Precious Blood of Dayton, Ohio, and a mental health counselor with Livingston County Catholic Charities in Howell, Michigan, for almost 20 years, similarly applauded Biles' decision.

She said in her work she frequently sees people having to make very difficult decisions and that their strength often comes from recognizing their weaknesses.

She said Biles "made a wise decision" and also gave her points for staying and supporting her teammates, noting: "Sometimes you need to take care of yourself and still take care of others."

Dominican Sister Jenn Schaaf, assistant chaplain at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, similarly emphasized Biles' support and encouragement of her teammates and also mentioned the added pressure on all the Olympic athletes competing during the pandemic.

She said young adults have faced spiritual and mental challenges this past year when their "access to normal spaces, communities and routines was disrupted."

For Biles, you add to that "being an elite competitor, a minority and someone who has experienced trauma," then it is even more amazing to see her resilience, she added.

Decision took courage

The day after Biles' announcement, Rachel Annunziato, a professor of psychology at Fordham University, a Jesuit-run school in New York, talked about it one of her classes.

Her view, she told CNS in an email, is that it "takes a great deal of courage and self-awareness to make the decision that Simone Biles did."

"Given the collective trauma we are all going through (coupled with the traumatic experiences the U.S. gymnastics team has faced), I think having a sense of one's limits when it comes to safeguarding emotional and physical well-being is incredibly important and insightful."

Her comment also brings attention to yet another issue: the longtime impact of abuse and the lingering lack of trust in USA Gymnastics after accounts in The Indianapolis Star said the group's executives had failed to report teams members' allegations of sexual abuse to authorities.

Over 265 gymnasts, including Biles, accused USA Gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar of sexually assaulting them. In 2018, he was sentenced to up to 175 years in prison.

In an April interview, Biles told NBC's Hoda Kotb that she wanted to continue competing to be a voice for change.

"If there weren't a remaining survivor in the sport, they would've just brushed it to the side," Biles said.

So she brought all that to the floor with her in the Tokyo Olympics.