



# The Catholic Virginian

Serving the People of the Diocese of Richmond for 90 years

Vol. 96, No. 22

www.catholicvirginian.org

August 23, 2021



Logan Bromley, a sophomore at Catholic High School, Virginia Beach, uses music as a way to “get through bad days with seizures.” He plays drums and guitar. (Photo/Lisa Bromley)

## ‘Remember to laugh more’ CHS student overcomes challenges of epilepsy

WENDY KLESCH  
Special to The Catholic Virginian

“Life can be hard sometimes,” 16-year-old Logan Bromley said, “so it’s important to remember to laugh more.”

It’s a perspective that has gotten the Virginia Beach teen through more than his share of adversity.

Ever since he was stricken with a sudden illness that left him in the hospital for 100 days — 32 of which he spent in a coma — Logan has struggled with epilepsy. Although seizures present him with day-to-day challenges, he has found ways to cope — through perseverance, adaptability and a bright sense of humor that he shares with those around him.

He is a sophomore at Catholic High School, where he plays drums with the school band and referees during gym class.

“Entering freshman year is difficult enough as it is,” Madison Dellinger, school nurse at CHS, said. “Logan’s resilience has really stood out to me. He always has a positive mindset; he always keeps everyone around him smiling and laughing.”

### ‘Fighting back’

In October 2013, Logan was a fourth

grader living with his parents and older brother in San Diego when he fell ill with a high fever.

“We took him to the emergency room twice,” his mother, Lisa Bromley, said. “They took chest X-rays, took blood, but couldn’t tell what was wrong.”

The family was instructed to take Logan home to rest, but when his parents found that they couldn’t wake him, they returned to the emergency room for a third time. From there, he was immediately transferred to Rady Children’s Hospital, where he would spend the next 100 days.

“Everyone who came in was dressed in full gowns and masks,” Lisa recalled. “On the third day, they took an EEG to look at his brain activity, and found he was in status, a seizure that won’t stop.”

Doctors made the decision to put Logan in a medically-induced coma. Over the next few weeks, they tried three times to wake him, but were unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, his class prayed for him.

“The parish rosary group held a novena,” Lisa said. “The pastor led an intercession through St. Junipero Serra for the healing of Logan. Even during Thanksgiving

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## Pope encourages vaccination; calls it ‘an act of love’

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — When each individual makes a small act of charity, like getting the COVID-19 vaccine, every gesture added together can transform the world, Pope Francis said in a global ad campaign.

“Being vaccinated with vaccines authorized by the competent authorities is an act of love. And contributing to ensure the majority of people are vaccinated is an act of love — love for oneself, love for one’s family and friends, love for all people,” he said in a public service announcement released Aug. 18 in Rome.

The video message was part of a global effort by the U.S.-based non-partisan, nonprofit Ad Council and the COVID Collaborative’s “It’s Up To

You” campaign to increase people’s confidence in COVID-19 vaccines by reminding them that the vaccines are safe, effective and save people’s lives. The Vatican’s Dicastery for Integral Human Development also cooperated with the educational initiative.

The three-minute video in Spanish with English, Spanish and Portuguese subtitles features Pope Francis and six cardinals and archbishops from North and South America. Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, is among them.

The “It’s Up To You” campaign has been inviting “trusted messengers” to deliver “fact-based and life-saving information to populations hesitant about the COVID-19

vaccines, helping them to make informed decisions for themselves and their families,” it said in a joint news release with the Ad Council.

Lisa Sherman, president and CEO of the Ad Council, said, “The role of trusted messengers to educate and inspire their networks is undeniable.”

“We are extremely grateful to (Pope Francis) and the cardinals and archbishops for lending their voices and platforms to help people across the globe feel more confident in the vaccines,” particularly to the world’s 1.3 billion Catholics, she said in the news release.

It said 72% of the adult population and 67% of Hispanic adults have currently been vaccinated against COVID-19 with at least one dose in

the United States.

But COVID-19 cases are on the rise worldwide, especially in North, Central and South America. Some nations are still showing very low rates of individuals who are fully vaccinated, such as Honduras with only 5.5% of the adult population and El Salvador with 30%.

While access to vaccines is a challenge, “confidence in the vaccines also presents a hurdle,” the news release said.

In his message, the pope said, “Thanks to God and to the work of many, we now have vaccines to protect us from COVID-19. They grant us the hope of ending the pandemic, but only if they are available to all and if we work together.”

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The Catholic Virginian  
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# Jubilarian doing what God has planned for him

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

KAREN ADAMS

Special to The Catholic Virginian

*Editor's note: This article appeared in the Aug. 9, 2021, issue of The Catholic Virginian. However, the photo that accompanied the article was that of Father David Ssentamu and not the jubilarian, Father Charles Ssebalamu. We apologize for the error and are reprinting the story with Father Ssebalamu's photo.*

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 sup-

portive."

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."

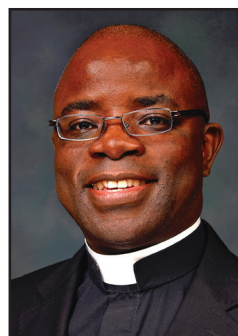
Prayer gives people strength and encouragement in all things, he said. Most of all, it's a way to simply be with God.

"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

## Two nuns killed in South Sudan after vehicle ambushed

NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS) — Two Catholic nuns were shot and killed along a highway in South Sudan Aug. 16 as they were returning home to Juba. Seven other sisters survived the attack.

Sisters Mary Daniel Abut and Regina Roba were members of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart in the Archdiocese of Juba. They were returning to Juba after attending the centenary celebrations at a parish in the eastern Diocese of Torit.

At the Vatican, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, sent a telegram to the chargés d'affaires at the Vatican Embassy to South Sudan, saying Pope Francis was "deeply saddened to learn of the brutal attack." The pope offered condolences to the victims' families and religious community and offered his prayers and blessing.

A spokeswoman for the religious congregation said that

on the way back from the parish celebration, nine sisters boarded the same bus. As they were ambushed, they tried to flee and hid in the bushes.

She said the gunmen went straight to where Sister Abut was hiding and shot her, then shot Sister Roba. Sister Abut died en route for help, but Sister Roba could not be found immediately. Her body later was collected by the army.

Sister Abut had served as the

superior general of the order from 2014 to 2018. She was serving as a headmistress in one of the order's schools in Juba.

Sister Roba was serving as a tutor and administrator of a nurse training school in Wau.



CHRIST OUR HOPE  
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

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

# Father Paraiso had 'no doubt' priesthood was his calling

## 40-year celebration is 'for entire people of God'

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

There's an adage: "We're all in this together."

That's true for Father Oscar Paraiso, pastor of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, West Point. As he celebrates his 40th anniversary of priesthood, he praises God, ponders his calling, reflects on his vocation and deliberates on how his priesthood is intertwined with the laity.

He said priesthood is "one of the greatest, if not the greatest, gifts of God to his people."

"Nobody deserves the gift of priesthood. When a person becomes a priest, it is not on account of his personal merits or holiness. It is because God wants him to be a priest. God alone knows the reason," he said in his Aug. 22 homily at the jubilee Mass.

"The whys of being a priest still puzzle me," he continued. "In my mind are the questions 'Why did the Lord call me? Why did he choose me in spite of all my imperfections?'"

Father Paraiso, who grew up in Naga City in the Philippines, had three sisters and six brothers, one of whom died at age two. The family practiced their faith by praying the rosary together on Friday evenings and attending Mass on Sundays. He was an altar server as a boy and was involved in outreach at his Catholic high school.



Father Paraiso

His family lived across the street from St. John the Evangelist Cathedral, so they "were very close," both physically and relationship-wise, to the pastor, Mgr. Nicanor Belleza, who visited the family "every now and then" to relax and dine with them. Mgr. Belleza baptized Father Paraiso, was celebrant at his first Communion and witnessed his ordination Aug. 16, 1981, at the cathedral.

Like his siblings, Father Paraiso received a Catholic education from elementary school through college.

He credits his interest in the priesthood to Msgr. Belleza, to the American Jesuit priests who ran his elementary and high schools, and to Vocation Week during his third year of high school when

doctors, engineers and agriculturists visited the school to talk about their careers.

Father Paraiso entered Maryhurst Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines, immediately after high school in 1968 to discern becoming a priest. The CICM missionaries, also known as the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, (Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae in Latin), directed the seminary.

"When I entered the seminary, I thought, 'This is my life,'" he said. "I realized this is really my calling. There was no doubt in my mind."

At first, Father Paraiso wanted to be a missionary priest, but in his third year of theology,

he realized he was called to be a diocesan one.

He earned a degree in sacred theology at the seminary, majored in philosophy and English, and minored in history and child psychology.

Father Paraiso served as pastor of four parishes in the Philippines and was chancellor for the Diocese of Libmanan, Philippines, for three years. In 2000, he moved to the Diocese of Victoria, British Columbia, where he was pastor of several parishes.

He came to the Richmond Diocese in October 2011. In January 2012, he became the pastor of St. Mary of the Presentation, Suffolk, and Church of the Good Shepherd, Smithfield. He was named pastor of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament in 2016.

He said that from ordination to the present, he has felt joy and the great love of God.

"The Catholic priesthood is the vehicle through which I have been able to experience and participate in the love of God," he said. "Because of the intimate relationship between the priesthood and the people of God, I can say that my joy is your joy, my sorrow is your sorrow, my success is your success, my failures are your failures, too."

Emphasizing that the gift of the priesthood was given by Jesus Christ to his Church, Father Paraiso said it is "a gift to be unwrapped and shared by all of us."

He said his jubilee is not a celebration for him alone but "involves the entire people of God."

See Father Paraiso, Page 4

# Jubilarian finds life's purpose in helping people

## Inspired by St. Ignatius of Loyola, Father Bayta gives will to God

JANNA REYNOLDS

The Catholic Virginian

Father Joker Bayta said the perfect combination of elements helped influence him to become a priest 25 years ago.

"There were lots of things that contributed to my vocation to the priesthood," he said. "I was in the right environment."

The jubilarian cited his parents, his grandmother and a Catholic education.

"My grandmother would always tell my father to ask me and say something like, 'Oh, your grandma is asking if you would want to become a priest,'" Father Bayta recalled.

He had a cousin who took the entrance exam for the seminary, but he did not pursue his vocation to the priesthood.

"But because of that, maybe my grandmother was thinking I could be a replacement for my cousin," Father Bayta said with a laugh.

Father Bayta said that his Catholic education had a significant influence on his vocation. He attended Mass each Sunday because at school the following week, the Gospel and homily would be discussed.

The school was adjacent to the church and rectory, so as a child, Father Bayta and his friends played volleyball with the priests assigned in the parish.

"Slowly I was introduced to the life of a priest," he said.

Despite attending Catholic school, Father Bayta said during his school years, the priest-

hood was "off my radar."

After high school, however, the priest thought of the conversation he had had with his father and decided to take the entrance exam for the seminary.

"I told myself if I like it in the seminary, I will continue; if I don't like it, then I will just go out," he said. "But what happened was I enjoyed being in the seminary. We did everything together. We lived as a community, and I loved it. We studied, we played, we prayed, we worked. We did things together, so that made me want to stay."

Father Bayta was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Caceres, Philippines, on Aug. 31, 1996, and served at two remote parishes.

### Asked to serve in Richmond

In his 17th year of priesthood, Father Bayta received a call from his vicar general, who said the archbishop wanted to send Father Bayta to the United States. He asked if the priest would like to serve there.

"I did not think, I just said, 'Yes, I would like to go there,'" Father Bayta said.

He came to the Diocese of Richmond in 2013 and served as a parochial vicar of St. Edward the Confessor, Richmond, for one year. He became pastor of St. Jerome, Newport

News, in 2014. He has served as pastor of St. Peter the Apostle, Lake Gaston, and St. Richard, Emporia, since 2016.

Father Bayta will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving at his parish on Tuesday, Aug. 31, to mark his jubilee. A reception with members of the parish will follow.

On the invitation marking his silver jubilee, Father Bayta included the Suscipe Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

"That is one of the things that is guiding me in my priesthood: 'Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will' and so on," he said.

The priest developed a connection with St. Ignatius in the school he attended as a child, the Ateneo, which is run by the Jesuits.

While in seminary, he asked an American Jesuit, Father Dolan, to be his spiritual director.

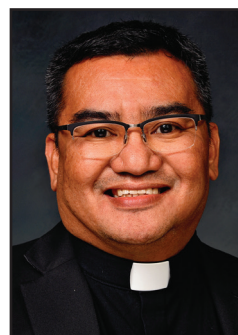
"He was a very good priest, and he devoted all his life teaching in the seminary and teaching in the school," Father Bayta said.

### 'Happy to help'

Father Bayta's favorite thing about being a priest is helping people.

"I am able to help somebody, whether because of my homily or because of my conversation with a person. If I am able to help, I

See Father Bayta, Page 4



Father Bayta

## Help fleeing Afghans with 'utmost urgency,' bishops say

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Saying that a humanitarian crisis is developing in Afghanistan, the chairmen of two U.S. bishops' committees called on the U.S. government to "act with utmost urgency" to resettle thousands of Afghan citizens entering the country under special immigrant visas.

The U.S. government has said it would resettle up to 30,000 people who have applied for Special Immigrant Visas, or SIVs.

The flow of refugees has been fueled by the rapid takeover of the Afghan government by Taliban forces in the first half of August as the U.S. withdrew its military, which has been in the troubled country for nearly 20 years.

"The government's goal to relocate as many as 30,000 SIV applicants to the United States remains a monumental task that hangs in the balance," said Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration, and Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace.

"We know that time is of the essence to help our brothers and sisters in need, and we call on our government to act with the utmost urgency, considering all available avenues to preserve life," the bishops said in a statement released late Aug. 17.

Describing videos and photos of

the desperation of Afghan citizens as the Taliban swept into power Aug. 15 as "difficult to view," the chairmen expressed concern for all people requiring evacuation, "as well as Afghan women and girls, who risk losing opportunities gained over the last two decades and now face potential mistreatment."

The statement also said that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities and other agencies have been assisting the U.S. government in working with SIV applicants at Fort Lee, near Petersburg.

"We will continue to work as long as necessary until those who are in harm's way are brought to safety," the bishops said.

The statement closed with an offer to join with Pope Francis in praying for peace in Afghanistan, "that the clamor of weapons might cease and solutions can be found at the table of dialogue."

Meanwhile, Pax Christi International expressed concern for Afghanistan and the Taliban's sudden rise to power, noting the insurgents' history of atrocities that has continued in recent weeks as it expanded its control of the country.

In a statement Aug. 17 the organization called on the Taliban "to act in accordance with your own dignity as human beings" and to honor its promises "not to take a path of retaliation to create a secure environment."

## Fr. Paraiso

Continued from Page 3

"My joy for the priesthood is not just my own joy, but I want my joys to be shared with the community," he said.

"The spiritual powers that emanate and flow from the priesthood are for the benefit of the people of God," Father Paraiso said. "Being able to celebrate the Holy Mass with Congregation is a privilege I cannot take for granted."

Being a priest though isn't always easy, he said.

"Ask any priest, surely they will say that the priesthood is a very challenging work for Christ. You always have to be conscious that people look up to you, ask you questions, particularly, in things pertaining to God," he said. "To run a parish is really hard. A pastor must have great patience, understanding, strong will, great determination, Christ-like humility and deep spirituality."

## Fr. Bayta

Continued from Page 3

am happy with that. I think that is the purpose of my life — to help somebody," he said.

Father Bayta said although he considers his vocation "a gift from God" for which he is very thankful, "priesthood is not easy."

"I know the feeling of being uprooted from familiar soil and then being planted and forced to bloom in another garden away from home. There were struggles, but the good thing is I did not give up. I know the feeling of isolation, the feeling of frustration. These feelings are not alien to me," he said. "But those are the difficulties of priesthood."

When Father Bayta experiences a challenge in his vocation, he knows that he can share his struggle with his brother priests.

"They are the ones who can understand me," he said. "I know that happy priesthood demands holy friendship."

## Supported by prayer

Father Bayta said his brother priests are just one of the blessings that have filled his vocation.

"First, I have the assurance that God loves me; that is one thing that keeps me going," he said. "Then there is my prayer life. I keep my spiritual life through that, and my personal prayer invigorates my priesthood."

The rosary also strengthens Father Bayta's prayer life.

"I come from a very Catholic family. We prayed the rosary every evening, and that's a big thing for me," he said. "I still pray the rosary every day, every 6 o'clock in the evening."

Father Bayta said that people praying for him — his mother, his family, his friends — continues to sustain him as he celebrates his jubilee.

"They support me. They pray for me," he said. "It lifts my energy to continue. They are God's gift to me."

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Date: September 29, 2021

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# Washington Archdiocese's plan cares for all creation

PATRICIA ZAPOR  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — With a new action plan, the Archdiocese of Washington is encouraging parishes, Catholic schools and other institutions, families and individuals to follow the guidance of Pope Francis to protect the Earth, care for all human life, and combat climate change using education and actions small and large.

The “Laudato Si’: Embarking On A Seven-Year Journey Promoting An Integral Ecology” action plan released by the archdiocese Aug. 16 uses Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical on the environment, “Laudato Si’, on Care for Our Common Home,” as the framework for educational, spiritual and practical steps to help protect the Earth.

It includes educational resources connecting Catholic social justice teaching to care for creation, such as study guides and videos that might be used in school, parish or community settings.

Other sections suggest steps that individuals, families, churches, schools and other organizations can take to limit pollution, reduce consumption of water and electricity, and to protect natural resources.

## Integral ecology

The plan calls on people of faith to “embrace environmental science and the science of climate change to protect and preserve the environment for future generations because the Earth is God’s wondrous creation and gift to humanity.”

Crafted for the people of the Archdiocese of Washington, this “Laudato Si’” action plan seeks to work toward an integral ecology — the concept in Pope Francis’ encyclical that connects caring for all human beings with concern for the environment. The action plan aims to reflect an integral ecology in the life of parishes, Catholic schools and with the faithful in the archdiocese.

The action plan ranks suggested activities on a scale from “easy,” such as “cut down on single-use plastics,” to “moderate,” including “incorporate justice and care for our common home into faith formation programs at all levels,” and a few “advanced” activities including “compost food scraps.”

## ‘For all of us’

In his introductory letter to the plan, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory noted that it “is for all of us! We are all called to protect our common home according to our ability and means.”

He quoted Pope Francis’ encyclical, calling people to “new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation, which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. We require a new and universal solidarity. All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.”

The Washington plan was published one week after the United Nations panel on climate change released a grim report about the state of a global climate emergency.

Genevieve Mougey, director of the Washington Archdiocese’s Office for Social Concerns, told the Catholic Standard, the archdiocesan newspaper, that the U.N. report “illustrates the gravity of the situation we are facing,” but that Christians are called to approach the climate crisis from a basis of hope.

“Hope moves us forward to live in God’s call of love and the care for our common home,” she said. “The reality of what it means to be a Christian is that we live in hope. That’s what the encyclical and this action plan call us to do — act out of hope and faith in God’s love for us and our common home, the Earth.”

## Financial aid to implement it

The plan includes an offer of grants to parishes of from \$500 to \$1,000 to offset initial expenses of implementing it. There also are links to other programs that can significantly reduce the costs of steps such as installing solar panels on parish property.

The plan is the product of 18 months of work by the laity-led archdiocesan Care for Creation Committee and its Office of Social Concerns.

When he was archbishop of Atlanta before coming to Washington in 2018, Cardinal Gregory shepherded a similar plan that soon was widely adopted in Georgia and even adapted in other states.

Bob Simon, a member of the Care for Creation Committee, told the Catholic Standard that although the committee had been active for many years, Cardinal Gregory’s arrival in Washington energized the group and its activities.

“Suddenly we had an archbishop who celebrated our efforts,” Simon said. “He had such a strong record from what he did in Atlanta, creating the first archdiocesan

*See Creation, Page 13*

## Logan

*Continued from Page 1*

break, when school was out, they still came in to pray.”

It was on the fourth attempt, she said, that doctors were able to finally wake her son.

“They told us that he would need nursing care at the house, that he wouldn’t be able to walk, that he probably wouldn’t relearn how to swallow,” Lisa said. “They prepared us for the worst.”

“Slowly but surely, he fought his way back,” she said. “The only real side effect of that illness is the epilepsy.”

## Finding new paths

When Logan began fifth grade at St. Matthew School, Virginia Beach, he worried how his new classmates might view him.

“I didn’t want everyone to look at me as ‘the kid with epilepsy,’” he said. “I didn’t want it to define me.”

To help him adjust, the school invited the Epilepsy Support Group of Hampton Roads to hold a presentation for his class about epilepsy, using puppets to show the children what to do when someone is having a seizure.

“One in 26 people have a seizure in their life. So it’s a good first-aid thing to know,” Lisa said.

When Logan did have a seizure at school that October, his classmates knew how to respond.

“Everyone was super understanding,” he said.

Logan said he’s thankful for the encouragement he’s received from his family and from his teachers at St. Matthew and CHS over the years, especially in helping him find new ways to replace a once-beloved pastime.

Before his illness, he had been an avid hockey player. Once he recovered, however, doctors advised that he not risk participating in such a high contact sport.

So Logan found a new way to be a part of the game: by attending referee training at a local skating rink, where he was the youngest candidate in the class. This past year, he refereed for his teacher during P.E. class at CHS.

“I love reffing,” Logan said. “I refereed all during the floor hockey unit. We also had a ping-pong tournament, with six tables set up, and I got to ref the finals.”

“It’s been helpful, since he knows all the rules,” Kristin Patterson, CHS lifestyle wellness teacher, said.

“Logan has many strengths and knows no weaknesses,” she said. “Whenever he finds something he can’t do, he finds some way that he can.”

Logan said he has also found a new outlet in music by taking up drums and guitar. This September, he’ll perform with students from his music school at a live venue at

the Oceanfront.

“I listen to music more than I do anything,” he said. “Music is actually one of the ways I get through bad days with seizures. I use that to forget about the bad things and to focus on the good.”

He’s also brought his love of music to his school by volunteering to DJ during outdoor events called Fun Fridays.

“Mrs. Patterson would let me hook up my phone to a speaker and DJ,” he said. “As long as I played at least one Backstreet Boys song,” he added, laughing. “She’s a big fan.”

“I’m grateful that the teachers always help me find ways to be included,” he said. “I really never want to have to just sit out.”

## Remember to L.I.O.N.

“It’s been a strange year with COVID,” Logan said, “but it hasn’t been a ‘bad year,’ necessarily. It’s just been different. We had to do some days virtually and eat lunch in the classrooms, but we still got to do the fun things. We made the best of it.”

The school year came to a roaring finish for Logan, when he was unexpectedly called out of class one day and presented with a surprise gift from Patterson and Dellinger: a “zoooption” of the lion exhibit at the Virginia Zoo, home to a three-year-old lion named Emery, who, like Logan, struggles with epilepsy.

“It’s been a trying year for everyone,” Patterson said, “and Logan has persevered through it all. He has such a big heart. Just like a lion. We’ve been so impressed with all that he’s done.”

“My first reaction was,” Logan said, “I was actually worried that I was in trouble, because they asked to speak to me alone. But then when I found out I was getting the adoption certificate, that totally blew me away because I had no idea. It meant a lot, just coming from the goodness of their hearts.”

As part of the zoooption, Logan had the chance to talk to Emery’s keeper.

“It was interesting to learn that the lion is actually on one of the same medications that I am on,” he said. “Also, hearing of all the ways they protect it — making sure it doesn’t get too near water, making sure it doesn’t get too hot. — I thought, ‘I’ve heard that before.’”

The visit to the zoo inspired him to come up with an acronym of his own — one that sums up the philosophy he’s chosen to embrace: L.I.O.N.

“Because of my epilepsy, I said that I always have to remember to L.I.O.N.,” Logan explained. “With epilepsy, I have to remember to laugh, to inspire others, I have to own it, and I have to never give up.”

## GUEST COMMENTARY

GREG ERLANDSON  
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

## When tomorrow is a day too late

The human tendency to postpone and procrastinate is at times breathtaking. It can also be fatal.

Now that Americans are starting to believe that COVID-19 variations can be more efficiently lethal, hundreds of thousands of us are finally getting vaccinated. For some, they will have delayed too long.

A 39-year-old father in Florida, a father

of five, died last month from the virus. Before he died, he texted, "I should have gotten the damn vaccine."

We all do this, putting off a task or a decision, despite warnings that delay may be harmful. Often these might be small decisions — renewing a license, filling a prescription, writing a term paper. The penalty may be small, the punishment minor.

But sometimes our tendency to delay can be much riskier.

An article in Foreign Affairs magazine titled "The Forever Virus" attempted to recommend "a strategy for the long fight against COVID-19." It was no surprise that a pandemic struck. Experts had been warning us.

Yet the failures of world leaders to rally effectively against the virus in its early stages has now left us in danger of multiple variants that may be even more deadly than the delta variant currently forcing us all back into masks.

See Commentary, Page 7

*Editor's note: The three letters on this page regarding coverage in the July 26 Catholic Virginian of Pope Francis' motu proprio "Traditionis Custodes" (Guardians of the Tradition) are representative of the responses those articles generated. Additional letters have been posted at [www.catholicvirginian.org](http://www.catholicvirginian.org).*

### Latin Mass does not sow division

It's heartbreaking to read the articles by Cindy Wooden misaligning the Traditional Latin Mass (Catholic Virginian, July 26). That the Latin Mass sows division or ignores the New Rite is false; quite the contrary.

When I visit a church celebrating Mass in the Novus Ordo, I find I have a greater devotion to the sacrifice than I had ever had prior to experiencing the Latin Mass. As a 62-year-old woman, I only remember the New Rite growing up.

Right out of high school I volunteered to be a catechist. I continued when I was stationed overseas with my husband and later as a parent. I proudly raised my children in the faith.

By chance I attended mass at Saint Benedict Parish, Chesapeake, and simply fell in love. I wasn't coerced or told not to return to my former parish. I was not encouraged to renounce Vatican II.

Instead, I found myself eager to embrace the Latin Mass, donning my veil, frequenting the confessional, kneeling often, praying and worshipping more solemnly than I ever had. That was 12 years ago.

I live in a community which is served by Novus Ordo parishes. I do not shun my neighbors or fellow Catholics. My enthusiasm for volunteering, participating in the Mass and increasing my knowledge for

the faith is more robust now than it has ever been.

There should be unity among Catholics, but I hope it is not at the expense of limiting the use of the 1962 missal, which is a treasure in and of itself, or the rubrics for the Latin Mass.

— **Katrice Krebs**  
Chesapeake

### Traditional Latin Mass brings her 'closer to God'

Upon reading the two articles by Cindy Wooden in the July 26 Catholic Virginian, I would like to express my heartfelt sadness. Both portrayed the Traditional Latin Mass as a useless, outdated rite and those who participate in this rite as aggressive people who create divisions, resist the Church and, ultimately, resist God.

I am a 19-year-old girl who regularly attends a Latin Mass parish. I love the Latin Mass for the prayers in the missal, the reverence of the priests, the devotion of the altar boys, the symbolism of every movement, the poetry of the prayers, the breath of the Holy Spirit in the music and the deep sense of the presence of God.

To me, nothing compares to being in my parish church and adoring God amidst the ancient beauty of this rite.

It was the Latin Mass which brought my family to Catholicism when I was 7 years old. We were not aggressively forced into the rite; rather, we visited a Latin Mass and knew we had found the truth in the Catholic faith. Without the Latin Mass, my family may not be part of the Church. Rather than dividing me, my family or other Catholics, the Latin Mass brought us closer!

The Latin Mass never has been and never will be useless nor outdated. I hope that the few people who have discredited traditional-minded Catholics will be overlooked in light of

the majority of souls who, like me, love the Traditional Latin Mass because we find we can be closer to God here than anywhere else.

— **Elizabeth Stephenson**  
Suffolk

### TLM coverage lacked 'rest of the story'

My response to the two articles regarding Pope Francis' "Traditionis Custodes" (Catholic Virginian, July 26) was that they were both missing, what Paul Harvey used to say, "The rest of the story."

The writers provided an accurate paraphrase of the motu proprio but they did not provide any information about the reaction to it from Virginia Catholics. That reaction could have easily been provided by interviews with lay people and priests who will be affected by it.

In my case, and based on my discussions with other traditional Mass-going Catholics, our reaction is that the rationale for the motu proprio was based on false claims about our sentiments regarding Vatican II and false claims about our sentiments about the new Mass. Also, the articles did not describe anything concerning the historical background.

Finally, the articles did not report on the concerns of many globally accepted, credible theologians that have determined that Pope Francis' motu proprio is not authoritative when canon law is applied.

Clearly missing from the reporting was the most interesting part of the story which is that our Holy Father, with "Traditionis Custodes," reversed, then obliterated, Pope Benedict XVI's motu proprio, "Summorum Pontificum," which formalized the intents of St. John Paul II concerning the freedom for all priests to celebrate the Traditional Latin Mass. (TLM)

— **Jonathan M. Grogg**  
Virginia Beach

*Editor's note: According to Msgr. R. Francis Muench, judicial vicar of the Diocese of Richmond, "Because canon law is in the hand of the legislator, as is its interpretation, one must regard the motu proprio, too, as binding. Liturgical law is still law."*

### Pro-choice Biles not a 'witness to faith'

Re: "Simone Biles' Olympics decisions: Witnessed to faith in advocating mental health (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 9): In this article, Biles was praised as a "great witness" to the Catholic faith for withdrawing from the all-around final due to mental health.

However, the same day the article was published, the athlete posted to her personal Instagram account, stating in regards to abortion that she is "very much pro-choice," as well as "your body, your choice."

This is in direct contradiction to Catholic Church teaching. The Catholic Church has always held firm that all "human life is sacred," and it must be "respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception" (CCC, 2258, 2270).

Women and unborn children deserve better than abortion. While mental health is an important

issue, greater prudence and discernment should be encouraged before exalting who could possibly be a "witness to faith" and a Catholic role model for our children.

— **Jiza G. Zito**  
Williamsburg

### Afghan arrivals need vaccinations

Re: "Bishops' agency helping resettle Afghan translators" (Catholic Virginian Aug. 9):

It is laudable for the Catholic bishops and its services to assist with the relocation of translators. My concern is if and when these people will be vaccinated for COVID. With the rapid spread of the Delta variant, hopefully a strategic plan is in place for a safe welcome and setting for these brave Afghan people.

This also presents a concern for the welfare of the 57 children and 12 babies mentioned in the article. As a member of a parish that may house some of the children, I would hope that careful thought has been considered for their welfare and that of the surrounding communities.

What steps have been taken to medically protect the Afghan population and the agencies' representatives? The communities directly affected need to be informed in a timely manner.

— **Phyllis Holland**  
Virginia Beach

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**Phone:** (804) 359-5654 • [www.catholicvirginian.org](http://www.catholicvirginian.org)  
**Circulation changes to:** [akrebs@catholicvirginian.org](mailto:akrebs@catholicvirginian.org)

**Publisher:** Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout

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

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**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.

# New principals at 3 schools

**A**s Diocese of Richmond schools began the academic year on Monday, Aug. 23, three of the schools had new principals.

Dominican Sister Mary Cecilia Goodrum is the principal at St. Mary Star of the Sea School, Hampton. A native of Nashville, Tennessee, she has been a religious sister for more than 30 years.

Sister Mary Cecilia has worked with students at the elementary, middle, high school and college levels in the Dioceses of Nashville, as well as in the Archdioceses of Denver, Cincinnati, Chicago, New Orleans and Atlanta.

She has graduate degrees in school administration, religious/biblical studies and counseling psychology.

Matthew Weatherford brings 15 years of experience in public school education as principal of Sacred Heart Catholic School, Danville. He taught technology and engineering at Chatham High School for nine years. For the last six years, he

has been assistant principal at Dan River High School.

Weatherford holds an undergraduate degree in business administration from the University of North Carolina – Greensboro and a master's degree in educational leadership from Arkansas State University – Jonesboro.

He and his family are members of St. Victoria Parish, Hurt.

For Carey Mae Jacobsen, a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Richmond, becoming principal of Our Lady of Lourdes School is a continuation of service that began there 20 years ago.

From 2001 until 2015, Jacobsen taught middle school mathematics and religion. She then moved into administration, first as the administration intern, then as assistant principal. Jacobsen earned her bachelor's degree at Virginia Commonwealth University and a master's degree and doctorate in educational leadership and policy studies through Virginia Tech.



**Dominican Sr. Mary Cecilia Goodrum**



**Matthew Weatherford**



**Carey Mae Jacobsen**



Hope4Life's two mobile ultrasound RVs are parked within their new secure location at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, Virginia Beach. The space is secured by aluminum fencing and monitored 24/7 by four high-definition, motion-activated cameras. The project was completed by volunteers from Knights of Columbus Father Habets Council 4632. (Submitted photo)

## Hope4Life's ultrasound RVs get secured parking places

**T**hanks to the generosity of organizations, individuals and a parish in the Hampton Roads area, Hope4Life's two mobile pregnancy resource centers will now be safe from vandalism and theft.

Father Eric Vogt, pastor of St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach, donated a small part of the parish parking lot to be transformed into a secure location to park the vehicles after the catalytic converters had been stolen at a previous parking area.

To prevent further hardships of that nature, members of the Knights of Columbus Father Habets Council 4632 secured the allocated section of asphalt with aluminum fencing and installed four high-definition, motion-activated cameras with solar-powered LED lights so the space can be monitored 24/7.

A 60-cubic-foot KNAACK Jobmaster steel cabinet was permanently positioned within the fence to house the electronics, tools and supplies that will be needed to maintain the RVs.

A new well water faucet was also installed so the Hope4Life vehicles can be washed regularly and with ease.

The cost of the project was approximately \$15,000. An anonymous donor provided \$10,000 of that amount, which was used to purchase and install the fencing. The remain-

ing balance – used to patch the asphalt and to purchase electrical cable, lights and light poles, security cameras and the steel cabinet – was provided by corporate and individual donors and Knights of Columbus councils from throughout the southside Tidewater area.

Fred Artho, member of the Father Habets Council, designed and managed the project. He led a team of volunteers from the council, which included Past Grand Knight Paul Trovato, Dick Voltz, George Elliot, John Sayer and Dan Shaughnessy.

Father Kevin Fimian, pastor at Joint Expeditionary Branch Little Creek – Fort Story bases and chaplain of Tidewater Hope4Life, and his brother, Keith, also helped with the construction.

Father Fimian blessed the new enclosure, and Father Vogt plans to do the same in the coming weeks.

The ultrasound machines in the RVs are an integral part of the outreach Hope4Life does to women who consider aborting their babies. Since 2015, the organization estimates it has saved 824 babies from being aborted, with a high percentage of those due to the ultrasounds they have provided to the mothers. Hope4Life members pray every Friday at noon on the sidewalk in front of a Virginia Beach Planned Parenthood clinic.

## Commentary

*Continued from Page 6*

The article's authors call for a "system reboot," including a "global health threats council" and a greater investment in testing and vaccines that will be able to address the worldwide need for both. "Figuring out how to" address this pandemic and prepare for the next one "might be the most meaningful challenge of our lifetime," they conclude.

Can we rise to the occasion?

In some ways, the collapse of the Florida condominium at Surfside in June seems a tragic metaphor for our current state of vacillation and avoidance.

The video of the building collapsing in the middle of the night

as residents slept unawares in their beds is the stuff of nightmares. And yet this unpredictable horror was, in fact, predicted. Media reports confirmed that there had been multiple warnings of danger.

The Washington Post reported that "debate over the cost and scope of the work ... dragged out preparations for the repairs for three years."

"Despite increasingly dire warnings from the board, many condo owners balked at paying for the extensive improvements."

Delay was the preferential option until it was too late.

Reading about the Surfside tragedy, I thought of climate change. Humanity has had decades of warnings. The scientific

evidence may have been tenuous at first, but it has become increasingly clear and increasingly dire.

Now we are seeing "storms of the century" and "fires of the century" every year. Beyond our shores, we are seeing droughts in Africa and the Middle East, while Siberia and the Arctic thaw. The warnings are growing starker, and yet we vacillate. Like the condo residents, we debate the scale of the problem and the cost of the solution.

The Church's social teachings on the common good are needed now more than ever, as humanity struggles to think beyond its own immediate desires and comfort.

At this providential moment in human history, we have a pope who

has made this message forcefully. In his encyclical "Laudato Si," Pope Francis appeals for all humanity "to protect our common home." He challenges us to "regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world."

The problems we face at times seem overwhelming. We procrastinate out of fear and, sometimes, indifference. The voice of the Church is needed now not only to challenge us, but to provide a sense of hope that we can meet the challenge together.

*Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.*

# Funeral Mass commends deceased to God's mercy



**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**  
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE  
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

**Q.** May a Mass of Christian Burial be celebrated for a baptized person who has been, for many years, away from the Church? (East Springfield, New York)

**A.** Yes, absolutely. The Church's Code of Canon Law states, in fact, that every Catholic has the right to a Catholic funeral, and the wording of the canon is strong: "Deceased members of the Christian faithful must be given ecclesiastical funerals according to the norm of law" (No. 1176).

The few exceptions to that rule are stated specifically in a subsequent canon and include such categories as "notorious apostates, heretics and schismatics" and "other manifest sinners who cannot be granted ecclesiastical funerals without public scandal of the faithful" (No. 1184).

A person who has been away from regular Church attendance could not, of course, receive holy Communion without going to confession first. But it is always possible that the deceased, in the privacy of his own conscience,

may not have realized the gravity of his offense or may have expressed repentance and been reconciled to the Lord.

The Church's rule on funerals gives a person the benefit of that doubt, and the funeral Mass commends the deceased to the tender mercy of God.

**Q.** For the past year, I have been striving for a stronger Catholic faith. (Before, I guess I would say that I was a lukewarm Catholic.) I was married in a Methodist Church and divorced 30 years ago through no fault of my own.

I have always received holy Communion. Is this wrong? (I have been reading different Catholic opinions.) (St. Clairsville, Ohio)

**A.** For the purpose of this answer, I am going to assume that you never received the Catholic Church's permission to marry in the Methodist Church.

(The possibility does exist, of course, that you might have received the necessary dispensation to be married in a Methodist ceremony, especially if you were marrying a Methodist, but since you did not mention that, I am going to assume that your mar-

riage took place without Catholic permission.)

If that is the case, that marriage would have violated Catholic teaching and would therefore have required either that you had the marriage "convalidated" in the Catholic Church or that you receive absolution in the sacrament of confession once that marriage had broken up.

If you did in fact confess this, then you have been correct in receiving holy Communion in the Catholic Church.

If, instead, you never confessed this, all you would need to do now is to make a worthy confession; then, going forward, you would be eligible to take Communion in the Catholic Church.

**Q.** A few years ago, our pastor who was in his 70s retired and was replaced by a priest in his 30s. At the time, our new priest was clean-cut, with short hair and no beard.

Shortly after arriving, though, he appeared to quit grooming and let his hair and beard grow, and they've been growing ever since. Now his hair is way over his ears and down his back, and his beard is to his waist.

Could this be some sort of vow of poverty? (The priest avoids

questions about his grooming, but it has become a distraction at Mass.) (City and state withheld)

**A.** As to your question whether this priest's long hair represents a vow of poverty, I doubt that this is the case — but the only sure route is to ask the priest himself.

You probably know that there is no present Church disciplinary regulation that forbids priests from having beards or long hair, so your priest is on a safe canonical path.

The former Code of Canon Law (in 1917) did require clerics to have a simple hairstyle but did not specifically forbid beards; and the current code (issued in 1983) specifies that clerics are to wear suitable ecclesiastical garb but makes no mention of hair or beards.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, popes were frequently bearded, but since that time there has been no bearded pope. Some notable saints wore beards, including Ignatius of Loyola, Francis de Sales and Philip Neri.

My advice to you would be to set aside your own preference as to this priest's appearance and just be grateful, especially during the current shortage of priests, that there is one to serve your parish.

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

## Masses for Hope & Healing

Bishop Barry C. Knestout will concelebrate three regional Masses for victim survivors of sexual abuse and their families.

The community is welcome to attend.

### Western Vicariate:

Friday, Sept. 17, 2021 at 7pm

Our Lady of Nazareth Church, Roanoke

### Eastern Vicariate:

Wed., Nov. 10, 2021 at 7pm

Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk

### Central Vicariate:

Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022 at 7pm

Saint Thomas Aquinas University Parish, Charlottesville

Counselors will be available an hour before and after Mass for anyone who desires to talk with them. Light refreshments will be served after Mass.

**For information, contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator, at 804-622-5175**



Please note: Photographs will be taken during the liturgy but only of the altar and bishop. Photos may be used for digital and print communications of The Catholic Diocese of Richmond.



# Embrace what St. Augustine learned about God



IN LIGHT OF FAITH  
BARBARA HUGHES

**O**n Aug. 27 and 28, the Church celebrates, respectively, the memorials of St. Monica and her son, Augustine, whose conversion is credited to his mother's constant prayer and involvement in his life — at times much to her son's chagrin.

Anyone who is praying for the conversion of a loved one would be inspired by Monica's constancy, but it's the "Confessions of St. Augustine" that has been lauded as a masterpiece. Although I read it decades ago, I reread it recently, and what impressed me in the past was different than what impressed me this time.

During the initial read I was interested in what Augustine disclosed about his life, but this time I was interested in what he shared about his relationship with God. Confounded by his discovery that despite his sinfulness, God never left him, the entire book is addressed to God, which has led some to regard it as a continual prayer.

In conversing with God, often in the form of rhetorical questions, the saint reveals his innermost thoughts. However, lest readers dismiss God's love and mercy as a foregone conclusion, Augustine acknowledges his bewilderment regarding the humility of a God whom heaven and earth cannot contain, yet condescends to be contained within mortal human beings.

The confession of his sins was never the saint's objective. His intent was to share the abundance and un-



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knowable bounty of God's love and mercy in response to the wayward and selfish tendencies of the human heart. It's a theme that's carried throughout the pages, which offers hope to all regardless of where they are on the journey.

Not everyone may be inclined to read the confessions of the man who eventually became a doctor of the Church, but most Christians are familiar with the words, "You have made us for yourself O God, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." Ironically, since the words appear in the first paragraph of the book, the foreword could include a spoiler alert since the saint announces the conclusion of his search at the very beginning of the book.

The account, which resembles a journal more than an autobiography, offers insights into Augustine's life as well as philosophical reflections on the growth and development of the human person from infancy to

adulthood. Long before psychologists posited theories regarding human behavior, the fourth century saint ventured into the dilemma of humanity's failure to choose what in their deepest center they know to be true.

Given the cultural proclivity to air the sins of others in public, Augustine's honest self-appraisal and acknowledgement of his own sins is refreshing. Yet confession was not his only purpose.

More than declaring his sins, he wanted to understand the reason why he sinned. In what he referred to as "a zeal for wisdom," Augustine invited God to accompany him as he revisited the sins and failings of his life. Recounting his continued failures, he wrote, "Suffering from a most fearful wound, I quaked in spirit...because I did not want to enter into a covenant with your will, O God."

Sometimes we can be too dismissive of our wrong doings, using

the words of St. Paul, "I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Rom 7:19) as an excuse for our failures.

Augustine took Paul's acknowledgement a step further. He explained that we have two wills: one that's complete and knows what is right and the other that's incomplete and acts according to its pleasure rather than according to the will of God.

The question for each of us is which will do we honor? When we begin to understand that God is nearer to us than we are to ourselves, we, like St. Augustine, will proclaim:

"You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you. In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things which you created. You were with me, but I was not with you.

"Created things kept me from you; yet if they had not been in you, they would not have been at all. You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness.

"You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace."

That same Spirit is still at work, changing hearts. I was reminded of this the other day when I met with a woman who had returned to the Church after being away for 45 years. And her story is just as inspiring as Augustine's.

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

## Be a hearer *and* doer of God's Word



BELIEVE AS  
YOU PRAY  
DEACON CHRISTOPHER COLVILLE

**W**e've just finished the five-week discourse on the Bread of Life in John's Gospel. In it we heard how we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, become what we receive, and, as a result of this transformation, are sent so others may experience Christ through us. Today we are presented with ideas of how to put this into practice.

We are challenged to be true to the Word that has been given to us, to be authentic, teaching the law and practicing it as it was presented. Deuteronomy tells us: "You shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it" (4:2) Deuteronomy also tells us that the nation that "observes them carefully" (4:6) gives evidence of their wisdom and intelligence.

In the Gospel, Jesus calls the Pharisees to task for not following God's directive. They have taken human precepts and made them part of the law

that the people must follow. Jesus goes even further, accusing them of disregarding God's commandments and clinging to human traditions. They have laid heavy burdens on the people by adding these to the law in direct opposition to what God has commanded.

The psalm speaks to us about the law — specifically about justice. Verse one, which is not part of our response, asks the questions, "Lord, who may abide in your tent?" and "Who may dwell on your holy mountain?"

It answers these questions in our psalm response. By walking blamelessly and doing justice, we will abide with God and dwell in his presence. While none of us can be considered totally blameless because we're not perfect, we can still try to be as good as possible and seek forgiveness for the times we fail.

Acting with justice is another matter. We may have different ideas about justice. One event can be defined as justice for one group and an injustice by another.

If we are looking to define justice, we look to the standard we are challenged with throughout the Old Testament and the standard Jesus used. The law given to Moses preaches justice, and part

of this justice is taking care of the vulnerable ones in society.

Throughout Deuteronomy — in fact, throughout all of the Old Testament — we hear how the law calls for fair treatment of widows, orphans, strangers or aliens and travelers. In his ministry, Jesus was concerned with those discarded by society — tax collectors, widows, lepers and others.

We must hear this Word of God, and let it reside within us. We're also told we can't be people who just hear, think and talk about justice.

In the second reading, James charges us to "be doers of the Word and not hearers only" (22). He also tells us that without works, faith is dead and that our actions demonstrate our faith (2:17-18). If we truly hear the Word of God and have faith, we act on it and do the things of God.

If we are hearers and doers of the Word, our faith not only resides in our hearts, but it flows from the heart in our actions. It is also from the heart that justice and truth flow.

Are we hearers and doers of God's Word? Do our hearts direct us in following God's law, putting it into action and bringing about justice? Do we stand firm, unshaken in our faith?

Psalm 15 tells us, "Whoever acts like this (with love and justice) will never be shaken."

*Deacon Christopher Colville serves at Church of the Redeemer, Mechanicsville.*

**Twenty-Second Sunday  
Ordinary Time, Cycle B  
Dt 4:1-2, 6-8; Ps 15:2-5;  
Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27;  
Mk 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

# 'Glorifying Christ comes first,' Paralympian says

Credits University of Illinois Newman Center for supporting her faith journey

**TOM DERMODY**  
Catholic News Service

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — When Jenna Fesemyer races at the Tokyo Summer Paralympic Games, the students and staff of St. John's Catholic Newman Center at the University of Illinois will be watching and cheering her on.

And Fesemyer, who was born without a left leg and hip socket because of a rare congenital disease and is now a world-class wheelchair athlete, will be thinking of them with gratitude.

"I owe a lot of my success to the support I've received during my time at St. John's Newman Center," said Fesemyer, who until this spring was resident director of Newman Hall on the Illinois campus. She stepped down to pursue her goal of making Team USA and competing in Tokyo.

In mid-June, Fesemyer attained that goal at the U.S. Paralympic Team Trials in Minneapolis, qualifying in three events — the 1,500-meter, 5,000-meter and marathon races — for the Aug. 24-Sept. 5 Games.

"It takes a village to become an Olympian," Fesemyer, 24, told The Catholic Post, newspaper of the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, after her success in Minneapolis. "And I can confidently say that my faith and the support I've received from the staff and students at St. John's have been instrumental in this journey."

The Newman Center also has been instrumental in her faith journey.

A native of Ravenna, Ohio, and a trailblazing athlete at Southeast

High School there, Fesemyer lived at Newman Hall as a student while working toward her 2019 University of Illinois degree in kinesiology and communication.

Raised in a nondenominational church, she picked the residence hall because it was very accessible and close to the university quad, but did not know until she arrived that it was part of the largest Catholic campus ministry of its kind in the United States.

"It was quite a surprise when we rolled up in the car and we saw priests and religious out moving boxes onto carts," said Fesemyer. "My family, we all looked at each other and we're like, 'What did we do?'"

She now recognizes it was God doing something.

In the second semester of her freshman year, she and her roommate took part in a Newman Center-sponsored retreat. Her first experience with adoration and Mass ignited a curiosity about the Catholic faith, a fire that was fueled by the sense of community she was already experiencing at Newman Hall.

Fesemyer completed the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults at St. John and entered the Church on Divine Mercy Sunday of 2017 — a week after others in her RCIA class because she was competing in the Boston Marathon that Easter weekend.

"Divine Mercy Sunday holds a very special place in my heart," she said.

There are many special places in Jenna Fesemyer's heart, including for



Jenna Fesemyer competes during the 2021 U.S. Paralympic Team Trials for track and field in Minneapolis. A Tokyo-bound member of Team USA, Fesemyer said she owes much of her success to the support she received during her years at St. John's Catholic Newman Center at the University of Illinois. (CNS photo/Mark Reis, U.S. Paralympics Track & Field, courtesy The Catholic Post)

her family. A triplet, she is technically the youngest child of David and Cindy Fesemyer by one minute. Brother Jonathan was born first and sister Jessica second.

Fesemyer, who wears a prosthetic leg, has many friends at St. John's Catholic Newman Center.

"I couldn't be happier for Jenna as she's attained a goal she's been aiming for a long time," said Father Robert Lampitt, head chaplain. "And yet, the way she bears a faithful witness to

our residents and other students is what really impresses me."

Fesemyer has trained countless hours to do well in Tokyo, and is honored to represent the United States there. But medals are not her highest goal.

"Glorifying Christ comes first, always," she said. "I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't look to Christ in my time of need or doubt. When we turn to Christ, our joys are multiplied."

## 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](http://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.

# Mandate must include conscience protections

## Where two Catholic groups stand on vaccines

MARK PATTISON  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Two Catholic organizations issued statements in July urging against imposing a coronavirus vaccine mandate without conscience, religious or medical exemptions.

In a poll of its members, the Catholic Medical Association said in a July 28 statement that all who responded “voiced moral/ethical objection to the use of aborted fetal cell lines in development, testing and/or production of all three currently available vaccines.”

“As an organization, CMA opposes mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations as a condition of employment without conscience or religious exemptions,” the association said. “An individual Catholic’s decision to be vaccinated should be informed by the clear and authoritative moral teaching of the Church on vaccinations.”

When it comes to health care organizations, “historically, a vaccinated workforce has been an effective means of fostering” a safe environment for its patients, CMA acknowledged.

“While we recognize the importance of this consideration medically and ethically,” it said, “the Church’s teaching is clear, that ‘as a rule’ vaccination ‘must be voluntary’ and based on an individual’s personal assessment in good conscience of the medical risks/benefits and morality of a particular vaccine. This is imperative.”

The National Catholic Bioethics Center, in a July 2 statement, said it “does not endorse mandated COVID-19 immunization with any of the three vaccines” which received emergency use authorization July 1 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

### Quotes Vatican statement

Both the NCBC and the CMA quoted from the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s Dec. 21, 2020, statement, “Note on the Morality of Using Some Anti-COVID-19 Vaccines.”

The NCBC quoted the Vatican statement, in part: “Those who, however, for reasons of conscience, refuse vaccines produced with cell lines from aborted fetuses, must do their utmost to avoid, by other prophylactic means and appropri-

*“As an organization, CMA opposes mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations as a condition of employment without conscience or religious exemptions. An individual Catholic’s decision to be vaccinated should be informed by the clear and authoritative moral teaching of the Church on vaccinations.”*

— Catholic Medical Association

ate behavior, becoming vehicles for the transmission of the infectious agent.”

“When ethically irreproachable COVID-19 vaccines are not available ... it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process,” said the CMA in quoting the document. “The moral duty to avoid such passive material cooperation is not obligatory... At the same time, practical reason makes evident that vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, it must be voluntary.”

The CMA, like the NCBC, also strongly emphasized that individuals who opt not to get vaccinated for reasons of conscience are obligated to avoid transmitting the virus.

“The NCBC’s position is that we do not take a position on receiving a vaccine. We do not tell people (to) get a vaccine, we do not tell people not to get a vaccine,” said Jozef Zalot, an NCBC staff ethicist, in a July 30 phone interview with Catholic News Service.

Zalot said NCBC developed its statement after receiving queries from parents of children about to attend college, “including Catholic colleges,” that were requiring students to be vaccinated.

“We drafted this very short response for them, but in that time, the issue has kind of exploded,” he added.

### No change in position

The Delta variant of the coronavirus is now responsible for the great majority of reported infections in the United States, and the number of infections has soared to a daily rate nearing 90,000, a number

first reached last November, eight months into the pandemic.

“Catholic executives, health care systems and emergency rooms, and governments are mandating vaccines, but our position remains the same,” Zalot said.

“As calls increase for universal vaccination as a condition of employment, a lack of accommodation will result in an individual’s inability to work in their chosen vocation, lead to further shortages of essential health care workers, while exacerbating existing hesitancy and distrust regarding the COVID-19 vaccines,” the CMA statement said.

“The exemption process should be clear and consistent while not placing an undue burden on those requesting an exemption, while protecting the health of all involved,” it continued. “As has been true throughout this pandemic, procedures followed to minimize risk of contracting or transmitting SARS-CoV-2 should be clearly delineated and those in particular who choose not to be vaccinated must agree to adhere to these provisions.”

“The call for mandates just started coming out a week and a half, two weeks ago, and we got four, five calls from members,” said Dr. Michael Parker, president of the 2,600-member CMA, in a July 30 phone interview with CNS.

### ‘Weigh risk-benefit’

The CMA’s poll found that unvaccinated members were bothered by the lack of conscience protections, Parker said. “Even the people who had gotten the vaccine had some concerns about the background and ethical testing” issues, he added. Parker said he has been vaccinated.

Millions of Americans have resisted getting vaccinated for reasons wholly unrelated to conscience or religious concerns.

“They have to weigh their risk-benefit for themselves and what the consequences for them are, and whether they’re willing to tolerate the outcomes,” Parker said.

“Any vaccination should be voluntary and not mandated, and there’s no moral obligation to get a vaccine,” he said. “But they do have some responsibility to the common good to take steps to avoid transmission of the disease.”

Medical workers, Parker said, go beyond the social distancing dictum to prevent COVID transmission.

“If we’re in with a patient who’s COVID-positive, we wear N-95 masks and goggles and making sure that we have negative air flow in the room for those patients if we possibly can and disposing of our PPE equipment in a proper manner,” said Parker, an OB-GYN. “We get screened every time we walk into the hospital for COVID.”

### U.S. bishops’ view

Between the doctrinal congregation’s declaration from last December and the two U.S. Catholic groups’ July statements, U.S. bishops and scholars made known in March their positions on the permissibility of receiving the available vaccines.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Doctrine, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in a March 2 joint statement, noted the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was made with the help of abortion-derived cell lines, but “given the worldwide suffering that this pandemic is causing, we affirm again that being vaccinated can be an act of charity that serves the common good.”

On March 4, a YouTube video featured Bishop Rhoades saying, “There’s no moral need to turn down a vaccine, including the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which is morally acceptable to use.” He cited an earlier Vatican statement that “has made clear that all the COVID vaccines recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience.”

## Pope

Continued from Page 1

“Love is also social and political” as these individual “small gestures of personal charity” add up, “overflowing” into something universal that is “capable of transforming and improving societies,” he said.

“Vaccination is a simple but profound way of promoting the common good and caring for each

other, especially the most vulnerable,” the pope said.

“I pray to God that everyone may contribute their own small grain of sand, their own small gesture of love; no matter how small, love is always great. Contribute with these small gestures for a better future. God bless you, and thank you,” he said.

Also offering messages encouraging vaccination were: Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes of Mexico;

Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, retired archbishop of São Paulo; Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chávez, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, El Salvador; and Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte of Trujillo, Peru.

The campaign encouraged people to go to GetVaccineAnswers.org and DeTiDepende.org for more information and answers to questions about the COVID-19 vaccines.

### Praying for Haiti



Left: Rosemary Overton, a member of St. Elizabeth, Richmond, prays during a prayer service for Haiti at her parish, Wednesday, Aug. 18. Below: Diane Atkins, chair of the diocesan Haiti Ministry Commission, speaks to participants.




Left: Father Jonathan Goertz, a member of the diocese's Haiti Ministry Commission, was the homilist at the service. Below: Deacon Charles Williams, right, greets Father Kesner Joseph, a priest from Haiti who is parochial vicar at St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen. Father Joseph gave a reflection at the event. (Photos/Deborah Cox)




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For more information, contact Margaret Keightley, Executive Director, Catholic Community Foundation at [mkeightley@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:mkeightley@richmonddiocese.org) or (804) 622-5121.

# Vandalization of statues continues at NYC churches

FLUSHING, N.Y. (CNS) — A newly installed and dedicated statue of St. Bernadette outside St. Michael's Catholic Church in Flushing in the Brooklyn Diocese was found vandalized Aug. 17.

The incident occurred at about 3:30 that morning when a man jumped over the church fence and knocked the statue over, according to a diocesan news release. The damage to the statue was in the area of its left forearm and wrist.

The statue of St. Bernadette and a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes were dedicated earlier this summer in remembrance of all parishioners who lost their lives to COVID-19.

"St. Michael's plays a central role in the faith and care of our neighbors through our Masses and faith-based services that feed the hungry," said Father Vincentius Do, pastor of the parish in the New York borough of Queens.

"For sure this act of vandalism is upsetting, but the faithful of St. Michael's and I are praying for the person who committed this act against our church," he said. "It is important to find the good in all things, and so I wish to take this opportunity to encourage the public to respect our church and our property, as well as that of all houses of worship."

The 109th Precinct of the New York City Police Department was investigating the vandalism. Father Do was already planning to have the statue repaired.

St. Bernadette is the patron saint of the poor, the sick and those ridiculed for their faith.

Exactly a month before the Flushing church's statue was damaged, two religious statues displayed outside Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in the New York borough of Queens were destroyed in an act of vandalism in the early morning hours.

The damaged statues included one of Mary

and one of St. Therese Lisieux, known as "the Little Flower." A news release from the Diocese of Brooklyn said the statues were dragged 180 feet from the church across 70th Avenue, where they were smashed with a hammer.

Earlier in the week, on the evening of July 14, the statues "were toppled over but were not damaged," the diocese said. "The individual involved in both acts of vandalism is believed to be the same person."

Other church property in the Brooklyn Diocese has been the target of vandals, including the grounds of the diocesan administrative offices in the Windsor Terrace section of Brooklyn.

In another case, a crucifix on the property of St. Athanasius Catholic Church in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn was toppled and damaged in the early hours of May 14.

New York police May 22 arrested a 29-year-old Brooklyn man, Ali Alaheri, in connection with that crime and an arson the week before. He was charged with one federal count of criminal mischief as a hate crime.

Similar incidents also have taken place in the Archdiocese of New York, including outside Our Lady of Mount Carmel-St. Benedicta-St. Mary of the Assumption Church on Staten Island. According to Catholic New York, the archdiocesan newspaper, a vandal destroyed statues of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and the Sacred Heart of Jesus outside the church in the early hours of May 15.

A week later, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York offered a prayer of invocation and reparation at the church.

At least one organization, the New York State Ancient Order of Hibernians, has taken New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio to task for not publicly condemning what it called a "rise in hate crimes targeting Catholics."

## Creation

*Continued from Page 5*

action plan, that it created a lot of energy and interest."

### Everyone has a role

Simon, an energy policy expert who is retired from positions in the U.S. Senate and the Obama administration, said that Cardinal Gregory's intentions for the plan were clear, as the committee drafted its framework for completion by archdiocesan staff.

"There was a very clear message that he has an expectation that pastors, parish staff and parishioners have a role to play" in addressing climate change, Simon said.

Mougey noted the plan underscores that environmental protection is integral to protecting human life. For example, in the plan's section on ecological education, it describes how to link care for creation with concern for marginalized communities as "important dimensions of what it means to be pro-life."

In his letter, Cardinal Gregory asked people to join him in the new dialogue on the environmental challenges facing the world that Pope Francis has called for, so future generations in the archdiocese can continue to "enjoy the natural beauty and splendor of the Chesapeake Bay, cherry blossoms and Potomac River."

As part of activities related to the release of the 22-page action plan, the archdiocese will celebrate an Oct. 3 Mass at with the theme: "Created by God: A Celebration of the Dignity of Life." People can attend the in-person Mass or follow it via livestream.

The Mass will highlight St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology, whose feast day is Oct. 4. The liturgy also will mark the start of October as Respect Life Month and "celebrate all of God's creation."



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## WHAT WE'VE HEARD

**Honored I:** Knights of Columbus Council 13170 at St. Gabriel Parish, Richmond, recently awarded college scholarships totaling \$4,000 to Stanford Vassar, Jack Merkel, Madison Williams and McKenzy Hinski — all members of the parish.

**Honored II:** The Virginia State Council Knights of Columbus recently honored Parker Mokry, a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Newport News, as its outstanding young man of the year. A senior at Oakland Homeschool, the Eagle Scout noted that his life "is guided by the Holy Spirit, my Catholic faith and the spirit of Scouting." St. Mary Star of the Sea Council 511 nominated Parker for the award.

**Positive response:** Publication of the Scripture word search in the Aug. 9 issue of The Catholic Virginian drew positive responses from readers. Word searches are planned for upcoming issues of the paper. In the meantime, please test your knowledge by doing the crossword puzzle on Page 14. A crossword puzzle is scheduled to appear in the last issue of each month.

**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](mailto:akrebs@catholicvirginian.org). Include your name and phone number in case we need to follow up. Information cannot be taken over the phone.

## 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 (richmond-diocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CDR-Application-For-Employment-11-17-16.docx) to Father Danny Cogut (Pastor) at dcogut@richmond-diocese.org or 314 Turner Road, Salem, VA 24153.

## SHORTTAKES

**Violins of Hope,** a touring exhibit of 60 violins played by Jewish musicians during the Holocaust, will be in Richmond through Sunday, Oct. 24. Some of the violins will be on display during this time at the Virginia Holocaust Museum, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture and the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia. Violinists with the Richmond Symphony will play instruments from the Violins of Hope collection during two featured concerts at Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on Thursday, Sept. 9 and at St. Mary Catholic Church on Friday, Sept. 10. For more information about the exhibit, the concerts and educational programs about Violins of Hope, visit [violinsofhope.org](http://violinsofhope.org).

**Peninsula Catholic Annual D.B. Brackin Golf Tournament,** Friday, Sept. 10, at Sleepy Hole Golf Course. 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. Please join us at 7 a.m. for registration, 8 a.m. shotgun start, and 11 a.m. lunch and winner ceremony. Register online at [www.peninsulacatholic.org/giving](http://www.peninsulacatholic.org/giving).

**Day Retreat: Praying with Icons.** They've been called "openings into mystery," "windows looking out upon eternity" and "gateways to heaven." Come and mine the hidden mysteries in these masterpieces at St. Clare Retreat Center, 620 Buckroe

Ave., Hampton, Saturday, Sept. 11, from 9 – 3. Barbara Hughes, columnist with The Catholic Virginian, will present insights and lead group discussions. Liturgy of the Eucharist will be offered. To register or for information, call 757-797-6627 or email: [Philippians2foundation@gmail.com](mailto:Philippians2foundation@gmail.com). Fee: \$10 to cover cost of lunch.

**Mark your calendar!** St. Michael Catholic Church is having its annual Rummage Sale this year to support our friends in Dos Palais, Haiti. Join us for this amazing sale Saturday, Sept. 11 from 7 a.m.-12 p.m. at St. Michael Catholic Church, 4491 Springfield Rd. in Glen Allen. We hope to see you there!

**16th Annual St. Benedict Oktoberfest,** Sept. 17-19, St. Benedict Church Festplatz in the heart of the Museum District, Belmont and Hanover. Authentic German food and beverages, live music and bands each day. More information at [www.stbenedictoktoberfest.com](http://www.stbenedictoktoberfest.com)!

**Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Norfolk,** proudly presents: "Music & The Sea" featuring The Harbor String Quartet, Sunday, Sept. 19, at 4 p.m. Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 6400 Newport Ave, Norfolk, VA 23505. Advance tickets are \$20; \$30 at the door. Join the Harbor String Quartet for an afternoon of beautiful music to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. Enjoy music of the sea and waterways for which the area is famous. Concert will include an array of styles and genres from both the sacred and secular repertoire, including the hauntingly beautiful Gregorian chant arrangement of "Ave, Maris Stella" ("Hail, Star of the Sea"). This performance is partially supported by funding from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Have you been touched by God the Father** through one of the ecclesial movements of the Catholic Church, and you want more? If so, please get in touch with us at [contact@awakeningthedomesticchurch.com](mailto:contact@awakeningthedomesticchurch.com) or call 757-814-1706.

**The Emmaus Journey: Serving the Spiritual Needs of Grieving Parents:** Of all the pains that life can hand us, arguably the most searing is the death of a child. A parent's world irrevocably and horrifically changes forever. As Jesus joined his distraught disciples on the road to Emmaus after his crucifixion, we ask him to join us as we struggle through this horrendous journey of grief daily. To meet the spiritual needs of parents whose children of any age have died by any cause, no matter how long ago,

the Diocese of Richmond now offers the Emmaus Journey — a faith-based, day-long, spiritual retreat for grieving parents offered by a team which includes grieving parents, spiritual directors, priests, deacons and parish leaders. The Emmaus Journey offers a safe place where you can seek peace, comfort and hope. Join us in a warm and loving environment with other parents who know something of your pain. This October we will have two retreats: Oct. 2 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Oct. 9 at Church of the Redeemer. Register at [bit.ly/EmmausJourneyRetreat2021](http://bit.ly/EmmausJourneyRetreat2021).

[mausJourneyRetreat2021](http://bit.ly/EmmausJourneyRetreat2021).

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

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[www.wordgamesforcatholics.com](http://www.wordgamesforcatholics.com)

### ACROSS

- 1 Jesuits' motto (abbr.)
- 5 Russian country house
- 10 Thrill
- 14 Polish site
- 15 Leers
- 16 To him, to Pierre
- 17 Pleasing
- 18 Wuthering Heights setting
- 19 Fastens a knot
- 20 Incessant
- 22 Toothed wheels
- 23 Energy-saving light source
- 24 Some
- 25 Equipment
- 27 Benedict's number
- 28 Small gland
- 32 A knife is named after this Catholic defender of the Alamo
- 35 Clock faces
- 36 His wife was turned to salt
- 37 Commander of the army who was made king over Israel in 1 Kings
- 38 Liverpool elevators
- 39 Molten rock
- 40 Santa \_\_\_ winds
- 41 Trousers
- 42 Catholic actress and First Lady of the American Theatre
- 43 Wife of Moses
- 45 "\_\_\_ and at the hour of our death. Amen"
- 46 Sister of Rachel
- 47 OT wisdom book
- 48 Road service org.
- 51 Husband of Sarai
- 54 Abominable
- 56 Military jail
- 57 Mistake
- 59 Wading bird
- 60 \_\_\_ Brummel
- 61 Musical instrument
- 62 Inflict on
- 63 Perry's creator
- 64 Targeted (with "in on")
- 65 Riding

### DOWN

- 1 Declare a marriage invalid
- 2 The Diocese of Portland is here
- 3 Did a kitchen job
- 4 Small secluded valley
- 5 Anno \_\_\_
- 6 Jesus' experience in the Garden
- 7 Overfill
- 8 Pronoun
- 9 A jawbone from this animal was sued as a weapon by Samson.
- 10 \_\_\_ Tekakwitha, "Lily of the Mohawks"
- 11 Hip bones
- 12 One who prompts
- 13 Judas betrayed Jesus with one
- 21 Jazz musician and Catholic convert Brubeck
- 22 Women
- 25 Jesus spoke of separating these from the sheep in Matthew 25
- 26 Old cloth measures
- 27 Number of apostles, in Roman numerals
- 28 Commandment that forbids killing
- 29 Adam was made from this
- 30 "...the greatest of these is \_\_\_" (1 Cor 13:13)
- 31 LAX postings
- 32 Ruth's second husband
- 33 Discontinued Dodge
- 34 Enclose in paper
- 35 Sister of Judah
- 38 Zhivago's love
- 39 The \_\_\_ of Moses
- 41 Composition in verse
- 42 Biblical instrument
- 44 Frogs or locust
- 45 Biblical hunter
- 47 Rhone tributary
- 48 Boss monk
- 49 Catholic United States Supreme Court Justice
- 50 "The Tortoise and the Hare" author
- 51 French clergyman
- 52 \_\_\_ rabbit
- 53 Monetary unit of Iran
- 54 Small drink of liquor
- 55 Verdi opera
- 57 NT epistle
- 58 "\_\_\_ Bravo"

(Answers on Page 16)

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# Edith Stein, el don de la vida contra la intolerancia

“Una mártir, una mujer coherente, una mujer que busca a Dios honestamente, con amor y una mujer mártir de su pueblo judío y cristiano”. Así definió el Papa Francisco a Santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz, a quien la Iglesia celebra este 9 de agosto. Una figura que todavía hoy ilumina el camino, especialmente para Europa, de la que es copatrona.

**BENEDETTA CAPELLI**  
CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

Una hija querida de la Iglesia que ha reconocido su testimonio de fe, de amor, su ser “luz en la noche oscura”, como definió Benedicto XVI a Edith Stein. Nacida en la Silesia alemana en 1881 en el seno de una familia judía, se hizo filósofa y luego se convirtió al catolicismo, sin negar nunca sus orígenes judíos, porque le llamó la atención la vida de Santa Teresa de Ávila.

Se convirtió en religiosa carmelita con el nombre de Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz y durante los años de la persecución nazi fue trasladada a Holanda. Pero fue aquí, en el Carmelo de Echt, donde escribió su deseo de ofrecerse “como sacrificio de expiación por la verdadera paz y la derrota del reino del Anticristo”.

Dos años después de la invasión nazi de los Países Bajos, en 1940, fue llevada a Auschwitz junto con otros 244 judíos católicos como acto de represalia contra el episcopado holandés, que se había opuesto públicamente a las persecuciones. Murió en el campo de exterminio junto con su hermana Rosa, que también se había convertido al catolicismo.

## El amor cura el dolor

San Juan Pablo II la canonizó el 11 de octubre de 1998, destacando su “camino en la escuela de la Cruz” y mostrando cómo el amor hace fecundo incluso el dolor. Al año siguiente la elevó a copatrona de Europa junto con Santa Catalina de Siena y Santa Brígida de Suecia. La editorial Città Nuova ha presentado recientemente la serie “Obras completas de Edith Stein”. La editora es la profesora Angela Ales Bello, profesora emérita de Historia de la Filosofía



**Santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz, también conocida como la Santa Edith Stein, aparece en una foto sin fecha. Santa Teresa se convirtió del judaísmo al catolicismo durante un curso de trabajo como filósofa y luego ingresó a la orden carmelita. Murió en el campo de concentración nazi de Auschwitz en 1942.** (archivos del CNS).

de los demás. Y aquí es sumamente importante el concepto de “comunidad” que propone Stein, una comunidad que significa solidaridad y asunción de responsabilidad mutua. Se trata, pues, de un mensaje moral basado en una dimensión fundamentalmente religiosa, judeo-cristiana.

**- El Papa Francisco ha destacado sus valientes elecciones, tanto en su conversión a Cristo como en la entrega de su vida contra toda forma de intolerancia y perversión ideológica. ¿Cree que hay aspectos de esta figura que son menos conocidos hoy en día?**

Ciertamente es una figura completa y compleja. Complejo significa que es difícil captar todos los matices de su personalidad. Mi largo conocimiento de los escritos de Stein me ha permitido entrar en sintonía, al menos así lo creo, con una persona valiente hasta la médula, y así lo demuestra también su participación en la Primera Guerra Mundial como enfermera de la Cruz Roja en su juventud, en contra del consejo de su familia porque el trabajo era naturalmente muy arriesgado.

Se encontraba en un hospital donde también había enfermos de tifus y, por tanto, en una situ-

Contemporánea en la Universidad Pontificia Lateranense de Roma y presidenta de la Asociación Italiana Edith Stein.

La profesora destaca las similitudes entre el momento histórico actual, marcado por la pandemia, y el que vivió Santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz, condicionado a su vez por la gripe española.

**- ¿Qué nos pueden decir hoy la historia y el pensamiento de Edith Stein en medio de una emergencia pandémica? ¿Cuál es su mensaje?**

Yo diría que el mensaje tiene varias lecturas. En primer lugar, se trata de actuar en la historia y, por tanto, de ser capaces de convertirnos, dentro de nuestro propio ámbito de actuación, en verdaderos protagonistas de una acción orientada al bien, naturalmente no sólo al nuestro, sino también al

de los demás. Pero no sólo este elemento muestra su valentía, también la forma en que afrontó su, conocida como conversión religiosa con respecto a su familia que, por supuesto, no podía aceptar este paso a una visión diferente a la del judaísmo. Y de nuevo en el momento de la persecución, es realmente un ejemplo extraordinario de la serenidad interior que da la conciencia de la fe para afrontar cualquier situación negativa.

Del 5 al 9 de agosto fue trasladada a Auschwitz junto con su hermana, que la había seguido al Carmelo de Echt, en Holanda. Según el testimonio de algunos de los supervivientes, se dedicó especialmente a cuidar de los niños que a menudo habían sido abandonados por sus madres, que ya no podían ocuparse de ellos por la angustia y el dramatismo de la situación. En sus escritos habla de la fuerza espiritual que puede contrarrestar todas las situaciones negativas de la vida, incluso cuando falta lo que ella llama la fuerza vital.

**- ¿Qué imagen de Edith Stein recuerda la colección de la que usted es editora?**

En primer lugar la de pensadora, no hay que olvidar toda su investigación filosófica. Tenía una capacidad teórica y la habilidad de intuir inmediatamente los elementos fundamentales ante una situación problemática y extraordinaria. La suya era una gran inteligencia en el sentido de la comprensión. Su reflexión se centró fundamentalmente en el ser humano, pero luego desde el ser humano en su singularidad pasó a los demás: de ahí el gran tema de la intersubjetividad, de la interpersonalidad.

La enseñanza de Stein sobre el proceso educativo es sumamente importante, y es fundamental no sólo para los jóvenes, a los que naturalmente presta gran atención en las escuelas y las familias, sino también para una educación que podríamos definir como permanente, recíproca y para toda la vida. Sus obras son realmente una muestra extraordinaria de su excepcional actividad intelectual; es una de las más grandes filósofas de todos los tiempos. Stein es, en mi opinión, un faro y, al mismo tiempo, va unida a otras pensadoras que demuestran que las mujeres tienen una extraordinaria capacidad teórica. Stein, que dio clases en el instituto durante muchos años, decía que sus alumnas tenían grandes capacidades metafísicas, para captar con precisión la esencia de los fenómenos fundamentales de la relación entre el ser humano y Dios, el ser humano y el mundo.

## Virginia Housing Celebrará el mes “Nacional de la Herencia Hispana” ofreciendo sesiones virtuales en vivo y en español

RICHMOND, Va. – ¿Está pensando en comprar una casa, pero no sabe por dónde empezar? Virginia Housing puede ayudar.

Charlando EN VIVO: La compra de una casa con Virginia Housing es una serie de sesiones virtuales gratuitas de una hora diseñadas para aprender el proceso de compra de una casa y contestar preguntas frecuentes sobre la compra de vivienda.

“Estas sesiones virtuales son perfectas para compradores de vivienda por primera vez,” señaló LaDonna Cruse, gerente de Educación para la Vivienda en Virginia Housing. “Los temas incluirán cómo calificar para un préstamo hipotecario, la asistencia para el pago inicial y los costos de cierre y consejos para la búsqueda de vivienda. Llegar a ser propietario de una vivienda es mucho más factible de lo que la mayoría de la gente cree, y animamos a los compradores de vivienda por primera vez a aprender más sobre el proceso de compra de vivienda. Queremos que estén preparados para hacer realidad sus sueños de ser propietarios de una casa”.

### Aprender sobre la propiedad de la vivienda

Virginia Housing ofrecerá las siguientes sesiones virtuales gratuitas para tratar temas importantes para los compradores de vivienda:

- Cómo prepararse para ser propietario de una casa, 14 de septiembre del 2021 – mediodía a 1 p.m.
- Explorar los prestamistas, las hipotecas y el proceso de préstamo, 15 de septiembre del 2021 – mediodía a 1 p.m.
- Encontrar la casa correcta, 16 de septiembre del 2021 – mediodía a 1 p.m.

Las sesiones contarán con un panel de expertos en la materia hispanohablantes, incluyendo asesores de vivienda, prestamistas y agentes de bienes raíces. Para obtener más información e inscribirse en las sesiones virtuales gratuitas, visite el Calendario de Eventos para Compradores de Vivienda de Virginia Housing en [VirginiaHousing.com/ClasesEnEspañol](http://VirginiaHousing.com/ClasesEnEspañol).

“Incluso con los desafíos que la pandemia nos ha traído, los compradores motivados siguen comprando casas mediante el uso de tecnología innovadora, como sesiones virtuales de asesoramiento y visitas virtuales a casas, solicitudes de préstamo en línea y cierres electrónicos”, indicó Cruse. “Esperamos apoyar a los compradores de vivienda de Virginia en estos tiempos sin precedentes, ofreciendo estas sesiones virtuales sin costo alguno”.

### Acerca de Virginia Housing

Cuando las viviendas son asequibles y permiten el acceso a empleos, buenas escuelas y transporte, todos se

benefician. La vida de cada persona mejora y las comunidades en su conjunto se fortalecen. Virginia Housing fue creada en 1972 por la Asamblea General para ayudar a los virginianos a obtener una vivienda asequible de buena calidad. Llevamos adelante esta misión trabajando en asociaciones público-privadas con gobiernos locales, organizaciones de servicio comunitario, prestamistas, agentes de bienes raíces, desarrolladores y muchos otros. Proporcionamos hipotecas para compradores de vivienda por primera vez, así como financiamiento para comunidades de apartamentos y esfuerzos de revitalización de vecindarios. Ofrecemos clases gratuitas para compradores de vivienda, apoyamos el asesoramiento sobre vivienda y ayudamos a las personas con discapacidades y a los ancianos a hacer sus casas más habitables. También administramos los programas federales de vales de elección de vivienda (Housing Choice Voucher) y de crédito de vivienda (Housing Credit) en Virginia. Virginia Housing es autosuficiente y no recibe dinero de contribuyentes estatales para financiar nuestros programas. En cambio, recaudamos fondos en los mercados de capitales y aportamos una parte significativa de nuestros ingresos netos cada año para ayudar a satisfacer las necesidades de vivienda más difíciles de Virginia. [www.virginiahousing.com](http://www.virginiahousing.com)

# The priest, the Klan and a wedding remembered

## Centennial of a murder commemorated in Alabama

CHAI BRADY  
Catholic News Service



**Father James E. Coyle, born in Drum, Ireland, in 1873, was murdered by the Rev. Edwin R. Stephenson Aug. 11, 1921. Rev. Stephenson turned himself in for the murder and was found not guilty. Father Coyle is pictured in an undated photo.**

(CNS photo/Birmingham Public Library Archives)

DUBLIN — Irish Father James E. Coyle faced prejudice and threats and ministered during the height of the Spanish flu pandemic. One hundred years ago, he was shot and killed by a Protestant minister in Birmingham, Alabama.

After ministering in Mobile, Alabama, for eight years, Father Coyle served as pastor of the Cathedral of St. Paul in Birmingham for almost 17 years. In Birmingham, he became chaplain for the Knights of Columbus, and his contemporaries cited his passion and fervor for the faith. At the time, the Catholic population of Birmingham was growing rapidly due to an influx of thousands of Italian miners and steelworkers.

The growing Catholic presence was not universally welcomed. The Ku Klux Klan was the predominant influence in Alabama and dubbed itself a “patriotic” fraternity that targeted Catholics, Jews, African Americans and others.

It was a time when laws were passed that allowed Catholic convents, monasteries and hospitals to be searched without a warrant. The KKK fueled hysteria that the Knights were the military arm of the pope and were stockpiling weapons and planning an insurrection. It also claimed Catholics were kidnapping Protestant children and women.

The Rev. Edwin Stephenson, a minister in the now-defunct Methodist Episcopal Church and a member of the KKK, had a well-known hatred of Catholics. Ruth, his daughter, became fascinated with Catholicism when she was 12 and began secretly taking instruction from the nuns at the Convent of Mercy. She was baptized a Catholic when she was 18. However, she was beaten badly when her parents discovered what she had done.

Just months later, on Aug. 11, 1921, Father Coyle celebrated the wedding of Ruth Stephenson and Puerto Rican Pedro Gussman, who had worked at Rev. Stephenson’s house several years earlier. Shortly after the wedding, enraged by the ceremony, Rev. Stephenson went to the Catholic church with his rifle. There he found Father Coyle reading on the porch and shot him three times, once in the head. The priest died shortly afterward.

Rev. Stephenson immediately turned himself in and was charged with murder. He was defended by a lawyer, Hugo Black, who later joined the Klan. The Klan paid Rev. Stephenson’s legal fees, and he was found not guilty. Black went on to serve in the U.S. Senate and subsequently served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court until

his death in 1971.

But on the centenary of his murder, Father Coyle is still remembered with pride in his native County Roscommon. Speaking to The Irish Catholic newspaper, Father Coyle’s great-niece, Chrissy Killian, explained how her Great Aunt Marcella Coyle — Father Coyle’s sister — lived with her after returning to Ireland from Alabama. In the U.S., she had helped out in the parish where Father Coyle was killed; after the murder, she moved to Mobile, before returning to Ireland in 1963.

“She was in the rectory when Stephenson walked up and shot Uncle Jim. She went out and she screamed and called for a doctor,” Killian told The Irish Catholic.

Killian recalled Father Coyle being spoken of as “a very poetic man, a strong-minded and principled man — a strong Fenian (Irish nationalist) back in the early 1900s.”

By the standards of the day, Father Coyle was progressive, Killian said.

“He allowed Black people into his church, and I think he founded the first Black school in Birmingham, which was very badly received by the Ku Klux Klan. He was honored by the civil rights movement in Birmingham, Alabama, and they have a library dedicated in his honor and a website.

“They remember him everywhere in Alabama,” she said with pride.

On Aug. 11, the Cathedral of St. Paul livestreamed a Mass on its Facebook page (@stpaulbhm) for the 100th anniversary of Father Coyle’s death.

In May 2012, Catholics and Methodists gathered at Highlands United Methodist Church in Birmingham for members of both

denominations to seek forgiveness and reconciliation.

A report on Father Coyle’s funeral appeared in the September 1921 Catholic Monthly. A Mrs. L.T. Beecher wrote there were “thousands of men and women of all classes and denominations gathered around St. Paul’s Church long before the hour of three o’clock, which has been fixed for the funeral service. ...”

It said “all the Catholics of the district have been so stricken with grief, have received such a test of their Christian patience and fortitude as, pray God, may come no more to us personally or collectively while this earthly trial lasts. Deep in the hearts of all who revere simple goodness and loyalty to an ideal was our priest who, for 17 years, went about among us doing good.”

Then-Bishop Edward P. Allen of Mobile said Father Coyle “labored and preached the word of God in season and out of season, visiting the sick, instructing the little ones of the poor and needy and afflicted. He especially labored to bring the people to the holy sacrifice of the Mass.”

During the Spanish flu, a pandemic in which it is estimated 50 million people died, places of worship in Alabama were closed to stop the spread of the virus — much like what happened in many jurisdictions due to the current pandemic.

Father Coyle reached out to his parishioners at this time to emphasize the importance of the congregation coming together for Mass. He said: “You are, for the first time in your lives, deprived of hearing Mass on Sunday, and you will, I trust, from this very circumstance appreciate more thoroughly what the Mass is for Catholics.”

# Drama in Church, Chinese relations

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (CNS) — The ongoing “drama” between Chinese Catholics and the nation’s communist leaders has three stages, said Chinese Archbishop Savio Hon Tai-Fai, the Vatican’s nuncio to Greece.

The current stage in the drama, in effect since 2013, is one of “shrinking and getting confused,” Archbishop Hon said. “As a result of the drama, people feel so disoriented, disconnected,” Archbishop Hon said in his recent keynote address to the 28th international conference of the U.S.-China Catholic Association, held at Jesuit-run Santa Clara University.

Archbishop Hon cited three major players in each stage of the drama: the communist regime, the Church in China and the Vatican.

The first stage he characterized as “resisting and divided,” a period lasting from 1949 to 1980, during which “the Church is also divided.” Many Catholic leaders were arrested earlier during this period, Archbishop Hon said, as the Church was being split into underground — not official — and above-ground — recognized by the government — communities, “hostile to each other.”

That was the regime’s intent: “divide the people, and easy for control” Archbishop Hon said, while China continued to deride Vatican “imperialism” and offer “carrots and sticks” to Catholics, depending on how much one wanted to do the communist government’s bidding.

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## Correction

In the Aug. 9 Catholic Virginian story regarding permanent diaconate inquiry sessions, the school that had been providing academic formation was incorrectly listed as St. Leo College. It is St. Leo University.

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