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Hispanic community focus of formation office expansion 'Appropriate cultural context' integral part of transition

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

For nearly a year, the Diocese of Richmond's Office of Christian Formation (OCF) has been building a house — a metaphorical house.

Building began in September 2020 when Comboni Missionary Sister Inma Cuesta, director of the Office of Ethnic Ministries (OEM), moved to Rome to work in her congregation's General Administration. During her 11 years of serving the diocese, Sister Inma oversaw formation of catechists, leaders and adults in the Hispanic community.

Bishop Barry C. Knestout appointed Emily Filippi, director of the OCF, acting director of the OEM and determined that all aspects of formation be housed in the Christian Formation Office.

(The diocese is in the process of hiring a director for the OEM.)

Filippi used the house metaphor to describe how the OCF is expanding with personnel and responsibilities in faith formation.

To bring all of the formation personnel into one area, the offices of Daniel Villar and Araceli Perez, who had been part of the OEM, were relocated among those of the OCF staff.

"It became apparent to me that moving office spaces up to the second floor (of the Pastoral Center) was not going to integrate us," Filippi said. "We decided we'd see that as a sleepover. Just one night. You're joining us. We've taken that approach as to how we're working together."

Until a director is hired for the OEM, Villar will continue to be involved with migrant ministry, the OEM newsletters and social media,

and compiling copy for the Spanish page in The Catholic Virginian.

With the OCF, Villar is an associate director and Perez is an administrative assistant — the same positions they had in the OEM. The other OCF associate directors are Sheri Kemp, Megan Cottam and Bernadette Harris. Nina Henry serves as an administrative assistant.

"We are beginning to enjoy each other and beginning to understand unique patterns in our work," Filippi explained. "We haven't really finished the interior of the house; it isn't completely decorated yet, but we're well on our way."

She noted that Villar and Perez "have been a big help."

"We are expanding our office while maintaining appropriate cultural context. Daniel is very mindful of elevating our recognition of that,"

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Sliding at All Saints School



Junior kindergartener Tristan Robinson enjoys outdoor playtime on Monday, Aug. 23, the first day of school at All Saints School, Richmond. More back-to-school photos on Pages 3 and 7. (Photo/Karen DeMarino)

Pope encourages living simpler, eco-friendly lives

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — People should change the way they eat, travel and use natural resources, energy and products so they minimize their harm to the earth, Pope Francis said.

"Let us pray that we all will make courageous choices, the choices necessary for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, taking inspiration from our young people who are resolutely committed to this," the pope said.

In a video message (<https://youtu.be/FnQxcFLH7Y8>) released by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network Sept. 1, the pope offered his prayer intention for September, which he dedicated to "an environmentally sustainable lifestyle."

Sept. 1 also marked the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, which also kicks off the celebration of the Season of Creation, which runs to Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

The theme this year is "A home for all? Renewing the Oikos (House)

of God," Pope Francis said during his general audience at the Vatican Sept. 1.

He told those gathered that he, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, an early leader in the Christian ecology movement, and Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury "have prepared a message that will be issued in the coming days."

"Together with our brothers and sisters of different Christian denominations, let us pray and work for our common home in these times of grave crisis for the planet," he said at the general audience.

The pope also confirmed that "in principle" he was scheduled to attend the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, in November, during an interview aired Sept. 1 with COPE, the radio network owned by the Spanish bishops' conference.

"In principle, the program is that I go. It all depends on how I feel at the time," he said.

"But, in fact, my speech is

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The Catholic Virginian
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Make your heart a dwelling place of peace



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

Like many of you, I have been reflecting on and praying about the international unrest in which we have been living since the morning of August 26. We are living in a time of increased fragility of peace in our world.

During these recent days, I've been offering special prayer intentions for the people of our diocese. Among those prayer requests have been many for the members of our military services, those serving in Afghanistan and the Afghani people. I included those who lost their lives among U.S. military personnel and civilians, and the friends and families who grieve their loss.

I encourage all our parishioners, as a diocesan Church, to join me in prayer for the physical, emotional and spiritual healing of the injured and for those in Afghanistan whose lives remain in jeopardy. So also, please offer prayers of gratitude for the many members of the military in our diocese who have served in Afghanistan and for their families — all of whom have shared in the sacrifice that comes with military service.

As I've reflected and prayed, my thoughts turned to how our Church has responded when refugees from worn-torn countries have come to the United States. I recall how in the 1970s, my father worked as a deacon and with

the St. Vincent de Paul Society to help settle Vietnamese refugees in the Archdiocese of

“In troubling times, especially in the midst of international unrest, our faith and hope may be tested. However, when we embrace the Prince of Peace and live the Gospel he proclaimed, we know that the faith and hope we place in him will sustain us.”

— BISHOP KNESTOUT

Washington. In the same way, I am grateful for the service Commonwealth Catholic Charities is providing at Fort Lee in welcoming and assisting in the resettlement of Afghan refugees in these days.

In troubling times, especially in the midst

of international unrest, our faith and hope may be tested. However, when we embrace the Prince of Peace and live the Gospel he proclaimed, we know that the faith and hope we place in him will sustain us.

In his 1963 encyclical “Pacem in Terris” (“Peace on Earth”), St. John XXIII wrote, “... the world will never be the dwelling place of peace, till peace has found a home in the heart of each and every man, till every man preserves in himself the order ordained by God to be preserved” (165).

He further asked that we “pray with all fervor for this peace which our divine Redeemer came to bring us. May he banish from the souls of men whatever might endanger peace. May he transform all men into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love. May he illumine with his light the minds of rulers, so that, besides caring for the proper material welfare of their peoples, they may also guarantee them the fairest gift of peace” (171).

I assure you that I will continue to pray for the intentions with which you have entrusted me, and I invite all members of our Catholic community to join me in prayer and to lift up those family members and loved ones who may be hurting from this violent attack. I especially ask you to keep our military troops in prayer as they continue their humanitarian and national defense missions. May God grant us all protection and give us strength.

Our Lady Queen of Peace, pray for us.

IN MEMORIAM

Bon Secours Sister Victoria ‘Vicky’ Segura



A Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated Friday, Sept. 10, 10:30 a.m. at St. Bridget Catholic Church, 6006 Three Chopt Road, Richmond, for Bon Secours

Sister Victoria “Vicky” Segura. Sister Vicky, 79, died Monday, Aug. 23, of cancer.

Born and educated in the Philippines, Sister Vicky received her medical degree from the University of the Philippines in 1967 and entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in April 1979, professing her final vows in 1986.

She was a medical examiner in New York City before joining the Sisters of Bon Secours. Upon entering the Congregation, she served as a pathologist at St. Mary’s Hospital, Richmond, before moving in 1981 to Grosse Pointe, Michigan, where she worked with a family practice.

From 1986-2000, she was medical director of Bon Secours Hospital Hospice of Southeast Michigan. Sister Vicky became board certified in hospice and palliative medicine, and in 2000 began serving as medical director of Hospice/Palliative Care for Bon Secours Richmond Health System in a program known as the Care of the Dying/End of Life Initiative. She was a leader

in the hospice movement and became the first full-time hospice physician in central Virginia.

After many years of providing direct patient care, in 2019 Sister Vicky helped to raise funds to complete the Community Hospice House in Bon Air.

Within her Bon Secours Congregation, Sister Vicky held active roles on the formation team and provincial council. She served as vocation director and chaired the ongoing formation task force. Sister Vicky served as president of the board of directors of Bon Secours St. Mary’s Health Care Foundation, St. Mary’s Hospital, Stuart Circle Hospital, Richmond Community Hospital and Bon Secours Memorial Regional Hospital, all in Richmond.

She was an avid gardener, an accomplished photographer and loved to travel.

“Sister Vicky was a creative, good and generous friend and made so many contributions to our congregation and to the people of Richmond. She was indeed a pioneer in the field of hospice and palliative care, and her contributions to the field will have an ongoing impact on so many people in the future. She will indeed be missed,” said Sister Elaine Davia, area leader for the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Bon Secours Community Hospice House, 1133 Old Bon Air Road, Richmond, VA 23235.

IN MEMORIAM

Bon Secours Sister Mary Regina Flatley



A funeral Mass was celebrated for Bon Secours Sister Mary Regina Flatley on Wednesday, Sept. 1, in Marriottsville, Maryland. Sister Mary Regina, 89, died of natural causes on Monday, Aug. 23.

A native of Philadelphia, Sister Mary Regina entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in

1951 and professed her final vows in 1959. She attended Bon Secours School of Nursing, received a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Villanova and her master’s in education with a focus on counseling from the University of Delaware. She also received a certificate in spirituality/spiritual direction from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California.

Sister Mary Regina was a clinical director in the Bon Secours School of Nursing and served as vice president of mission and associate director at Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital. She also served as vice president for mission at Bon Secours DePaul Hospital in Norfolk.

She was on the boards of many Bon Secours facilities over the years and was president of the Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital board of trustees and the Bon Secours St. Francis Xavier and Bon Secours St. Joseph Healthcare boards. Sister Mary Regina was also president of the Bon Secours Health System board from 1986-90.

Sister Mary Regina served for two terms as provincial of the Sisters of Bon Secours USA, and in November 1999, she was elected to the Congregational Leadership Team in Paris, France.

Needs of military-connected students addressed

Presenters offer teachers strategies at professional day

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

It's a life full of hellos and good-byes for children in military families. They attend an average of six to nine schools before graduating, and they deal with parent deployments to locations afar.

That was a message that Julie Coffey and Kim Shoffner, trainers with the non-profit Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC), shared during their Aug. 18 presentation at a virtual professional day for Catholic educators in the diocese. They spoke on how to recognize and respond to the needs of military-connected students.

The Diocese of Richmond's Office of Catholic Schools sponsored the day, whose theme was "Teach as Jesus Did: Meeting the Needs of Catholic School Students." Approximately 750 educators participated.

Shoffner defined military-connected students as children and youth who have at least one parent or guardian who is on active duty in the armed forces or who is a veteran, member of the Reserves or in the National Guard.

Coffey said some of the top challenges facing military-connected children and youth are parent deployment, frequent relocation, adapting to new schools, making friends and tension at home.

But there is a bright side.

Those experiences provide military-connected students "the opportunity to develop some pretty amazing strengths," Shoffner said, noting that they are resilient and are often optimistic, tolerant, resourceful, adaptable and responsible. They tend to welcome challenges, have good peer relationships and a greater respect for authority. They can be empathic and are likely to befriend someone who is "different" because they know what it's like to be "an outsider" and feel like they "don't fit into the group."

When teachers at the event were asked how relocating can affect military-connected students, some of the challenges they typed online were loneliness, making friends, stress and the feeling of lack of control.

Therefore, providing a consistent and structured environment



Sonia and Ryan Burgess, a U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant, help their son, Caleb, a second grader at St. Mary Star of the Sea School, Hampton, with his supplies during a "meet and greet" session on Monday, Aug. 23. St. Mary Star of the Sea is one of several schools in the diocese serving military-connected students. (Photo/Maritza Davila)

is crucial, Shoffner said. Coffey added that it gives "some solace" to military-connected students to be able to predict what will happen, especially if family life is unpredictable at that time. It could be soothing for a child to know when the bell will ring, where their cubby is, that lunch follows a particular subject and that they go to Mass once a week.

"Schools can really be that stable foundation for those families," Shoffner said. "Kids crave routine. It's something they can really depend on."

Building positive relationships with students and their families is "key," Shoffner said, adding that it opens doors to communication, lets students know that the teacher cares about them and allows teachers to identify and respond to students' needs.

Young students might not have the vocabulary to express themselves when a parent is deployed, Shoffner said. It might benefit elementary school children to engage in play activities such as using puppets or role playing.

Teachers may use storytelling that depicts a child in conflict and then discuss as a class how the character solved the conflict and if the decision was "good or bad." Some students might want to journal, write or dictate a letter to the deployed parent, paint or draw pictures reflecting their feel-

ings or make a memory book.

Shoffner said some strategies a teacher might use to help middle and high school students deal with separation are assigning students to write poetry or stories about their experiences or express themselves through art. Some students find it helpful to listen to music, exercise, and practice breathing and muscle relaxation exercises.

When necessary, professional counseling is valuable for students of all grades, Shoffner said.

When teachers were asked for strategies or tips to address the "unique challenges" of military-connected students, some of their answers typed online were icebreakers, buddy systems, community building, journaling, and being open and compassionate.

Many teachers said the convocation reinforced concepts they already knew and validated that they are on the right track in regards to teaching military-connected students. Some teachers said they learned information that has stirred them to employ more strategies.

For example, starting this year, kindergarten teacher Shirley McCartney at St. Pius X School, Norfolk, will meet with deploying parents before they leave to discuss how to communicate with them while they are gone. She plans to offer to send artwork, letters, photos of the children and

other materials to the deployed parent. She also plans to offer "courtesy conferences" with both parents when the military parent returns to give an opportunity to see the classroom, ask questions and "get up to speed" on what the child is doing.

For Mark Zafra, St. Pius X School principal, "a big take away" from the convocation was learning about the MCEC website, SchoolQuest, and other resources for teachers, military-connected students and their families.

Similarly, Douglas Ziegenfuss, history teacher at Catholic High School, Virginia Beach, said learning about resources adds another "tool" in his "toolbox" to help military-connected students "succeed in my classroom."

In addition to the presentation on military-connected students, Father Michael Renninger, pastor of St. Mary, Richmond, and Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Patricia McCormack made separate presentations on how teachers and staff can evangelize in school and the importance of doing so. Sister Patricia is the director of the IHM Office of Formative Support for Parents and Teachers, a ministry of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Congregation in Philadelphia.

Good start

Based upon numbers provided by the Diocese of Richmond's Office of Catholic Schools, the 2021-2022 academic year is off to a good start.

During the first week of school, which began Monday, Aug. 23, enrollment in the 23 diocesan schools was 7,431 — an increase of 683 students from the opening of the 2020-2021 academic year. The 10.1% increase in enrollment marks the first time in more than 17 years the schools have shown growth.

The growth rate occurred in 22 schools and varied between 1 and 35%. Five schools with the highest rates of growth were Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newport News; Christ the King, Norfolk; St. Benedict, Richmond; Star of the Sea, Virginia Beach; and St. Mary Star of the Sea, Hampton.

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15 permanent deacons to be ordained Sept. 25

Bishop Barry C. Knestout will ordain 15 men as permanent deacons, Saturday, Sept. 25, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. The Mass will be livestreamed on the Catholic Diocese of Richmond's website and Facebook page.

On these pages, The Catholic Virginian introduces readers to those who will be ordained.



Joe Badalis

Wife: June Badalis

Parish: Parish: St. Joan of Arc, Yorktown

Occupation: U.S. Air Force civil servant, retired Air Force

Favorite Scripture passage: Jas 2:15

Favorite saint: St. Augustine and St. Ignatius

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My call to the diaconate likely began when I decided I didn't want to be a priest and wanted a family, although I had no idea there was such a path. It started germinating when I rediscovered my faith upon entering the Air Force. God actively fertilized my formation at the National Basilica in 2004. Since entering formation with the diocese, my faith has been turned up-side-down. I had 12 years of Catholic education, but no real understanding of what I professed. These last four years fixed that. I deeply appreciate our faith, especially as expressed by Vatican II. The criticality of the sacraments to all of us carrying Christ into the world cannot be overstated – lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi (The law of prayer is the law of belief, is the law of life).



John A. Carey

Wife: Kassaunrda B. Carey

Parish: St. Victoria, Hurt

Occupation: Sales supervisor

Favorite Scripture passage: Jer 29:11

Favorite saint: St. Benedict

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My formation began when I received my first Communion. In my heart, I felt a vocation to something greater than myself when God asked, "I did this for you, what will you do for me?" The diaconate is a humbling service where I can serve God at Mass and, more importantly, serve everyone in every aspect of my life. The impact of formation is difficult to describe other than God has changed me. He is the potter; I am the clay. This change has made me a much better disciple, husband and father; to God be all the glory. I have never been more honored than to have my wife by my side through this process, and those in my cohort are truly my brothers.



Michael Francis Carlucci

Wife: Paola Apruzzese Carlucci

Parish: Sacred Heart, Richmond

Occupation: Supervising appraiser, City of Richmond

Favorite Scripture passage: Phil 4:8

Favorite saint: St. Francis of Assisi

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

About 20 years ago, Deacon Paul Mahefky made a simple proposal for me to consider the diaconate. My return to the Church had been fairly recent and Paola and I had three small children at the time. (Since then, we have been blessed with two more!) I felt it was poor timing. I loved the faith and did whatever I could to serve my parish. The lives of the saints had always inspired me, and I would be reminded again and again that God was not looking for perfection or perfect timing, but for an open and willing heart. Just over five years ago, my pastor, Jesuit Father Shay Auerbach, and Deacon Charles Williams provided the final words of encouragement for me to step on to the road of discernment. Deacon Anton Siochi told me early on that this journey would be transformational. He was right.



Kirk Daniel Collins

Wife: Valérie Collins

Parish: St. Mary, Richmond

Occupation: Database/web programmer consultant

Favorite Scripture passage: Jn 9:25

Favorite saint: St. Francis of Assisi

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My call to the diaconate came to me during prayer before daily Mass in 2013. At first, I was confused about what it could mean. Through continued prayer and conversations with my wife, Valérie, I came to a greater understanding of what God was asking of me. Subsequent conversations with my pastor, Father Michael Renninger, and pastoral associate, Sister Pat McCarthy, provided to me a sense of what the call to serve might look like. They encouraged me to seek Christ in service to others while listening to the guidance of the Spirit. Long before formal formation began, God placed into my life amazing people of faith who continue to inspire and challenge me.



Steven Cottam

Wife: Megan Cottam

Parish: Our Lady of Lourdes, Richmond

Occupation: Director of evangelization and catechesis

Favorite Scripture passage: Mt 25:40

Favorite saint: St. André Bessette

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

The call to the diaconate has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. From studying about St. Stephen in first Communion class, to studying about vocations in confirmation class and on from there. I have always had a deep love of the Church for her liturgical worship and her service to the poor, and my love of these things finds a new fulfillment in the ministry of the diaconate. My formation — including the classes, as well as the support of my mentors, my brother candidates, my wife and my parish — have helped deepen my prayer life and develop my pastoral skills so I can be a better servant and companion to all God's people.



Jose J. Cuenca

Wife: Emma Cuenca

Parish: Church of the Incarnation, Charlottesville

Occupation: Procurement/buyer

Favorite Scripture passage: Mt 5:7

Favorite saint: St. Francis of Assisi

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My call to the diaconate began around 2001. During that time, I was going through a soul-search. I asked a man of God (a layperson) to help me discern what I was going through at that moment. He instructed me on the Wisdom God and got me involved in Church ministry. Since that time, I have been serving God and neighbor, intentionally. I feel that it is God who has put me on this path to the diaconate. The diaconate formation has humbled me and has given me a wider view and understanding about my Catholic faith. I encourage all lay people to take some theological courses, if possible. In my humble opinion, the reason people are leaving Catholicism is because we do not fully understand our Catholic faith and sacraments.



Mark De La Hunt

Wife: Catherine De La Hunt

Parish: Holy Name of Mary, Bedford

Occupation: Engineering manager

Favorite Scripture passage: Lk 1:78-79

Favorite saint: St. Joseph (my helper); St. John Paul II (my inspiration)

Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

True story. Over a period of years, my calling went like this: God said, "I want you to be a deacon." I said, "I'm not holy enough." He said, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you" (Is 43). I said, "I'm not healthy enough." He said, "You will flourish in my courts, still bearing fruit when you are old" (Ps 92). Then, just before the first inquiry session in 2016, he had me care for my dying brother in his last week of life. That experience cemented God's calling in my heart. During the four years of formation, God awakened me to my ignorance and flaws. Finally, he assured me it would be OK, for he would be "my word, my power and my wisdom."



Daniel “Dan” Derringer

Wife: Elizabeth “Beth” Derringer
Parish: St. Andrew, Roanoke
Occupation: Chemistry professor
Favorite Scripture passage: Phil 2:3
Favorite saint: St. John Paul II
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My call to the diaconate is the latest juncture in my journey of faith. In the ‘60s, I was baptized Lutheran; in the ‘70s, I worshipped as a Baptist; in the ‘80s, I met and married my wife, Beth (with whom I have three lovely children – Dani, Amanda and Jesse); in the ‘90s, the Holy Spirit used Christ’s presence in the Eucharist to call me into the Catholic Church, and then six years ago, the Lord used the occasion of my mother’s death to invite me into a deeper relationship with him and his Church. Guided by the Spirit, formation has prepared me for the important work I will do as a minister of the word, of liturgy and of charity and justice.



Liem Do

Wife: Beth Nguyen
Parish: Church of the Vietnamese Martyrs, Richmond
Occupation: Programmer
Favorite Scripture passage: Jn 3:16
Favorite saint: St. Francis of Assisi
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

I used to take priests to my church every weekend during the shortage. One of them happened to tell me that I could be a permanent deacon. I smiled and asked him to pray for me. I had not understood this term until my pastor introduced me to the diaconate program convocation. Each year of the formation changes my life tremendously. Soon after, during the discernment, my heart and soul were wide open to God’s love more. The closer to the altar, the better. The more serving to the poor, the further resounded his Holy Name. I am grateful to have the support of my wife and daughter. It means so much to serve the Church as an icon of Christ the Servant!



James “Jim” Findley

Wife: Leanne Findley
Parish: St. Bede, Williamsburg
Occupation: Aerospace engineer
Favorite Scripture passage: Jn 1:5
Favorite saint: I can’t possibly pick a “favorite.” My confirmation saint is Joseph.
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

I first heard of the permanent diaconate in 1993, when my nephew was baptized by a newly ordained deacon. Five years later, I was received into the Catholic Church and was drawn to the vocation. I discerned the call over the following years, and in 2015, I saw an article in The Catholic Virginian announcing the formation of a new cohort. I felt the Holy Spirit prompting me, and with the support of my wife and children, I began formal inquiry. The formation has been challenging but wonderful. I consider the men in my cohort brothers, not friends. I am not certain I would respond the same, but after going through formation, I can comprehend how martyrs could face death joyfully, singing hymns praising God.



Hoang Le

Wife: Dao Le
Parish: St. Pius X, Norfolk
Occupation: Retired nuclear engineering manager
Favorite Scripture passage: Phil 2:10
Favorite saint: St. Paul
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

I believe that God has done many incredible but subtle things for me on my journey from Vietnam to the United States, allowing me to not only care and provide for my family but also to live a life in servitude to his Word. Although I am not and never will be “perfect” in any sense of the word, I realize that God does not call the qualified, but he qualifies the called! Through the diaconate formation, I have grown in wisdom and in faith. I have realized that using God’s gifts to strengthen the faith in others encapsulates the essence of what it means to be a deacon — a life dedicated to spiritual service to others.



Lawrence Wayne Mikkelson

Wife: Lise Mikkelson
Parish: St. Ann, Ashland
Occupation: Land conservation specialist (part-time)
Favorite Scripture passage: Rom 8:31b-39
Favorite saint: St. Joseph
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

God has called me to a life of service and has provided signs along the way, such as a strong desire to assist others. God was also calling by instilling in me a love of his Word, helped along by my grandmother who read and studied Scripture with me from a young age. The diaconate formation has helped me to grow spiritually and to develop my relationship with Jesus. The formation instructed me in the theology that is foundational for the Church’s teachings. Journeying toward diaconal ministry with other men holding different perspectives helped me to become more understanding and accepting, as well as even more deeply inspired by God’s message to us in Scripture.



Myles A. Pocta

Wife: Rene’ S. Pocta
Parish: Church of the Ascension, Virginia Beach
Occupation: Business owner
Favorite Scripture passage: 1 Cor 13:13
Favorite saint: St. Francis
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My call to the diaconate began years ago when parishioners and deacons from Ascension community urged me to consider the vocation. Initially, I felt a bit challenged with balancing such an undertaking with my marriage vocation and responsibilities. Eventually, and after praying over it and discerning it with my wife, Rene’, I finally heard and joyfully accepted God’s call. The diaconate has had a profound impact on my faith journey and relationship with Jesus Christ. It has truly been a life changing experience. Through the support of my wife and family, the diocese and our parish, deacon mentors, my cohort and men of faith, I am honored, humbled and now prepared to share this experience, proclaim the Gospel and serve God’s people.



Domingo Caratachea Torres

Wife: Marta Murillo Castro
Parish: Sacred Heart, Richmond
Occupation: Civil engineer
Favorite Scripture passage: Mt 7:21
Favorite saint: St. Ignatius of Loyola
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My calling to the diaconate was not a single event, but rather a series of events over a period of years. I can trace and identify a need within me, a profound desire in my heart for something, 31 years back. This desire led me to begin a life of service to the Church at Sacred Heart Parish in Richmond 12 years ago, where I had the opportunity to begin an active prayer life through Ignatian Spirituality. The desire just grew stronger, and, through the support of my wife and our pastor, I enrolled in the diaconate program. Prayer and my formation in the process have deepened my faith in, and love for, God and made it stronger, and most certainly have facilitated my discernment to the permanent diaconate.



Gregg K. Whisler

Wife: Josie Whisler
Parish: St. Edward the Confessor, North Chesterfield
Occupation: Mathematics teacher
Favorite Scripture passage: Jn 16:33
Favorite saint: St. Thomas Aquinas
Describe your call to the diaconate and the impact your formation has had upon you:

My call to the diaconate is partially a response to my experience in the military. Many times, while deployed, Catholic soldiers do not have the good fortune of pastoral care provided by a priest. We read in Acts chapter 6 that the apostles selected the first seven deacons to assist them in serving the Christian community. Like the original seven, my call is from the desire to provide pastoral care and service to the community, particularly those who may not have easy access to a priest.

What our self-absorbed culture needs

GUEST COMMENTARY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Recently I've seen television footage of two protests against vaccine and mask mandates. In my home state of Washington, a protester held up a large sign saying, "My Body My Choice." A protest in Louisiana featured the slogan "Freedom of Choice."

These, of course, have been mantras of the pro-abortion movement: Whatever I choose regarding myself is valid and beyond reproach, simply because it's my choice.

Of course, one's choices about abortion and the pandemic affect more bodies than one's own, devastatingly so in the former case. But some protesters were probably staunchly pro-life, objecting to vaccines that were developed (or later tested) using a cell line from an abortion performed decades ago. How must they have felt, seeing those slogans?

That question leads to political, cultural and even spiritual reflections.

Libertarianism — emphasizing individual freedom and some distrust of government power — has always been part of American politics.

In recent decades, both major parties have embraced it to some extent, applying it differently: Democrats favored a strong government in economic matters but maximum freedom on

moral issues of life and sexuality; Republicans favored the free market economy but defended traditional norms on "social issues."

That seems to be breaking down. Corporate America promotes the freedom to choose one's sexual orientation and even one's gender; and formerly "pro-choice" Democratic politicians work to force others to fund and even perform abortions.

Culturally this has been a long time coming. Social commentators once called the baby boom generation, born during the prosperity after World War II, the "Me Generation." But some of the boomers' descendants make them look socially responsible by comparison.

In the 1980s, sociologist Robert Bellah and philosopher Charles Taylor called the dominant worldview of our time "expressive individualism." It sees persons as atomized individuals, who fulfill themselves by expressing their inner truth so they can invent their own destiny and even identity. Personal autonomy is the core of the person.

Law professor O. Carter Snead points out in his book "What It Means To Be Human" that on matters of life, death and procreation, this tends to reduce human relationships to contracts for mutual benefit, discarded when they no longer serve one's personal goals.

Even the human body becomes a mere instrument for achieving those goals — and vulnerable people at the beginning and end of

life who cannot freely express and pursue such goals may not be persons at all.

Snead shows that this ignores fundamental aspects of the human condition. We are embodied beings, not sovereign wills trapped in prisons of flesh. Our very existence depends on the love and care of others, beginning with our parents, and our flourishing depends on our learning to give and receive love.

What does expressive individualism make of religion? It can accept being "spiritual but not religious" — spiritual wayfaring can be yet another way to advance oneself, and there is no religious authority to contradict that. But it has a serious problem with the Judeo-Christian claim that human flourishing comes from my loving God above all, and my neighbor as myself.

As Bishop Robert E. Barron says, "Your life is not about you" is a central Christian message. Jesus says to take up our cross and follow him, that we must lose our life to save it. Explaining the Sign of the Cross, Msgr. Ronald Knox used to say that its vertical gesture spells "I" — and its second gesture crosses that out.

Nothing could be more alien to the self-absorption typical of our culture, which means that nothing is more desperately needed.

Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.

Likes Mass in English

I am very much in favor of having Mass in English. One the most positive changes that the Church has made was transitioning from Latin to the vernacular.

I grew up with Latin Mass and had three years of Latin in school, but it was almost impossible to follow the Latin parts unless one had a missal with facing Latin and English pages.

It is so much better to hear the entire Mass in my native tongue.

— Bill O'Connell
Williamsburg

Damage done by Hugo Black

Re: "The priest, the Klan and a wedding remembered" (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 23):

Why no mention of Justice Hugo Black's most notorious act, his fake Wall of Separation SCOTUS opinion in 1947's "Everson" decision that prevented public schools from helping Catholic school children?

It should be "high and impregnable" this hideous man said, falsely quoting from President Jefferson's private letter to the Danbury Baptists, that had no force of law.

— Michael Smith
Chase City

Diocese should issue mask mandate

I have been involved with implementation of diocesan COVID-19 guidance and protocols at the parish level since the beginning of the pandemic. Recent guidance provided by the diocese related to the virus's Delta variant resurgence lacks both clarity and decisiveness. It seems that the diocese will not require mandatory action with respect to COVID protection measures unless the governor goes first.

Unfortunately, the governor is constrained by political considerations that

impact his decisions. The bishop, on the other hand, has the freedom to direct actions needed to protect health and welfare without regard to politics. Diocesan COVID protocols should be simple and direct.

The CDC identified the COVID-19 Delta variant as a significant, highly transmissible health threat and recommended that both the vaccinated and unvaccinated wear masks indoors in areas with unacceptable virus transmission rates. The diocese should accept this medical guidance and implement the CDC recommendation as an enforceable mandate.

As it is, only those in classroom settings are required to wear masks (in conformance with the governor's

direction), while the decision to either wear a mask or not is left as a matter of personal choice for those attending church or participating in indoor parish activities.

This voluntary approach, as a protective measure, does nothing to ensure the safety of those attending church, where we no longer practice social distancing, and where it only takes one infected individual to prioritize his or her personal freedom over public health to put a congregation at risk.

The diocese needs to issue a simple, clear and enforceable mandate implementing CDC mask-wearing recommendations as soon as possible.

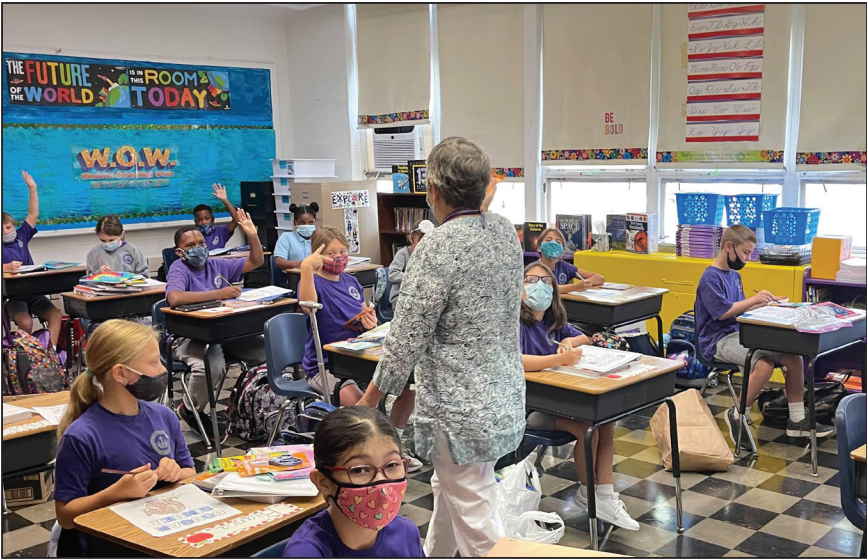
— Tom Bosse
Norfolk



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Above: Fourth grade teacher Mary Bisese directs students at Christ the King School, Norfolk, in setting up their desks and organizing supplies for the year on the opening day of classes, Monday, Aug. 23. (Photo/Katy Rock)

Right: Leslie Winder, left, junior kindergarten aide at St. Edward-Epiphany School, North Chesterfield, helps Jason Nowak out of his car on the first day of school. (Photo/Corrine Rusher)



Dominican Sister Immaculata Marie reads a story and asks questions of second graders at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Newport News, Wednesday, Aug. 25. (Photo/Charlie Lyden)



Third grader Reese Hughes uses a microscope in STEM class during the first day of classes at St. Anne School, Bristol. (Photo/Nicole Hughes)



From left, first graders Emori Marciano, Hannah Scherder and Elisabeth Jones are beckoned to the listening circle by their teacher, Taylor Mugford, at St. Mary Catholic School, Richmond, during the first week of classes. (Photo/Katie Botha)



Father Rob Cole, pastor of St. John the Apostle, Virginia Beach, blesses Susan Tobin's first grade class on Monday, Aug. 23, the opening day of classes at the parish's school. (Photo/Barbara Franklin)

Prayers of petition are part of the divine plan



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. Can you please tell me the purpose of prayer? I understand prayers of thanksgiving and prayers of adoration, but I don't understand prayers of petition. I was always taught that God doesn't change.

So what good does it do to pray that a family member returns to the Church or that a friend survives cancer, if God already knows what's going to happen and isn't going to change his mind? (Virginia)

A. Throughout the Scriptures, it is clear that we are invited to pray if we need something. One striking example comes in the Letter of James (5:14-15), where we are told:

"Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the Church, and they should pray over him and anoint (him) with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up."

Another such reference is found in Mark's Gospel (9:29). Jesus had expelled an unclean spirit from a boy, and when his disciples asked him why they themselves

had not been able to do this, he answered, "This kind can only come out through prayer."

And in Matthew's Gospel (21:22), Jesus assures us that "whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive." But your question still remains, "If God knows ahead of time what he's going to do, what's the point in our praying for it?"

The answer is that the effect of petitionary prayer is not opposed to God's unchangeable providence but included within it. That is to say, our prayers do not alter the divine plan but are factored into that plan itself.

God, in his wisdom, has made some things we desire contingent on our praying for them. He does this so that we may regularly turn our hearts to him and recognize our dependence. I should admit that the relationship between God's plan and our prayers is veiled in some mystery, and we will not understand fully until we have met the Lord.

Q. Among my dying husband's wishes was the desire to save land for the living and therefore to be cremated and interred at Willamette National Military Cemetery near Portland, Oregon.

I, too, shall be cremated and interred at Willamette National, sharing my husband's niche. I would like my ashes to be mingled

with his. Does that violate Catholic teaching? (Estacada, Oregon)

A. Catholic practice does not include commingling the ashes of spouses. This is based on the Church's belief that the body of a person is God's temple and therefore deserves individual honor and preservation.

However, here might be a solution: Catholic cemeteries customarily offer companion urns, with two separate chambers, so that the ashes of a married couple can be buried side-by-side in the same vessel.

And it strikes me that these receptacles would eventually disintegrate, leaving what you desire — that, over time, the ashes would be mixed.

Q. I have a question regarding dating people who are divorced (Catholic or non-Catholic). At my age (42) it seems like the majority of those in the dating pool are, in fact, divorced. Many of these potential dates are through online dating apps, which don't list the person's whole history.

Then there is the issue of knowing whether the person's marriage was even valid to begin with. These are questions that, I feel, need to be asked over the course of several dates. So my question is this: Is it OK for a Catholic to date someone who is divorced? (Bel Air, Maryland)

A. Certainly before entering any kind of serious romantic relationship, a Catholic should know whether the person he or she is dating is free to marry in the Catholic Church. (And it is good to consider how quickly — especially at the age of 42 — a dating relationship can become serious.)

In terms of knowing whether someone's previous marriage was valid in the Church's eyes, it is safest to presume that it was. Certainly two non-Catholics have no responsibility to get the Catholic Church's approval before marrying, and the assumption is that the couple was in good faith and that their decision must be honored.

I can understand — especially with the advent of online matches — that you wouldn't want to "grill" a potential date at the very outset on the circumstances of their first marriage; but fairly early in the relationship, you would want to know that, should you decide to marry, the two of you would be free to marry in the Church.

Should your dating partner need a Church annulment from a previous marriage, you should know that that process could take several months, even a year. The questionnaires are extensive and seek to examine whether there was some reason — psychological or emotional — that may have hampered the first couple from entering into a permanent relationship.

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



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Vaccinations + masks = love of God, self, neighbor



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

When masking became an issue last year at the beginning of the school year, few people would have expected it to extend into another school opening. Yet, here we are. With more children succumbing to the virus, it's difficult to understand why some people would be averse to protecting children and other vulnerable members of society when there is such a simple solution at hand.

It would be great if everyone used common sense and did what is not only in their best interest, but in the best interest of others — get vaccinated when eligible and don a mask. Sadly, that's not the case.

I recently received an email from a woman who works at a retail store. One day, when a customer told her that he couldn't wear a mask because he had asthma, she explained to him that she also had asthma, which is why she wouldn't consider not wearing a mask.

I'm not the only one who is flummoxed by those who are not vaccinated and yet have no problem exposing others to what all too often has proven to be a deadly virus. Given what is known about the high transmission rate of the delta variant, the recommendation that even vaccinated people wear a mask when they're inside a space where



social distancing is not possible should be common sense.

It raises a simple question: Have we become so self-absorbed that we can't see the forest for the trees, or so concerned with personal comfort that the smallest inconvenience becomes an issue? Giving up control is never easy, but rather than resist what is in everyone's best interest, why not be proactive?

I applaud the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for supporting vaccinations and the mask mandates according to the CDC guidelines. Catholic schools, as well as most private schools, have no problem mandating masks, nor do many stores or places of employment.

I am thankful that our parish priests and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist don masks before distributing the Communion, sending a clear message by their example. For me, it's simply a matter of abiding by the teachings of Jesus: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your

soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments" (Mt 22: 37-39).

Loving God always has a social and communal dimension. Listening to the stories of people who have lost loved ones to the pandemic is heart-wrenching. Yet, we are not entirely helpless. All we have to do is follow the recommendations that have proven effective deterrents to the virus.

One ICU nurse told a reporter that when people who have not been vaccinated are at death's door, the one thing that almost all of them say is that they never thought it could happen to them. The notion of exceptionalism and invincibility is nothing new, and it's a fallacy that can have deadly consequences.

It's true that death is inevitable, but to expose our self or others to needless risk is averse to every-

thing that Jesus taught. I wonder if it would help if there were masks that had printed across the front, "Remember the First and Second Greatest Commandment." What a great way to evangelize! Even those who do not know what the words mean might be prompted to look it up and find in the Gospels the truth which may have eluded them for most of their lives.

God speaks to us in many ways. This pandemic may be one more way that God is telling us "Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen" (1 Jn 4:20).

The Church teaches that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our example goes a long way in teaching the importance of loving our neighbor as we love God and our self. When I think of the tremendous sacrifices that many of the saints made in order to love God, self and neighbor, vaccinations and mask wearing pales by comparison.

Wearing a mask or getting vaccinated may not be an enforceable law, but it's simply good practice. Like buckling up when we get into a car, the same adage could apply to vaccinations and masks: "The life you save could be your own — or that of a child!"

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

True faith leads to the work of discipleship



BELIEVE AS
YOU PRAY
MELANIE CODDINGTON

Today's reading from Isaiah rings familiar. One of the "servant songs" from the second prophet bearing the name, we hear it on Palm Sunday and thus associate it with the Passion of Jesus. This portrait of a faithful servant (the Hebrew word also means disciple) applies to Israel and to us, too.

The courage in the face of adversity that Isaiah describes comes not from human resources, but from the saving help of God. Even the servant's receptivity to God's word results from divine action: "The Lord opens my ear that I may hear."

Indeed, the courage of this disciple springs from a relationship of trust, built up over time, as God proves trustworthy as compassionate savior and reliable guide. We can imagine asking, "How do you endure it?" and hearing the answer, "I have a covenant partner."

Obviously, trust in God and obedience to God's command do not shield the servant from persecution; rather they motivate ridicule and rough treatment from those who oppose this faithful one.

If this passage applies to us, as well as to Israel and Jesus, we must ask: How do we maintain our courage and convictions in the face of abuse? How do we handle the emotions that come with rejection, the feelings that well up in response to mean-spirited words and actions?

The great mystic Thomas Merton would call us to contemplation — the deep embrace of reality that owns the ebb and flow of emotion but does not allow it to direct our response; that sees through the chaos within and around us and perceives the presence of God — to us, with us and in us. This spirit of contemplation, of deep seeing, through and beyond our present troubles, underlies the psalmist's refrain, "I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living."

As the first reading anticipates God's deliverance, today's selection from Psalm 116 recalls the psalmist's experience of it. Mining concrete memory, this one describes how disgrace has marked her life.

Cords of death, snares of hell, distress and sorrow have done their worst, compelling the outcry, "O Lord, save my life!" Then comes the turn, for God has saved the sufferer. With soul restored, tears dried and feet steady, the psalmist vows to "walk before the Lord in the land of the living."

During the hardest times in human history, people of faith have interpreted this "land of the living" language from two distinct points of

view — from the *other-worldly* or *this-worldly* perspective. The other-worldly perspective looks at human misery and says, "Suffer now and reap your reward in heaven." This-worldly focus sees "the land of the living" as here and now.

From this here and now perspective springs the work of charity and justice-making emphasized by St. James in the second reading. Disciples of Jesus must answer a two-fold call by the power of the Spirit: to trust God amid our own troubles and be bearers of God's abiding presence to other suffering people.

This also rings familiar. We know from experience that in times of trouble God touches us through others. An empathetic ear, an assurance of prayer, a kind word — even from a stranger — can pierce the fog when we ourselves cannot see through the chaos. We "walk before the Lord in the land of the living" not alone, but together, leaning upon one another.

In the Gospel, Peter answers the question, "Who do you say that I am?" with great faith and conviction, saying, "You are the Christ."

A moment later, as Jesus predicts his suffering and death, Peter resists, prompting the stinging rebuke, "Get behind me, Satan."

Then comes Jesus' exhortation to deny self, take up our cross and follow. True faith leads to the work of discipleship, the spending of self on the mission handed on to us by Christ — to proclaim God's reign of justice in prophetic word and loving deed.

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

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 50:4c-9a;

Ps 116:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9;

Jas 2:14-18;

Mk 8:27-35

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Formation

Continued from Page 1

Filippi said. "There is uniqueness there."

As an example, she noted that members of the Hispanic community "don't mind having lots of conversation about a particular topic area whereas members of the non-Hispanic community have an agenda, bullet points, cover them and then move on while the others might want to wander back to it."

"The main point is that it is more than just a

language commitment; it is as much about preserving and honoring the cultural uniqueness of both groups," Filippi said. "We're not going to spend three hours talking about baptism when we can do it in 30 minutes. We're learning that unique right place to be."

She noted that OCF is still "painting the walls" of its metaphorical house.

"Our logo expresses what's new. We have one name expressed in two languages," she said. "We have one mission statement expressed in two languages."

As the finishing touches are put on the house, Filippi expressed gratitude for how the transition has progressed.

"It's wonderful that we have spent the time we have getting to know each other's stories, listening and praying first before we started digging into how we do this," she said. "This is an exciting time."

Editor's note: Further information about the Office of Christian Formation is available by emailing cf@richmonddiocese.org.

Simpler life

Continued from Page 1

already being prepared, and the plan is to be there," he said, adding that he hoped the summit would increase governments' commitments "and bring us more in line" with what action is needed to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The world's adults need to be inspired by and follow the lead

of today's young people, who are at the forefront of caring for the environment, the pope said in the rest of his video message for the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network.

Speaking about his monthly intention for September, the pope said, "It makes me very happy to see that young people have the courage to undertake projects for environmental and social improvement, since the two go together."

"We adults can learn much from them, because in all matters related to care for the planet, they are at the forefront. Let us take advantage of their example and reflect on our lifestyle, especially during these moments of health, social and environmental crisis," he said.

"Let us reflect on how the way we eat, consume, travel, or the way we use water, energy, plastics, and many other material goods,

is often harmful to the earth," he said.

He said, "Let us choose to change. Let us advance with young people toward lifestyles that are simpler and more respectful of the environment."

Young people "aren't foolish because they are committed to their own future. This is why they want to change what they will inherit at a time when we will no longer be here," the pope said.

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Cardinal Gregory urges ongoing prayers, support for Haiti

MARK ZIMMERMANN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory celebrated an Aug. 27 Mass urging prayers and support for the people of Haiti in the wake of an earthquake and tropical storm that recently devastated that island nation.

The Mass was held at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Washington, one of three churches in the Washington Archdiocese that hosts Masses for the local Haitian Catholic community.

“The deep faith of the Haitian people has been tested repeatedly over these past several weeks,” the cardinal said. He also pointed out that “painful and frequent struggles, unfortunately, are no strangers to the people of Haiti,” but that “as in the past, your faith has been the very anchor of your survival.”

The cantors, choir and congregation said prayers and sang hymns in Creole and French. The congregation of about 300 people were of all ages and ethnic backgrounds.

In his homily, the cardinal said the purpose of the Mass was to encourage people to pray for and support the people of Haiti.

“This is also a moment when all of your brothers and sisters both here and in the Archdiocese of Washington and throughout the entire global community must recall and recommit ourselves to stand once again with our Haitian family in their moment of dire need,” he said.

In remarks after Commu-



A boy sits on the side of a road near a tent encampment for earthquake survivors in Pestel, Haiti, Aug. 23, 2021. During Mass on Aug. 27, Cardinal Wilton Gregory called for continued prayers and support for the country. (CNS photo/Ricardo Arduengo, Reuters)

nion, Father Luc Philogene — the chaplain of the Haitian Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Washington who is a priest from the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capital — thanked the cardinal for his pastoral concern for the people of Haiti.

The priest, who serves about 350-400 families from Haiti now living in the Washington area, also thanked people for their prayers and support, saying that ongoing help is vital.

“Haiti is hurting, and so are we. Haiti needs all of us. Haiti needs prayers. Haiti needs actions also,” he said.

In an email interview before the Mass, he said: “There are no words to express the pain these people are currently experiencing.”

In the email, he told the Catholic Standard, archdiocesan newspaper of Washington, that many lost everything to the earthquake and had to sleep under the stars with practically no beds, many with broken bones, wounds, ailments of all kinds.

“Then comes tropical storm Grace, which gives no grace to these people. The strong winds of the storm coupled with the heavy rainfall gave rise to floods and mudslides. The victims who had no time

to breathe from the earthquake the day before have no food, water, tents, blankets or flashlights.”

He also said that the Catholic Church has been particularly hard hit by the recent earthquake.

“We counted many dead of all ages, including two priests, as well as hundreds of injured parishioners. Several churches, rectories, convents, parochial schools sustained significant damages. Most of the churches’ structures in these dioceses are totally lost. Also, many houses owned by the faithful incurred structural damages and would either need to be rebuilt or repaired,” he said.

Earlier in his homily, Cardinal Gregory paid special tribute to a Catholic bishop who had been a leader in promoting support for Haiti: Bishop Guy A. Sansaricq, a retired auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Brooklyn and a native of Jérémie, Haiti, who died Aug. 21 at the age of 86, one week after the earthquake hit his native country.

He was the first Haitian bishop in the United States and was a founder and the first director of the National Center of the Haitian Apostolate headquartered in New York.

“His long and devoted service to the global Haitian community is not only a personal legacy, but also an inspiration for us all,” the cardinal said. “It is ironic that his death came in the midst of such suffering for the Haitian people, but also as a witness to the tasks of service and care that he left behind.”

Whatever it’s called, does it meet just-war criteria?

MARK PATTISON
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The United States last declared war nearly 80 years ago in the conflict known as World War II. Afterward, there were several wars fought that weren’t declared as such.

Some ended successfully from a military standpoint: the 1983 invasion of Grenada, the 135-square-mile island in the Caribbean that was set to seat a communist government. Another was the 1989 invasion of Panama to oust its military strongman, Manuel Noriega, who had holed up in the Vatican embassy.

Others were less successful. The war in Korea ended in a tense stalemate between north and south that persists today. Another was Vietnam, where the communist-led Viet Cong in the north overran the south following withdrawal of U.S. troops after 14 years and 58,281 U.S. military deaths.

Since 2001, Congress passed a bill calling for AUMF — Beltway-speak for authorization for use of military force. Under AUMF, Congress gives the president the leeway to set the terms of military engagement. The bill was passed one week after the 9/11 terror attacks and was used to send U.S. forces to Afghanistan that year and Iraq in October 2002.

A Congressional Research Service report five years ago found 35 other citations of AUMF to justify U.S. military involvement in 14 countries

and on the high seas.

With all of these military adventures, do they meet the criteria of just war?

“Whether it’s authorized by Congress or not, most of our military adventures starting with Vietnam have been unjustified morally,” said Jim Sterba, an ethics professor at the University of Notre Dame.

With Afghanistan’s takeover by the Taliban in August, following a U.S. pullout after nearly 20 years of combat, there was “no moral justification” for invading, Sterba said, adding: “There are alternatives.”

Criteria for a just war

First, a review of what criteria are needed for war to be considered ethically just under just-war principles. Having the nation’s leader pronounce, “Our cause is just” is not one of them.

However, the cause must indeed be just. A nation cannot go to war just to punish people who have done wrong or taken things belonging to another nation.

The principle of comparative justice says the wrongs suffered by one side in a conflict must significantly outweigh those suffered by the other.

Only duly constituted authorities can wage war. That would not mean dictatorships like Adolf Hitler’s Germany, and deceptive military

actions like the U.S. bombing of Cambodia in 1968 violate this criterion.

The right intention is also key. The cause must be just and force can be used only to right the wrong suffered.

Probability of success is another criterion. Arms cannot be used in a futile cause.

Proportionality is a related criterion. The benefits of waging war must justify the violence used. Self-defense, or defense of another, must be present.

Finally, war must be waged as a last resort. All other means of resolving the issue peaceably must first be exhausted.

Further approval wasn’t sought

Sterba said the Taliban twice offered to find Osama bin Laden, the architect of the 9/11 attacks, for the United States in exchange for having one Islamic judge on a three-judge panel that would try him for his crimes, but the United States nixed the deal each time. “No,” we said, “we’re coming in.” Because we thought we could do it,” he added.

“There’s effectively no difference” between AUMF and declared war, including military conduct during the conflict, said Jesuit Father Drew Christiansen, a senior fellow at the Walsh School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University’s

See Just War, Page 16

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for September 12, 2021
Mark 8: 27-35

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B: Who Jesus must be. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

DISCIPLES	VILLAGES	CAESAREA
ASKED	JOHN	THE BAPTIST
ELIJAH	PROPHETS	DO YOU SAY
CHRIST	REJECTED	PETER
REBUKE	BEHIND ME	SATAN
TAKE UP	HIS CROSS	FOLLOW ME
LOSE IT	MY SAKE	GOSPEL

LOSE AND SAVE

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

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



Parish Partner Spotlight

Thank You
St. Pius X Catholic Church



Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia wants to thank St. Pius X Catholic Church for their compassionate service to the Hampton Roads community. St. Pius X meets the needs of many vulnerable populations through their outreach programs including their Food Pantry, Soup and Sandwich Ministry, Giving Tree Program, and their ministry for the migrant workers on the Eastern Shore. We are proud to work in tandem to uphold the dignity of the hungry, homeless, and struggling families in our community.

Their work truly inspires hope and changes lives.



Saint Thomas More Society of Richmond
presents dinner with

Hon. Kyle Duncan

Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Saturday, October 9, 2021

THE JOHN MARSHALL BALLROOMS
101 N. 5th St., Richmond, Virginia

following the

Annual Red Mass

invoking the Holy Spirit on the Legal Profession

CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART

823 Cathedral Place, Richmond, Virginia

5:15 P.M. Mass

THE MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT
BISHOP OF RICHMOND
Principal Celebrant

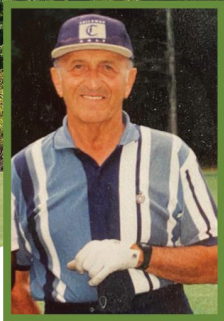
Dinner and Cocktails
\$100 per person

To attend or for further information, email RedMassRVA@gmail.com

Saturday, October 9, 2021
The Hamptons Golf Course
Hampton, Virginia
Shotgun Start @ 8 a.m.



Pat G. Minetti 21st. Annual
Memorial Golf Tournament



- ◆ **Format:** Captain's Choice (4 player teams). Individual Players can register and will be placed in a four-player team
- ◆ **Price:** \$300/team or \$80/individual
- ◆ **Contests:** Longest Drive & Closest to the Pin & Hole-in-One Awards with Prizes Awarded
- ◆ **Mulligans:** \$5
- ◆ **Raffle Tickets:** Available for purchase on the day of the event
- ◆ **Gourmet Boxed Lunch** by Create Cuisine

Sponsorship Opportunities!

Eagle: \$1,200
Birdie: \$800
Par: \$500
Tee: \$250

Registration, Sponsorship Details,
& Online Payments at:
<https://birdease.com/SMSSGolf2021>

Contact Scott Glenn sglenn1775@msn.com or 757-570-0100
Proceeds from the tournament will be directed towards Scholarships & Tuition Assistance

Cyclist pedals to renew culture of life

'Biking for Babies' provides youth minister with a lesson in commitment

JOHN SHAUGHNESSY
Catholic News Service

INDIANAPOLIS — This is the way Emily Mastronicola dreamed it would be.

On the last day of a grueling, weeklong journey that tested people's hearts and spirits, the 26-year-old Catholic woman from Indianapolis took the lead of a team of cyclists preparing to meet with other groups from across the country for a triumphant, last-mile ride together toward the "Celebration of Life" finish line in St. Louis.

Even the challenge of riding her bike up a 15-mile stretch of daunting hills couldn't sap the joy that Mastronicola was feeling July 17, the final day of the national ride of "Biking for Babies."

The pro-life organization's mission is: "renewing the culture of life, one pedal and one pregnancy resource center at a time."

With those 15 miles behind her — on a day when she rode 120 miles — Mastronicola could not stop smiling as she lined up with the other 49 riders who had biked from Ohio, Alabama, Colorado and Wisconsin for that final mile together.

"Everyone was so tired but full of joy to be there and meet the other people," she recalled. "Riding in together was beautiful, really beautiful."

Transformations

All her training since February, and the setbacks along the way, faded in that moment of knowing that everyone had poured everything they had into raising money and awareness to help pregnancy resource centers provide free services to young women and families in crisis — all with the goal of standing for human life.

The pursuit of that goal also led Mastronicola to a personal revelation.

"Your goal is to transform the culture of life, but I feel like the ride really transforms you," she told *The Criterion*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. "I definitely came home a different person."

That's where the full story — the highs, the setbacks, the bonds, the self-discovery — of Mastronicola's life-changing journey begins.

She was the only cyclist from Indiana when the 600-mile journey began July 11 in Columbus, Ohio. There, she joined 15 other members of the eastern route contingent, all between the ages of 18 and 35. There was also a priest from Virginia and riders from California, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Mastronicola's passion for the pro-life movement has increased since she started working for the Indianapolis Archdiocese's Office of Youth Ministry in 2018. Yet while she enjoys endurance sports, she initially resisted the idea of joining the national ride.

"The more I resisted it, the more the Lord placed people in my life and affirmed that this was something I needed to do, to help me grow as a person," she said. "I felt called to be a witness for my community."

"Post-ride, as I look back on that, I know preparing for the ride was not easy, and I know the ride itself was not easy, but neither is defending life."

Difficult commitment

Mastronicola experienced how difficult her commitment can be.

A few weeks before the ride, she sustained an ankle injury that was bad enough to sideline her



Emily Mastronicola, front and center, leads young adults from the eastern part of the United States on the last leg of the national "Biking for Babies" ride to promote pregnancy resource centers.

(CNS photo/Emily Mastronicola, courtesy The Criterion)

training. She was concerned that she would not be able to take part.

She recovered in time, but a combination of dehydration, physical sickness and a touch of vertigo limited the miles she was able to ride the first two days. Still, she got back on the bike for the Dayton to Indianapolis leg, gutting out 60 miles on that part of the trip.

"This was something I wanted to share with my friends and family," she said.

That stretch took a physical and mental toll, making Mastronicola do the last thing she wanted to do: stay behind.

As the other riders continued to Terre Haute, Indiana, the next morning, Mastronicola focused on regaining her strength and energy for two days.

"I was expecting to be tired that week. I wasn't expecting to have as many issues as I had," she said. "So there were definitely times of just feeling really desolate."

'Redemptive suffering'

In the midst of those feelings, she received a message from one of her teammates: "Emily, I know this was really hard for you to do, but I think this was so mature of you to step away."

Mastronicola viewed it a sign of the bond the riders and the support group had formed and that everyone was there for her when she became ill.

The young rider did her best to return the favor. She prayed for everyone on the ride and affirmed them with positive messages. Regaining

her strength, she wanted to return to the ride.

"There's a lot of humility and redemptive suffering with that," she said. "Even Jesus fell three times and he was able to get back up. The important thing when you do fall is to get back up, not to stay down."

"What gets you back up on the bike after you fall is remembering who you are riding for. ... The ride is beautiful, but you're doing it for these pregnancy resource centers, to advocate for them and the services they offer."

'Only the beginning'

Mastronicola rejoined her group near Springfield, Illinois, and was greeted by warm hugs. The smiles continued the following morning when Mastronicola gave each team member a pair of socks depicting the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of unborn children. The bikers wore them for the final stretch.

She rode 120 miles to St. Louis that day, leading to another defining moment when her eastern group met the teams from the south, west and north.

Now, Mastronicola hopes her efforts and the efforts of all the riders will benefit people she likely will never meet: the young women and families in crisis who benefit from pregnancy resource centers, the children whose parents choose life.

"Going forth, the ride is only the beginning," she said. "The mission continues as we restore a culture of life — within ourselves, our communities and the world."

'Crazy' Jesuit's swim raises \$27K for Cristo Rey

JOYCE DURIGA
Catholic News Service

CHICAGO — Jesuit Brother Matt Wooters went the extra mile, or extra eight miles actually, to raise money for Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago.

On Aug. 18, he swam eight miles in Lake Michigan, starting near Loyola University Chicago and finishing at the Navy Pier to celebrate the founding of the Cristo Rey school and attempt to raise at least \$25,000 for it.

The Chicago school was the first school in what has become the national Cristo Rey Network. The schools operate on a unique model where students receive a college-preparatory education and spend five eight-hour days a month working at local corporations gaining

valuable work experience and earning about 60% of their tuition.

Cristo Rey Richmond High School, which opened in 2019, is part of the Cristo Rey Network.

Brother Wooters, 34, has served on the school's board for six years. The day before his swim, he had raised over \$27,000 for the school.

He started swimming when he was 5 and competed on swim teams until he entered college. He took up swimming again during the pandemic.

In May, he got the idea to do a long swim to raise money for Cristo Rey's anniversary.

"I pitched this idea to (the school) and

See Swim, Page 16

OPPORTUNITIES

St. Gabriel Catholic Church is seeking applicants for the position of children's formation coordinator.

This position is responsible for overseeing the faith formation program for pre-school through grade 5, and children's preparation for first reconciliation and first Eucharist.

Qualifications: Candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. Undergraduate degree in theology, ministry, religious education or equivalent preferred. Excellent people skills, outstanding computer skills and the ability to maintain confidentiality.

This is a 25-hour-per-week, part-time position with regular weekend events and occasional evening meetings.

To apply: Please send a résumé and diocesan application to Therese Ventti, 8901 Winterpock Rd, Chesterfield, VA 23832 or thereseventi@saintgabriel.org.

St. Pius X Parish and St. Pius X Catholic School, Norfolk, are seeking a full-time director of development and parish stewardship.

The director serves as a member of the administrative staff of the parish and school. The director is responsible for all aspects of stewardship and fundraising for the parish and assisting the pastor in collaboration with the pastor's advisory councils. In addition, the director establishes, implements, oversees and maintains the development program for St. Pius X Catholic School, assisting the pastor and principal in collaboration with the school board.

The director is scheduled to dedicate approximately 40% of weekly hours to the parish and 60% to the school. The hours of dedication may shift each week due to parish and/or school events occurring at the time. The ideal candidate should have seven to 10 years of experience in business, management or Church administration; initiative, self-direction and ability to work with a variety of constituencies; and knowledge of the Church's teaching and mission. To apply, send a cover letter, résumé and diocesan application to Father Prince at the parish mailing address or via email to pastor@piusxparish.org.

SHORTAKES

All are welcome to join **Deacon Charles Williams of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land** from May 2-11, 2022, for the most deeply moving spiritual experience of your lifetime. A ten-day tour for \$3,599 including airfare, first class hotels, tours, breakfast and dinner, Mass every day in Holy Places and much more. For further information please con-

tact Alba Kim at tours@albastours.com or (804) 298-4035. *Reservations are available now. Spaces are limited. **COVID-19 policies available upon request.

The Tapestry Cello Quartet Concert featuring Amy Butler, Nancy Baun, Dan Shomper and Alan Saucedo presents a diverse program for four cellos, Sunday, Sept. 12, 4 p.m., St. John Neumann, Powhatan. Admission is free and opportunities will be provided for free-will offerings. For questions, please email Gary Fitzgerald at fitzgerald.ge@gmail.com.

A third concert featuring Richmond Symphony musicians playing on the Violins of Hope instruments will be added Sunday, Sept. 12, 3 p.m., Dominion Energy Center's Carpenter Theatre, 600 E. Grace St. The repertoire is identical to that of the featured concerts which are sold out. Violins of Hope Richmond is an exhibit of instruments played by Jewish musicians during the Holocaust. Several violins are on display through Oct. 24 at the Virginia Holocaust Museum, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture, and the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia. Information about the exhibit, concert tickets and educational programs can be found at ViolinsofHopeRVA.com.

Redeemer's annual indoor yard sale for their Haiti ministry is back! Friday, Sept. 17, 2-6 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 18, 7-Noon, Church of the Redeemer, 8275 Meadowbridge Road, Mechanicsville. For more information, visit churchredeemer.org/Haiti-Ministry. Donations welcome!!!

Forum on Immigration. Church of the Ascension, 4853 Princess Anne Rd, Virginia Beach (www.ascensionvb.org), invites you to a forum on immigration featuring Jay Brown, CEO of Commonwealth Catholic Charities, Tuesday, Sept. 21, 7 p.m. to review Catholic Social Teaching on immigration. Learn about the Catholic Church's work regarding immigration in Virginia, and explore how to become involved in efforts to promote, protect and integrate immigrants into our community.

"Doors to the Sacred: Exploring the history, mystery and rituals of the Sacraments" is an adult education series at St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach. More than signs, sacraments are encounters with the divine, a meeting place where divinity intersects with humanity, where the past becomes present, the lost are found, the hungry fed, wounds are healed, and sinners are sanctified. The response to these divine gifts of grace is ours. Wednesdays

9:30 -11 a.m.; repeated Wednesday evenings 7-8:30, Sept. 22 and 29, Oct. 6 and 13. All are welcome. No fee nor registration required.

Mary's Choice RVA cordially invites you to join us in celebrating the opening of the first MCRVA home for pregnant mothers and their children, Friday, Oct. 1, 7-10 p.m. in the Lake House at St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 4491 Springfield Rd, Glen Allen. At our first gala fundraiser for the home, we will offer an evening of fine wine, food and fellowship with all who continue to make this dream possible. Guest speaker will be Kathleen Wilson, executive director of Mary's Shelter in Fredericksburg. To join us for this joyful occasion, contact Ann Niermeyer at 804-714-5170 to purchase your ticket with a \$75 donation.

St. Olaf Catholic Church, in coordination with other churches, welcomes all to participate in the 33rd National Life Chain on Sunday, Oct. 3, 2-3:15 p.m. This will be the Greater Williamsburg area's 9th annual participation in this event. Location will be on the sidewalk facing Richmond Road starting at Centerville Road. The Life Chain is a peaceful, prayerful and public witness of pro-life faithful standing in honor of 60-plus million lives lost to abortion.

The Hope For Haiti Golf Tournament to benefit the parish of St. Michel in Saltadere, Haiti, will be held Monday, Oct. 4, The Club at Glenmore, 1750 Piper Way, Keswick. Registration at 7:30 a.m. and "shotgun scramble" start at 9. Limit is 128 golfers. Registration fee is \$250 per golfer, which includes golf (cart, balls, beverages on course), lunch, contests and prizes. St. Michel Parish is twinned with St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish, Holy Comforter and Our Lady of the Rosary. St. Michel supports a school and a medical clinic staffed by Haitian health care professionals serving a community of 40,000 people. The parishes also support expanding clean water access and the parish Caritas committee. Details, including registration, sponsorships and donations, are available at <https://info941709.wixsite.com/haiti-committee-site/golf-outing> or by contacting Dan Wassilchuk at 410-852-6126 or dmw9v@virginia.edu.

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

information, see our website at <https://birdeasepro.com/2021uso-warriorclassic>.

Whether you desire to simply grow in your own faith and/or mentor others on their spiritual walk, the Spiritual Mentor Program (SMP) will prepare you for the journey. Through intensive study, purposeful prayer, faith formation and ongoing fellowship, this 18-month program will challenge you to dig deeper into the heart of the Gospel as we learn to sincerely respond to Jesus's command to "feed his sheep." To learn more about this unique and enriching opportunity, come to our inquiry interest meeting Oct. 10, 2 p.m., at the new St. Clare of Assisi Retreat Center, located on 620 Buckroe Ave., Hampton. If you cannot attend the inquiry session, please contact us at philippians2foundation@gmail.org for information.

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, in the Highland Park area of Richmond, will celebrate its Centennial in 2023. Bishop Knestout will celebrate Mass on Nov. 20, 2022, and kick off the celebration, which will continue through Nov. 19, 2023. In between, you will have plenty of opportunities to share the history of the parish and recognize the people involved over the past century. If your family has ties to St. Elizabeth Parish, St. Elizabeth Catholic School, St. Joseph Parish and Van De Vyver School, then you are who we are celebrating. Join us! Register online at https://bit.ly/STECC_Bulletin or contact the parish office by emailing Mary Rose Purcell at mpurcell@stelizcc.org or by calling 804-329-4599. If no one answers, leave a message with your information.

Discuss Dante's "Inferno" and other treasures online! "Treasures of the Tradition" is a program of lively discussion groups sponsored by the adult formation program at Holy Comforter Church, Charlottesville. Join us this fall for "The Roots of Christian Spirituality," with writings by Origen, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Maximus Confessor and more on the idea of union between humans and God; for "Éric Rohmer's Moral Tales," a discussion of seven films by this director of French "New Wave" cinema whose Catholicism influenced his explorations of human romance; and for Dante's "Divine Comedy." All groups meet online, once a week or less, and take the texts at an easy pace. An expert facilitator guides discussions. A per-session fee applies; baseline circa \$15, but a sliding scale is available. Groups begin in mid-September. Contact organizer John Bugbee at bugbee@thetrea-sures.org or visit <https://thetrea-sures.org> ASAP.

El Papa: dejémonos provocar y convertir por Jesús y su ‘palabra de vida eterna’

En su alocución previa al rezo mariano del Ángelus, el Papa Francisco, al recordar el Evangelio de hoy, “que muestra la reacción de la multitud y de los discípulos ante el discurso de Jesús después del milagro de los panes”, el Papa nos pide que “no nos sorprendamos si Jesucristo nos pone en crisis. Más bien, preocupémonos si no nos pone en crisis, porque quizás hemos diluido su mensaje”.

PATRICIA YNESTROZA
CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

“En el Evangelio de hoy, Jesús, invitó a la multitud y a los discípulos a interpretar la señal del milagro de los panes, y a creer en él, que es el verdadero pan bajado del cielo, el pan de la vida; y les reveló que el pan que dará es su carne y su sangre. Estas palabras suenan duras e incomprensibles a los oídos de la gente”, señaló Francisco, “hasta el punto de que, a partir de ese momento, “muchos de sus discípulos se vuelven atrás, es decir, dejan de seguir al Maestro. Entonces Jesús pregunta a los Doce: “¿También ustedes quieren dejarme?”, y Pedro, en nombre de todo el grupo, confirma la decisión de quedarse con Él: “Señor, ¿a quién iremos? Tú tienes palabras de vida eterna; y nosotros creemos y sabemos que tú eres el Santo de Dios”, dijo el Papa.

“Ante el gesto prodigioso de Jesús, que alimenta a miles de personas con cinco panes y dos peces, todos lo aclaman y quieren llevárselo en volandas”, dijo el Papa, “pero cuando él mismo explica que ese gesto es “signo de su sacrificio, es decir, de la entrega de su vida, de su carne y de su sangre, y que los

que quieren seguirle deben asimilarlo, su humanidad entregada por Dios y por los demás, entonces no, este Jesús ya no tiene razón”, agregó.

Las palabras de Jesús causan escándalo

El Santo Padre, analizando la actitud de los que se retiran y vuelven atrás, decidiendo no seguir más a Jesús, se pregunta, Cuál es el origen de esta incredulidad, cuál es el motivo de esta negativa.

“Las palabras de Jesús causan gran escándalo: está diciendo que Dios ha elegido manifestarse y realizar la salvación en la debilidad de la carne humana. La encarnación de Dios es lo que da lugar al escándalo y es un obstáculo para estas personas, pero a menudo también para nosotros”, manifestó Francisco.

De hecho, sigue más adelante el Papa, Jesús afirma que el verdadero pan de salvación, que transmite la vida eterna, es su propia carne; que para entrar en “comunión con Dios, antes de observar las leyes o cumplir los preceptos religiosos, hay que vivir una relación real y concreta con él”.

Esto significa, dijo el Pontífice, “que no debemos perseguir a Dios en sueños e imágenes de grandeza y poder, sino que debemos reconocerlo en la humanidad de Jesús y, en consecuencia, en los hermanos que nos pasan de lado por el camino de la vida. Porque “Dios se hizo de carne y hueso: se rebajó para hacerse hombre como nosotros, se humilló hasta asumir nuestro sufrimiento y nuestro pecado, y nos



pide que lo busquemos, por tanto, no fuera de la vida y de la historia, sino en nuestra relación con Cristo y con nuestros hermanos”, afirmó el Papa.

La “escandalosidad” de la Eucaristía

Incluso hoy, aseveró Francisco, la revelación de Dios en la humanidad de Jesús puede “causar escándalo y no es fácil de aceptar. “Es lo que San Pablo llama la “necedad” del Evangelio frente a los que buscan milagros o sabiduría mundana. Y esta “escandalosidad” está bien representada por el sacramento de la Eucaristía”, y es que como se pregunta el Papa: “¿qué sentido puede tener, a los ojos del mundo, arrodillarse ante un trozo de pan? ¿Por qué alimentarse asiduamente de este pan?”.

Por último su petición: “pidamos la gracia de dejarnos provocar y convertir por sus “palabras de vida

eterna”. Que María Santísima, que dio a luz a su Hijo Jesús en la carne y se unió a su sacrificio, nos ayude a dar siempre testimonio de nuestra fe con nuestra vida concreta”.

Saludos después del rezo mariano

En sus saludos a los fieles presentes en la Plaza de San Pedro, el Papa Francisco saludó a los sacerdotes y seminaristas del Pontificio Colegio Norteamericano y a las familias de Abbiategrosso y a los motoristas de Polesine.

También saludó a varios grupos de jóvenes: de Cornuda, Covolo del Piave y Nogaré, en la diócesis de Treviso, de Regoledo, en Milán, de Dalmine, Cagli y Pescantina, cerca de Verona, y el grupo scout de Mantua. A todos ellos les auguró que este viaje que han hecho hasta Roma, les ayude a caminar en la vida por el camino del Evangelio. También saludo a los chicos de la Inmaculada Concepción.

Entrevista breve con Jose Cuenca: Llamado por Dios al diaconado

En el mes de agosto la Iglesia expresa una devoción especial a las vocaciones. Jose Cuenca es un feligrés de la parroquia de Encarnación en Charlottesville. El ha trabajado con la comunidad hispana por muchos años y su servicio ha sido un ejemplo para muchos hermanos y hermanas que viven el camino de la fe. Ahora, el está tomando el próximo paso hacia el diaconado; una vocación al servicio a nuestra Madre Iglesia y a todos quienes forman parte de su cuerpo.

Saludos Jose, ¿De qué país eres?

México

¿Cuándo llegaste a este país?

1979

¿Cuándo fue el momento que sentiste el llamado al diaconado?

Es una historia muy larga, pero seré breve. Yo creo que la semilla (Dios) lo siembran los padres, pero el llamado al diaconado sucedió a principios de los años 2000. Una búsqueda interna empezó en mi después del nacimiento de mi segundo hijo y me regresé a la fe, a Dios. Estudie dos años en la universidad de St. Mary of the Lake en Mundelein, Illinois y ahí me hablaron por primera vez sobre el diaconado. En el 2016, el Padre Edwin me mo-

tivó a que siguiera ese llamado.

¿Cómo ha sido el proceso de formación al diaconado para ti?

La formación ha sido como un abrir de ojos. Me hizo amar más la religión católica, y me hizo más humilde por que el amor de Dios se revela a los que lo buscan. También, creo que me ha ayudado mucho en el aspecto pastoral. La Iglesia es la puerta al cielo. Ahí es donde Dios necesita trabajadores enseñando el amor a Dios hacia el prójimo; trabajadores que entiendan las necesidades y quieran (con limitaciones y humildad) ayudar al Pueblo de Dios y a conocerlo a Él y a vivir Su fe.

¿Qué esperanzas y aspiraciones tienes cuando eres diacono?

Mi esperanza es de enseñar y atraer más gente a Dios. Dios no quiere que nadie se pierda y por eso pone ministros para que trabajen y el pueblo vea el amor tan grande que tiene Dios para la humanidad. La esperanza es lo único que muere al último, y yo estoy dispuesto a mantenerla viva hasta que Dios me llame.

Si está discerniendo y/o sientes la vocación al diaconado, favor de comunicarse con la Oficina del Diaconado Permanente.



Swim

Continued from Page 13

they thought I was nuts,” Brother Wooters said.

He said he liked that his swim route “models the pipeline of success for Cristo Rey grads from higher ed to downtown — from Loyola to Navy Pier.”

He also deliberately set his course at a length of which qualifies as a marathon for swimming.

Principal Lucas Schroder confirmed that he questioned Brother Wooters’ sanity upon learning of his plan.

“I thought he was crazy, but it didn’t shock me, let’s put it that way,” Schroder joked. “I said, ‘Well, at least that makes sense for him, but I still think he’s nuts.’”

He said the Jesuit brother has been an asset to the school in his role on the board.

“It’s really incredible to us that he’s willing to do this for us,” Schroder told the Chicago Catholic, archdiocesan newspaper.

Brother Wooters trained by swimming in the lake four times a week for about two hours at a time. He expected it to take between four and five hours to swim the eight miles accompanied by a boat.

The brother is a native of Washington, D.C., and moved to Chicago in July. Trained as a therapist and having worked with migrant communities for many years, he now serves as a vocations promoter for the Midwest Jesuits.

“God can use everything. When I joined the Jesuits, I never thought swimming would be part of my life again,” he said.

This endeavor has combined his passion for swimming and his passion for Jesuit life.

“When I’m swimming, I’m praying for the students and I’m praying for an end to the migrant crisis,” he said. “I’m delighted to raise awareness of Cristo Rey.”

Describing the school, he said that in today’s world where companies are seeking to diversify their staff, the students are assets to the places they work.

“The students have value. They’re not just the recipients of charity,” Brother Wooters said. “Their experience is incredible and different from yours and mine.”

Just War

Continued from Page 11

Berkley Center.

“People haven’t gone back to get further approval as the conflict has gone on,” Father Christiansen said. What is needed, he added, is for “the terms of the AUMF to get tightened and Congress get more involved in the regulation and enforcement of AUMF.”

“The AUMF is explicitly about empowering the president for a quick, effective, short-term response, thought to be needed in the wake of 9/11, whereas with the War Powers Resolution, Congress is more empowered in terms of declaring war and in terms of authorizing military budgets,” said Brian Orend, a philosophy at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, and the author of books on just-war examinations.

Return of urgency

After President Richard Nixon ordered the bombing of Cambodia without Congress’ consent, Congress passed the War Powers Resolution of 1973, intended to limit the president’s authority to conduct war.

“Many presidents, since 9/11, have appreciated the added latitude of the AUMF, whereas their critics would argue the urgency is long gone, and is no longer needed. But, in the wake of the Taliban re-taking of Afghanistan, perhaps the feeling of urgency has returned to some extent,” Orend said in an Aug. 19 email to Catholic News Service.

“It was felt needed to authorize quick action, which Congress perhaps might not be capable of, as well as to authorize so-called ‘measures-short-of-war,’ like cruise missile strikes, or drones,

launched from afar,” he said.

“At the same time, the AUMF is explicitly nested within the War Powers Resolution, where Congress is quite empowered, especially in terms of formal declarations of war as well as financing armed conflict,” Orend said, adding he believed the 2001 law would not be altered by Congress.

Yet without changes to the law, such AUMF uses may continue to be drawn out, Sterba told CNS. “The fact that there is the unjustified nature of it means there’s opposition at home to doing this,” he said.

‘War of choice’

And looking at the current situation in Afghanistan, Father Christiansen pointed out that because of the corruption in the Afghan government, its inability to reform and the ineffectiveness of its forces, the U.S. “should have withdrawn a long time ago.”

Yet where was the call for withdrawal, or mounting an argument that the war in Afghanistan was no longer just?

“It was so outweighed by the debate in Iraq I didn’t take into consideration at the time how it was playing out in Afghanistan,” he replied.

“Iraq was the war of choice and the problems just kept multiplying there and my attention was there and the attention of most ethicists was there. Afghanistan became a kind of backwater.”

That status may have been what foiled the U.S. military effort, Father Christiansen said.

It’s what did in Alexander the Great millennia ago.

“There’s a battle of technological civilization against tribal people,” the priest noted, adding that tribal rule seems to win each time.



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