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Retired Maj. Gen. Scott West stands among images of friends he lost during the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. He spoke at the 9/11 memorial service at his parish, Our Lady of Peace, Appomattox, on Saturday, Sept. 11. (Photo/Veronica Haney)

Prayerful memorials mark 9/11 anniversary

CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE AND LOCAL REPORTS

As the nation's attention focused on the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Catholic leaders and their congregations reflected upon the impact of that day.

In a statement released Friday, Sept. 10, Bishop Barry C. Knestout recalled the words spoken by St. Pope John Paul II the day after the attacks: "Faith comes to our aid at these times when words seem to fail. Christ's words are the only ones that can give us a response to the questions which trouble our spirit."

The bishop noted the permanent impact the events in New York, Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon had on everyone, noting that faith and hope "sustain us during our darkest hours." (Bishop Knestout writes more about 9/11 in his column on Page 2.)

He concluded his Sept. 10 statement with additional words from St. Pope John Paul II: "Even if the forces of darkness appear to prevail, those who believe in God know evil and death do not have the final say."

On Saturday, Sept. 11, Our Lady of Peace Parish, Appomattox, hosted a memorial service featuring retired Maj. Gen. Scott West, a parishioner who, was working at the Pentagon that day when the terrorists' plane slammed into the building.

While West's life was spared, three of his friends died — Lt. Col. Stephen Neil Hyland Jr., Major Stephen Long and Major Clifford Potter. Several days later he learned that another friend, retired Col. Rick Rescoria, was killed in the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

Following the attack on the Pentagon, all communication was shut down. It was four hours before West could reach his wife, Patti, to let her know that he was safe. By 9:30 that evening, he finally made it home.

In his reflection, West prayed, "They will live forever in our hearts. May God cradle them and all in his loving arms."

The service, whose participants included Our Lady of Peace parishioners, as well as those from Holy Cross and St. Thomas More Parishes, Lynchburg, and St. Victoria, Hurt, included a reading from Mark 15:33-

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Pope: 'Never forget the Holocaust'

Calls it 'worst form of blasphemy'

JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia — The violence of the Holocaust and the atrocities committed against the Jewish people are tantamount to blasphemy, Pope Francis said.

"The divine name, the Lord himself, is blasphemed whenever the unique and distinctive dignity of the human person, created in his image, is violated," the pope said Sept. 13 at a meeting with members of Slovakia's Jewish community.

The meeting took place in Rybné námestie Square, site of a memorial tribute to the 105,000 Slovak Jews who were killed in the Holocaust.

The memorial includes a black wall with an etching of the Neolog synagogue that once stood in the square before it was destroyed by communist authorities in 1969 to make way for a bridge.

A bronze abstract sculpture topped with the Star of David with the word "Remember," inscribed in Hebrew and Slovak, stands at the center of the square.

Daniel Feldmar, a 19-year-old member of the Jewish community in Bratislava, told Catholic News Service he saw Pope Francis' visit not only as an acknowledgment of "the tragedies of the Holocaust but also to acknowledge that the Jewish presence in Bratislava and in Slovakia is still strong."

"I am so happy that a person who is considered

to be holy in the Christian religion decided to come and walk through the parts where this synagogue once used to be," he said.

Feldmar said that although the Jewish community is small, it is still strong. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism is still alive in Slovakia, due in part to "a lack of communication."

"People usually don't know or have never met a Jew so, of course, they will be prone to those prejudices, and they will be happy to find a scapegoat," Feldmar told CNS.

"However, that is one of the reasons why I am happy that the pope came here today to meet with us. This dialogue will break the barriers between the Catholic Church and Judaism," he said.

During the meeting, Pope Francis heard several testimonies, including from Holocaust survivor Tomáš Lang, who recalled the anti-Jewish persecution in his country and the death of his parents.

He also noted that one of the few to openly speak out against anti-Semitism in Slovakia was the late Archbishop Giuseppe Burzio, who served as chargé d'affaires at the apostolic nunciature.

Archbishop Burzio, Lang said, "tirelessly sought to end the anti-Semitism of the deadly regime of that time. No Slovak politician at the time opposed that regime."

In his address, Pope

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9/11 reflections remind us to value faith, hope in God



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

The observance of 9/11 was an opportunity for most of us to recollect, reflect and to pray. We continue to remember the lives lost and accompany with our prayers and charity those who lost family or friends on that terrible day.

Living in Washington at that time, the attacks were only the first of events that had an impact upon me and so many others in Washington over the next year. Like so many, I remember in detail what was experienced and how I felt as the tragedy unfolded.

I was a couple of months into my assignment as director of the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Youth Ministry and Catholic Youth Organization. The morning of Sept. 11 was clear crisp and cool. I was scheduled to meet at the archdiocesan pastoral center with the director of the Mattaponi Youth Retreat Center.

Listening to radio as I drove to the pastoral center, I learned that a plane had hit the World Trade Center. I imagined that it was a small two-seat Cessna that had lost its way and crashed and didn't think much more about it the rest of the commute.

When I arrived at the pastoral center, I was puzzled to find that it appeared abandoned. No one was in the halls or their offices. Everyone had crowded into the archdiocesan communications office, which had the only TV in the building. When we saw the second plane hit, we immediately knew it was intentional.

Checking in with the CYO office, which was located at the top of a hill above the National Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the Catholic University of America, I learned that everyone was on the top floor looking at the distant smoke rising from the Pentagon.

As the city shut down, all of the downtown offices were evacuated, with many workers unable to access their cars because the parking garages around Capitol Hill were closed. Others clogged the Metro and the streets as everyone tried to make their way home at the same time.

“Our reflections on what occurred 20 years ago remind us how valuable our faith and hope in God are, and how important it is for us to nurture these and to live them so that they may prepare us for and sustain us during our darkest hours.”

— BISHOP KNESTOUT

My brother and his pregnant wife worked downtown and ended up walking for some distance until they could get a hold of another family member to give them a ride home. I did not learn until much later that day of their ordeal and that they were OK. My brother remembered the crowds of people walking slowly and speaking quietly as they made their way.

I drove back to Cardinal James A. Hickey's residence in NW Washington, where I resided and oversaw care for the cardinal who was increasingly frail. I could see and hear fighter jets circling above the city.

Like everyone else, I spent the rest of the day perplexed and shocked as I watched the reports on TV.

More concerns

But the concerns about terror did not cease at the end of that long day. The year unfolded with other experiences that raised the specter of terror and unsettled our lives. Less than a month later, as our nation was still coming to grips with the horrors of that day, another attack was underway.

This one was termed “bioterrorism” as anthrax was being mailed to various places, including Washington. Two of the people who died from exposure to anthrax were postal workers who processed mail at the Brentwood postal facility which served our pastoral center.

A few months later, during the first three weeks of October 2002, residents of the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia were constantly looking over their shoulders as people were being randomly shot as they carried out daily activities.

Given the Office of Homeland Security terrorist alerts and the frequency and location of the shootings, it was understandable that anyone would wonder if they might be the next target.

Prayer should be a constant in our lives

Like so many on this 20th anniversary, I felt a need to share these recollections in hope that this will help put those experiences in perspective, especially in the light of faith.

Tragedies and life-threatening experiences abruptly raise awareness of our personal weaknesses and limitations. When we realize our ability to deal with these events are finite, we turn — or return — to God for help.

How often during turbulent times such as 9/11, natural disasters, the pandemic or those that affect us personally, do we say in desperation, “All we can do now is pray”? Fortunately, God is always there for us and hears us.

Yet, it would be better if prayer were a constant in our lives rather than an exclamation reserved for desperate times. We need to regularly heed the words of the Psalmist to “cast your troubles upon the Lord, and he will sustain you” (55:23) — our personal concerns and challenges, as well as those we have about the confusion that permeates our cultural and political environments and the uncertainties with which we live due to the pandemic.

Our reflections on what occurred 20 years ago remind us how valuable our faith and hope in God are, and how important it is for us to nurture these and to live them so that they may prepare us for and sustain us during our darkest hours.

Bishop appoints 15 priests to serve as deans

Bishop Barry C. Knestout has appointed 15 priests to serve as deans in the Diocese of Richmond, effective Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2021. They will serve until Sunday, June 30, 2024. The priests and the parishes in each of their deaneries:

OFFICIAL

Deanery 1

Father Sean Prince, pastor, St. Pius X, Norfolk

Parishes: Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk; Blessed Sacrament, Norfolk; Christ the King, Norfolk; Holy Trinity, Norfolk; Sacred Heart, Norfolk; St. Andrew the Apostle, Chincoteague; St. Charles, Cape Charles; St. Matthew, Virginia Beach; St. Peter the Apostle, Onley; and St. Pius X, Norfolk.

Deanery 3

Father Esteban De Leon, pastor, Star of the Sea, Virginia Beach

Parishes: Anglican/Roman Catholic Community of Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach; Church of the Ascension, Virginia Beach; Church of the Holy Family, Virginia Beach; Church of the Holy Spirit, Virginia Beach; St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach; St. John the Apostle, Virginia Beach; St. Luke, Virginia Beach; St. Nicholas, Virginia Beach; and Star of the Sea, Virginia Beach.

Deanery 3

Father Romeo Jazmin, pastor, Prince of Peace, Chesapeake

Parishes: Church of St. Therese, Chesapeake; Church of the Good Shepherd, Smithfield; Church of the Holy Angels, Portsmouth; Church of the Resurrection, Portsmouth;

Prince of Peace, Chesapeake; St. Benedict, Chesapeake; St. Jude, Franklin; St. Mark, Virginia Beach; St. Mary, Chesapeake; St. Mary of the Presentation, Suffolk; St. Paul, Portsmouth; St. Stephen, Martyr, Chesapeake; and Shrine of the Infant of Prague, Wakefield.

Deanery 4

Father W. Daniel Beeman, pastor, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newport News

Parishes: Immaculate Conception, Hampton; Our Lady of Lavang – Vietnam, Norfolk; Our Lady of Lavang – Vietnam, Hampton; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newport News; St. Jerome, Newport News; St. Joseph, Hampton; St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Tabb; St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe; St. Rose of Lima & Korean Martyrs, Hampton;

and St. Vincent de Paul, Newport News.

Deanery 5

Father Gerald Kaggwa, pastor, Church of the Visitation, Topping, and Church of Francis de Sales, Matthews

Parishes: Church of Francis de Sales, Matthews; Church of St. Therese, Gloucester; Church of the Visitation, Middlesex; Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, West Point; St. Bede, Williamsburg;

St. Joan of Arc, Yorktown; and St. Olaf, Norge.

Deanery 6

Father Anthony Marques, rector, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond

Parishes: Cathedral of the

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Pope advises bishops about pro-abortion politicians

Reminds them that 'Communion is not a prize for the perfect'

JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM SLOVAKIA — The debate about denying Communion to politicians who support abortion must be handled in a pastoral way, not by public condemnations that seek to “excommunicate” Catholics who are not in line with Church teaching, Pope Francis said.

During his return flight from Bratislava, Slovakia, Sept. 15, the pope said that while there is no question that “abortion is homicide,” bishops must look take a pastoral approach rather than wade into the political sphere.

“If we look at the history of the Church, we can see that every time the bishops did not act like shepherds when dealing with a problem, they aligned themselves with political life, on political problems,” he said.

The pope told journalists that when defending a principle, some bishops act in a way “that is not pastoral” and “enter the political sphere.”

“And what should a shepherd do? Be a shepherd. Not going around condemning,” the pope added. “They must be a shepherd, in God’s style, which is closeness,

“And what should a shepherd do? Be a shepherd. Not going around condemning. They must be a shepherd, in God’s style, which is closeness, compassion and tenderness.”

— POPE FRANCIS

compassion and tenderness.”

“A shepherd that doesn’t know how to act in God’s style slips and enters into many things that are not of a shepherd.”

The pope said that he preferred not to comment directly on the issue of denying Communion in the United States “because I do not know the details; I am speaking of the principle” of the matter.

During their virtual spring general assembly in June, 75% of U.S. bishops approved the drafting of a document, addressed to all Catholic faithful, on eucharistic coherence. During long discussions on the document before the vote, several bishops specifically pointed

to President Joe Biden and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., who are Catholic, for not actively seeking to end legal abortion, and they said such politicians should be denied Communion.

When asked if he had ever publicly denied Communion to someone, Pope Francis emphatically said, “No, I have never denied the Eucharist to anyone; to anyone! I don’t know if someone came to me under these conditions, but I have never refused them the Eucharist, since the time I was a priest.”

But, he added, “I was never aware of anyone in front of me under those conditions that you mentioned.”

Recalling his apostolic exhortation, “*Evangelii Gaudium*,” the pope said that “Communion is not a prize for the perfect,” but rather “a gift, the presence of Jesus in his Church and in the community. That is the theology.”

However, Pope Francis also said he understood why the Church takes a hard stance because accepting abortion “is a bit as if daily murder was accepted.”

“Whoever commits an abortion, murders,” he said. “Take any book on embryology, those books on medicine. At the third week of conception, many times before a mother even realizes it, all the organs are there. All of them, even their DNA.

“It is a human life. Period,” the pope added. “And this human life must be respected. This principle is very clear.”

Pope Francis said that those “who don’t understand” this principle must ask themselves whether it is “right to kill a human life to solve a problem.”

He also recalled the reaction to his apostolic exhortation “*Amoris Laetitia*,” and the debates surrounding giving Communion to

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Love of Church at core of Deacon Barrett’s ministry

Wife encouraged him to be ordained so he could use ‘all my gifts’

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Editor’s note: Beginning this year, The Catholic Virginian, after discussion with the diocese’s Office for the Permanent Diaconate, is featuring permanent deacons celebrating 10th and 25th anniversaries of ordination.

Deacon Christopher Barrett was nearing the end of his formation to become a priest for the Congregation of Holy Cross when he met the woman who changed his life.

“I was in the seminary for seven years. The only thing left was final vows and ordination to the transitional diaconate,” he said. “I met a woman who is now my wife of almost 38 years, and I could not say forever to celibacy.”

While attending graduate school for theology, the rector of the seminary suggested that Deacon Barrett attend the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago for one semester to take special courses that were not offered at the University of Notre Dame. It was there that he met his now wife, Anne Gibbons, while she was working on her own Master of Divinity.

He and Anne, who has worked in ministry for her entire adult life, have three children.

Despite those years of preparing for priesthood, Deacon Barrett did not consider ordained service as a deacon right away.

“Because I had a Master of Divinity degree and I felt a calling to ministry, I worked as a lay minister for many years before even thinking about the permanent diaconate,” he said, noting that a Franciscan priest told him in 2005 that he should think about becoming a deacon.

At that time, Deacon Barrett was working full time as pastoral coordinator and senior pastoral associate at Resurrection, Moneta, where he was helping to prepare engaged couples for marriage and young married couples for the baptism of their children.

“I got to thinking that maybe I should be officiating at their weddings and performing the baptisms,” he said.

His professional life also included work as campus minister for four years, director of the Tabor Retreat Center for six years and executive director of the Lynchburg Peace Education Center for six years. He also worked with the Center for

Community Development and Social Justice at Lynchburg College for four years.

According to Deacon Barrett, Anne made a “huge difference” in his decision to apply for diaconate formation.

“I have loved the Church my whole life and loved ministry in the Church,” he said. “I loved lay ministry, but my wife said I’m not using all my gifts, and if I was a deacon, I could use all my gifts.”



Deacon Chris Barrett

Because he had a Master of Divinity, Deacon Barrett said he “had somewhat of a streamlined formation process through the diocese” when it came to diaconate formation.

He was ordained to the permanent diaconate by Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo on January 15, 2011, at his parish in Moneta.

He was assigned to that parish and served there for five years.

“I basically continued in the same position there but had additional responsibilities and additional opportunities as a deacon,” he said.

From 2016-2018, Deacon Barrett worked at St. Victoria, Hurt, and was a religion teacher at Holy Cross School, Lynchburg, his alma mater. The deacon’s family moved to the area from New York when he was 4 years old.

He has been in his current assignment at St. Elizabeth, Richmond, for four years.

Deacon Barrett explained that “the ministry of deacon is about assisting the pastor and to try to fit in with what the pastor believes is needed for the parish.” Father Jim Arsenault, St. Elizabeth pastor, wanted him to become involved with the social justice ministry.

Deacon Barrett works with TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More), which provides service to the Highland Park neighborhood, and RISC (Richmonders Involved to Strengthen Our Communities), a group of 23 congregations of different faiths that advocate for “justice with local issues of injustice.” He said that currently, RISC is “working very hard on the lack of affordable housing and on gun violence in

See Deacon Barrett, Page 4

National shrine's Mass ends centennial year

WASHINGTON (CNS) — During the closing Mass of the centennial year commemorating the 100th anniversary of the placing of the foundation stone of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory encouraged Catholics to reflect on Mary as the Mother of God and the entire Church.

"This great basilica is a brick-and-mortar tribute to that mother who is perfect in every fashion. For a century, American Catholics have helped to build and then traveled as pilgrim children to this place to honor the mother of the Church, God's own mother, and the mother of countless children who all claim that she is uniquely their own," he said.

On Sunday, Sept. 12, hundreds of local Catholics gathered in the basilica's upper church for a liturgy celebrated by Cardinal Gregory who was joined by Msgr. Walter Rossi, the rector of the basilica, Msgr. Vito Buonanno, the basilica's director of pilgrimages and several other priests.

A year ago, Cardinal Gregory was the principal celebrant of a Mass to inaugurate the jubilee year. During his Sept. 12 homily, he said throughout the past century the shrine has drawn countless people from all over the country and the world.

While there are many churches and holy sites in the United States devoted to the Blessed Mother, Cardinal Gregory said the basilica "embodies both our national identity and the various tributes that people offered to Mary from the rich cultural, ethnic and racial classes that belong to us."

Pope

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divorced or remarried Catholics.

Some called it, "heresy, but thank God for Cardinal (Christoph) Schönborn, a great theologian, who cleared a bit of the chaos," he said.

Nevertheless, "there was always this condemnation," the pope said. "These are poor people who are temporarily outside, but they are children of God and need our pastoral action."

The pope was also asked about his recent public service announcement in August encouraging people to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and whether his statement that "vaccinations are an act of love" would alienate Catholics who are skeptical about taking the vaccine.

Pope Francis said he found that "a little bit strange" because "humanity has a history of friendship with vaccines."

He also said that doubts about the vaccines may be a consequence of "the uncertainty of the pandemic, of the vaccine itself," or the notoriety of some vaccines in the past that were practically "distilled water."

"Even in the College of Cardinals there are some deniers. One of these, the poor guy, recently recovered from the virus," the pope said, alluding to American Cardinal Raymond L. Burke.

In Slovakia, recent legislation requiring vaccinations sparked protests in the country, causing divisions and tensions, including within the Catholic Church.

Although the government initially mandated all participants of papal events to be vaccinated, authorities relaxed their initial regulations and allowed participants who presented a negative COVID-19 test or proof of recovery from coronavirus.

Deacon Barrett

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Richmond."

"And I stay involved in assisting our Comboni Missionary Sister, Sister Tiberh, who heads up our ministry with our African immigrant community," he added.

The deacon has felt his Catholic faith grow through his ordained service.

"I have grown in my faith through my membership at St. Elizabeth, where I am so inspired by the joy exuded by our people in spirit and in song, and especially by our immigrant parishioners as they work so hard to rebuild their lives as they resettle in America," he said.

Deacon Barrett's favorite part of his ministry is preaching – the gift that Anne "especially" wanted him to be able to use when she encouraged his application for formation.

"All three of my pastors in my 10 years have been very inclusive of me," he said. "It's really up to the pastor if the deacon is invited to preach, and all three of my pastors have invited me to preach regularly. So I do love it, and I'm very grateful for that."

The deacon also expressed gratitude for the men who have served as mentors for him over the past decade: Deacon Bob Ewan, Deacon Mike Ellerbrock and the late Deacon Gordon Cartwright.

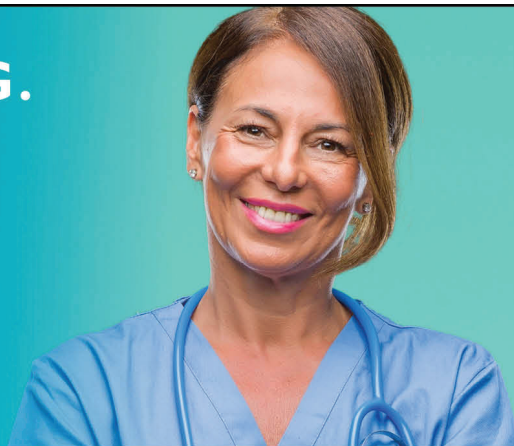
When he is not actively serving the Church, Deacon Barrett enjoys watching Boston Red Sox baseball and Notre Dame football. However, those interests come after three important people in his life.

"To tell you the truth, playing with my grandchildren is the greatest. That comes even before the Boston Red Sox," he said with a laugh.

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Deans

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Sacred Heart, Richmond; Church of the Redeemer, Mechanicsville; Holy Rosary, Richmond; St. Elizabeth, Richmond; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Quinton; St. John, Highland Springs; St. Patrick, Richmond; St. Paul, Richmond; St. Peter, Richmond; and St. Timothy, Tappahannock.

Deanery 7

Father Michael Renninger, pastor, St. Mary, Richmond

Parishes: Church of the Vietnamese Martyrs, Richmond; Our Lady of Lourdes, Richmond; St. Ann, Ashland; St. Benedict, Richmond; St. Bridget, Richmond; St. Mary, Richmond; St. Mary of the Annunciation, Ladysmith; and St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen.

Deanery 8

Jesuit Father Shay Auerbach, pastor, Sacred Heart, Richmond

Parishes: Church of the Epiphany, Richmond; Good Samaritan, Amelia; Sacred Heart, Richmond; St. Edward the Confessor, Richmond; St. Gabriel, Chesterfield; St. John Neumann, Powhatan; St. Joseph, Richmond; and St. Kim Taegon, Richmond.

Deanery 9

Father Joseph Goldsmith, pastor, Sacred Heart, Prince George County; St. James, Hopewell; St. John, Dinwiddie

Parishes: Church of the Sacred Heart, Prince George; Good Shepherd, South Hill; St. Ann, Colonial Heights; St. Augustine, Richmond; St. Catherine of Siena, Clarksville; St. James, Hopewell; St. John, Dinwiddie; St. Joseph, Petersburg; St. Paschal Baylon, South Boston; St. Peter the Apostle, Lake Gaston; and St. Richard, Emporia.

Deanery 10

Father Joseph Mary Lukyamuzi, pastor, Holy Comforter, Charlottesville

Parishes: Our Lady of the Rosary Mission, Crozet; Holy Comforter, Charlottesville; Immaculate Conception, Buckner; Incarnation, Charlottesville; St. Francis of Assisi, Amherst; St. George, Scottsville; St. Joseph's Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel, Columbia; St. Jude, Mineral; St. Mary, Lovingston; St. Thomas Aquinas, Charlottesville; and Sts. Peter and Paul, Palmyra.



Bishop Barry C. Knestout, center, greets the priests he recently appointed as deans in the Diocese of Richmond. The priests were at the Pastoral Center, Tuesday, Sept. 14, for training in their new roles.

(Catholic Virginian photo/Stephen Previtera)

Deanery 11

Father Rolo Castillo, pastor, St. John the Evangelist, Waynesboro

Parishes: Blessed Sacrament, Harrisonburg; Holy Infant, Elkton; St. Francis of Assisi, Staunton; St. John the Evangelist, Waynesboro; and Shepherd of the Hills, Quinque.

Deanery 12

Msgr. Patrick Golden, pastor, Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke

Parishes: Church of the Transfiguration, Fincastle; Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem; Sacred Heart, Covington; St. Andrew, Roanoke; St. Gerard, Roanoke; St. John the Evangelist, New Castle; St. Joseph, Clifton Forge; St. Patrick, Lexington; and Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Hot Springs.

Deanery 13

Father Charles Ssebalamu, pastor, St. Jude, Christiansburg

Parishes: All Saints, Floyd; Holy Family, Pearisburg; Holy Spirit, Christiansburg; Risen Lord, Stuart; St. Edward Mission, Pulaski; St. Joseph, Woodlawn; St. Jude, Radford; St. Mary, Blacksburg; and St. Mary the Mother of God, Wytheville.

Deanery 14

Father Francis Xavier Musolooza, pastor, Christ the King, Abingdon, and St. John, Marion

Parishes: Christ the King, Abingdon; Good

Shepherd, Lebanon; Holy Spirit Catholic Community, Jonesville; Sacred Heart, Big Stone Gap; St. Anne, Bristol; St. Anthony, Norton; St. Bernard, Gate City; St. John, Marion; St. Joseph, Clintwood; St. Mary, Coeburn; St. Patrick, Dungannon; St. Therese, St. Paul; Church of St. Elizabeth of Holy Family Parish, Pocahontas; Church of St. Joseph of Holy Family Parish, Grundy; Church of St. Mary of Holy Family Parish, Richlands; and Church of St. Theresa of Holy Family Parish, Tazewell.

Deanery 15

Father Salvador Añonuevo, pastor, Holy Cross, Lynchburg

Parishes: Holy Cross, Lynchburg; Holy Name of Mary, Bedford; Immaculate Heart of Mary, Blackstone; Our Lady of Peace, Appomattox; Resurrection, Moneta; Sacred Heart, Meherrin; Sacred Heart, Danville; St. Francis of Assisi, Rocky Mount; St. Joseph, Martinsville; St. Theresa, Farmville; St. Thomas More, Lynchburg; and St. Victoria, Hurt.

The responsibilities of a dean are included in the Code of Canon Law and detailed in the Vatican Congregation for Bishops' "Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops," which states:

"The vicar forane (dean) holds an office of considerable pastoral importance: he is a close collaborator with the bishop in pastoral care of the faithful and an attentive 'elder brother' towards the priests of the deanery, especially those who are ill or in difficult situations.

"It falls to him to coordinate the common pastoral activity of the parishes, to see to it that priests are living lives in conformity with their state and that parochial discipline is duly observed, particularly with regard to the liturgy."

The formal title for a dean is "Very Reverend." When that title is used, the initials "V.F." (vicar forane) follow his name.

When he established deaneries in the diocese in 2018, Bishop Knestout stated, "Through the leadership of the dean, I am confident that pastoral care for those on the peripheries found in places such as hospitals, prisons and nursing homes can be further enhanced through stronger coordination and support," he said. "Furthermore, I will count on each dean to identify members of the lay faithful in their deanery who can consult on a variety of regional and diocesan priorities."

9/11

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39, music by the Our Lady of Peace choir and prayers for the deceased of 9/11 and their families, and the people of Afghanistan.

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan said he couldn't think of "a better place to be" than St. Patrick's Cathedral "on this somber anniversary" of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

He shared his sentiments in opening remarks at a morning Mass he offered Sept. 11 at the cathedral to members of the New York City Fire Department and to families of firefighters who perished on 9/11.

"My welcome to all of you this morning is especially heartfelt and fervent," the cardinal said in his homily.

"While the entirety of this one nation under God observes this two-decade anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy, you all have a special claim to it," he added.

"You, FDNY, were there. You, FDNY, lost cherished colleagues —

343," the cardinal said. "You, FDNY, ask the questions ... in your duty to save, rescue and protect."

"And you, beloved families — how much we love you — realized that day, that the day you had long dreaded, the phone call you often feared, the supreme loss you knew was part of the package, had arrived all at once.

"So you are all very much at home here at St. Patrick's, folks," he said.

"This happens to be where we come to sob, to remember with reverence and gratitude, to recall with love those we gave away that day."

The cathedral, he continued, is where we come to hear the inspired word of God, especially the teaching of Christ.

"This is where we come to bow heads, to whisper a prayer, to dry a tear, to fight off a lump in the throat, to light a candle and realize we're not alone. God is with us, family, friends, community, Mother Church is with us."

At a 9/11 remembrance Mass



Parishioners from Our Lady of Peace, Appomattox; St. Victoria, Hurt; and Holy Cross and St. Thomas More, Lynchburg, participate in the 9/11 memorial service at Our Lady of Peace, Saturday, Sept. 11. (Photo/Veronica Haney)

Sept. 8 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, New Jersey, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin reminded the congregation that what happened 20 years ago was more than a national tragedy. For many in the local area, it was personal, he said.

The terrorist attacks directly impacted New Jersey families and residents who "had no idea that morning they were saying a final goodbye to someone whose loss would rip out their hearts," the cardinal said in his homily.

Some of those who lost loved ones in the World Trade Center attack were at the Mass.

Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory, the principal celebrant and

homilist of the Sept. 11 Mass at St. Patrick's in Washington, said the anniversary of the terrorist attacks is a time to "pause to remember the thousands of people whose lives were lost and their families who still grieve," and also an opportunity to "recall the extraordinary dedication of first responders and even ordinary citizens."

He said the anniversary is not "simply a moment for deep national mourning, but it is also simultaneously a time for deep hope and pride in the courage and the strength of our nation."

Contributing to this story was Father Jim Gallagher.

End the torture of solitary confinement

GUEST COMMENTARY

STEPHEN M. COLECCHI
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Every person enjoys occasional solitude. The busy business person, the hectic homemaker, the struggling student all welcome solitude at times. Persons of faith need solitude to connect with God in prayer.

But what about enforced solitude? What about solitary confinement within four bleak walls for many hours a day for weeks or months? This prison practice is all too widespread.

Solitary confinement is torture. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: "Torture which uses physical or moral violence to ... punish the guilty, frighten opponents, or satisfy hatred is contrary to respect for the person and for human dignity" (No. 2297). Torture is not only "physical," but also "moral" violence.

In the encyclical "Veritatis Splendor," St. John Paul II quotes the Second Vatican Council's absolute prohibition against "physical and mental torture" as an "intrinsic evil" (No. 80).

Solitary confinement is torture because we are created in the image of God as social beings.

Genesis teaches, "God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (1:27). "It is

not good for the man to be alone" (2:18).

Jesus understood the importance of human contact for the imprisoned and admonished his followers: "For I was ... in prison and you visited me" (Mt 25:35-36).

Self-directed solitude can be healthy; however, long periods of enforced solitary confinement compromise human dignity.

In an address to prison chaplains in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI raised the issue of torture: "When conditions within jails and prisons are not conducive to the process of regaining a sense of a worth and accepting its related duties, these institutions fail to achieve one of their essential ends."

The Church finds support for its view that long-term solitary confinement is torture in the social sciences. In 2014, Pope Francis gave an address to the International Association of Penal Law in which he said: "One form of torture is the one sometimes applied through confinement in high security prisons."

Pope Francis cited social sciences: "As shown by studies carried out by various human rights organizations, the lack of sensory stimuli, the total impossibility of communication and the lack of contact with other human beings induce mental and physical suffering such as paranoia, anxiety, depression, weight loss, and significantly increase the suicidal tendency."

In the words of Pope Francis, extended

periods of solitary confinement are "cruel" and sadly this "characteristic of high security prisons ... also occurs in other types of penitentiaries, along with other forms of physical and mental torture, the practice of which has spread."

In Virginia and in most states, solitary confinement is all too common. It does not just wound the prisoner; it wounds all of us.

Prison officials and society at large may not be aware, but our own humanity is wounded when we allow inhuman methods of punishment. The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church quotes St. John Paul who asserted that human dignity "is as much debased in his torturer as in the torturer's victim" (No. 404).

Any community that tolerates the torture of solitary confinement weakens human rights. Its extensive practice is not worthy of us.

Virginia has an opportunity to place humane limits on solitary confinement in its next general assembly. We can limit its practice to protecting people from imminent danger for the shortest periods necessary. We can make our society more humane for all of us.

Stephen M. Colecchi is the former director of the Office of International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and of the Office of Justice and Peace of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.

Appalled by cartoon

I have never written to an editor of any publication before; however, I feel compelled to voice my opinion regarding the cartoon in The Catholic Virginian (Sept. 6) that culminates in the line, "I told you so."

Nothing about it is funny, so I have to wonder what the point of it was. Was it supposed to encourage people to get vaccinated? I doubt anyone is going to be encouraged by such a cruel depiction.

Was it simply expressing judgment? Making fun? If that was the case, it is mean spirited and divisive, just like so much sentiment surrounding COVID in the secular world.

It reminds me of a

newscaster last week saying that if you're not vaccinated, don't bother going to the hospital if you get sick because it's basically your own fault. Or President Biden saying Sept. 9 that this is a pandemic of the unvaccinated now and he understands the anger of the vaccinated toward the unvaccinated. It goes on and on, and I was appalled to find such in The Catholic Virginian.

The message of support for masks and vaccines is made clear in Barbara Hughes' column and in a letter to the editor. That's fine, but the cartoon crosses a line. Instead of love, mercy and compassion for what appears to be a very sick spouse, the cartoon conveys

a cold, arrogant and uncharitable scene.

I am very disappointed that our diocesan newspaper would feature something so far removed from the spirit of Christ.

By the way, I am vaccinated.

— Kathleen Walsh
Newport News

Shouldn't enjoy another's misfortune

I am writing to express my disappointment with The Catholic Virginian's publication of Joe Heller's cartoon in its latest issue. I am disappointed because, as Catholics, we should never enjoy another's misfortune. In addition, the cartoon supports the current media portrayal of those

hesitant to get the MRNA shot as stupid, stubborn or selfish in some way. That is simply not true for all. I have family and friends who are struggling with the ethical dilemma that accepting this treatment entails.

They want to do the right thing. They would not willingly or knowingly put someone else in harm's way. They are not anti-vaccine as the press would like to portray them. What they are against is being coerced into taking a novel vaccine therapy that was rushed to market in a crisis. It takes time to assess the safety of any new treatment as anyone familiar with Thalidomide knows. We have already seen complications that did not show up in the clinical trials.

In addition, there are experts in the field of immu-

nology who are questioning the wisdom of vaccinating everyone using MRNA therapy. We are told that vaccinated people can still carry and spread the disease. Therefore, I empathize with those worried as to whether taking this MRNA vaccine really is for the common good. I welcome their skepticism and would like to see their concerns addressed properly and not lampooned.

For the record, I am fully vaccinated. Despite that, I contracted COVID this summer and my symptoms were not mild.

— Paul Roderique
Bedford

'You should be ashamed'

As the editor, I assume you are responsible for the

See Letters, Page 13

Dear Readers,

This space in the Sept. 6 issue of The Catholic Virginian included an editorial cartoon that should not have been published in this paper. Thank you to all who wrote or called to express outrage, indignation, disappointment and other views that were warranted. The four letters related to the cartoon that appear in this issue are representative of what you had to say about it.

You're right. That cartoon did not belong in our diocesan publication. As many of you noted, its message lacked the love of

Christ that we, as Catholics, are taught to preach and to live — especially to the sick and dying.

Had I taken additional time to reflect and more carefully consider what it was depicting, it would not have appeared in The Catholic Virginian. But I make no excuses. I made a grievous error in editorial judgment — a decision that disrupted the paper's mission to instruct, inform and inspire readers — and I apologize for it.

Publication of the cartoon was not consistent with the publisher's desire that all

matters covered by the paper be done so with charity and kindness. I deeply regret that something so offensive was published and pledge to make every effort to fully express the Gospel of Christ's love in its fullness.

Please know that I continue to pray for an end to COVID, for those affected by it and for myself — that I may be more diligent in relying upon the Holy Spirit's guidance in the decisions I make as editor.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Brian T. Olszewski

An apology from the editor

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Remains of POW chaplain to be welcomed home

Died in North Korean camp more than 70 years ago

CHRISTOPHER RIGGS
Catholic News Service

WICHITA, Kan. — The flag-draped casket was empty during a memorial Mass in Wichita for Father Emil J. Kapaun July 29, 1953.

The casket at Father Kapaun's funeral Mass Sept. 29, won't be vacant. He is coming home.

The memorial Mass in 1953 in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated a little over two weeks after word of Father Kapaun's death reached Bishop Mark K. Carroll July 12, 1953. He was notified the U.S. Army chaplain had died in a North Korean prisoner of war camp May 23, 1951.

Seventy years after his death, a U.S. government forensics team in Hawaii announced March 4 that it had identified his remains.

Father Kapaun was ordained a priest for the Wichita Diocese June 9, 1940. He was a U.S. Army chaplain in World War II and the Korean War and held the rank of captain. A candidate for sainthood, he has the title "Servant of God."

Scott Carter, coordinator of the Father Kapaun Guild, will be flying Sept. 20 to Honolulu with Wichita Bishop Carl A. Kemme and Father David Lies, vicar general of the diocese, as well as with Ray Kapaun, Father Kapaun's nephew, and his wife, and the late priest's niece to formally accept his remains and bring them back to the Diocese of Wichita.

Other representatives of the diocese and the U.S. military also will take part in the ceremonies in Hawaii.

Carter said many events have been scheduled in Hawaii and in Wichita to bring Father Kapaun home.

Bishop Larry Silva of Honolulu will celebrate a Mass Sept. 23 in the Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace as a ceremonial send-off of Father Kapaun's remains. The Mass is scheduled to be live-streamed from the Honolulu cathedral's website at 11 p.m. central time.

"It's a moment for the (Hawaiian) people to recognize someone who has been buried in their midst ... and a send-off, hopefully, a future saint," Carter said.

The Wichita diocesan group also will tour the U.S. military facilities where Father Kapaun's remains were identified as well as the Punchbowl, the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific located at Punchbowl Crater in Honolulu.

U.S. Army Forces Command Chaplain Col. Rajmund Kopec and U.S. Air Force Maj. Christina Roberts, Father Kapaun's niece, will officially escort Father Kapaun's



Father Emil Joseph Kapaun, a U.S. Army chaplain, is pictured celebrating Mass from the hood of a jeep Oct. 7, 1950, in South Korea. A candidate for sainthood, he died May 23, 1951, in a North Korean prisoner of war camp. His remains will be entombed in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Wichita, Kansas. (CNS photo/courtesy U.S. Army medic Raymond Skeehan)

remains on a commercial airline flight leaving Honolulu Sept. 24. Family and diocesan representatives also will be on the journey that will conclude Sept. 25, when a flight from Dallas lands at Eisenhower National Airport in Wichita.

"The military escort stays with the remains along the way," Carter said, "which is a great way to honor those who have fallen and ensure their security. They are never left alone, they are loved and not forgotten."

Other family members and diocesan representatives will welcome Father Kapaun's remains at the airport, he told The Catholic Advance, Wichita's diocesan newspaper.

"From there, his remains will be going to Pilsen for the weekend where he will truly be returning home," Carter said.

The visit to St. John Nepomucene Church in Pilsen, Kansas, is primarily for the Holy Family Parish community to pray for and spend time with their native son.

Father Kapaun's remains will be delivered to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Wichita Sept. 27 for a vespers service for the priests of the diocese.

"I think it will be a powerful, touching moment for them to be with their brother priest," Carter said.

A luncheon will be held Sept. 28 at the cathedral for special guests such as the families of the prisoners of war, military officials and possibly some former Korean

War POWs.

Kopec and Ray Kapaun are scheduled to share some thoughts at the luncheon. Kelly McKeague, director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, may also attend and speak.

"We're looking forward to that moment to honor and share Father Kapaun's story," Carter said.

The funeral vigil for Father Kapaun will be Sept. 28 at Hartman Arena in Wichita.

"It will be a beautiful and powerful ceremony with prayer – and music by the Air Force and West Point Catholic Cadet choirs," Carter said.

A rosary will be prayed at the vigil and comments from Ray Kapaun and possibly Mike Dow, a fellow POW with Father Kapaun, will be delivered. Father Kapaun's remains casket will be on the stage during the event.

His funeral Mass will be celebrated at Hartman Arena Sept. 29. EWTN is scheduled to broadcast the Mass.

"Bishop Carroll celebrated a Mass in 1953 when they found out that Father Kapaun had died in a prisoner of war camp. They had heard that he had been captured and they had been praying that he would make it back," Carter said.

"The family was there, the military was there, and that was a great way to honor him and pray for the repose of his soul," he said. "But a flag was draped over an empty casket."

A lot of people now believe

that Father Kapaun's soul is now in heaven, he said, adding that the diocese is waiting for validation from the Vatican regarding his cause for sainthood.

In general, one miracle attributed to the sainthood candidate's intercession and verified by Church authorities is needed for beatification; a second such miracle would be needed for canonization.

After the funeral, Father Kapaun's remains will be driven to a site near the Veterans' Memorial Park where his casket will be placed on a horse-drawn military caisson.

The procession will slowly move east from the park about a half-mile to the cathedral.

Father Kapaun will receive military honors, a 21-gun salute, and "Taps," before his remains are carried into the cathedral by members of the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division from Fort Hood, Texas.

Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division from Fort Riley, Kansas, also will take part in the various events planned for welcoming the priest home.

"There will be opportunities to visit him and pray at the cathedral after these events are over," Carter said, adding that it is unknown how long Father Kapaun will be interred at the cathedral.

"If he is named 'blessed' we will probably begin working on a shrine," Carter said.

Editor's note: More information about Father Kapaun's life, ministry and sainthood cause can be found at <https://frkapaun.org>. Details are being finalized for his funeral and other events and also will be available on the website.

MORE

Information Instruction Inspiration

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catholic virginian.org

Expect a lot of people to experience purgatory



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. I'm confused about the Catholic teaching on purgatory, as we never really covered it in our RCIA program. I understand it to be a "stop-over" of sorts, for a soul's purification on its way to heaven, but I've also been told different things as to the nature of this purification — anything from a final confession to a burning off of sins to a witnessing of harm the person may have caused while still alive and of which they may have not previously been aware.

I've also been told that a person's purgatory time can start in the here and now, while still alive, and even that some of the suffering in this life may be to help others already in purgatory. Finally, I've been told that almost everyone will likely go to purgatory. Can you comment? (Charlottesville)

A. The Catholic Church has always believed in the existence of purgatory. That belief is defined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which says: "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven" (No. 1030).

It is also reflected in the words of

Jesus himself, who says in the Gospel of Matthew (12:32), that certain sins "will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come," which serves as an indication that some purging of the soul may need to occur after death.

There are indications from the earliest centuries of the Christian era that this belief was common in the Church; some might remember that St. Monica, in the fourth century, asked her son St. Augustine before she died to continue to remember her soul in his Masses.

Even before the advent of Christianity, we read in the Second Book of Maccabees (12:46) that Judas Maccabeus "made atonement for the dead" that they might be freed from sin, which suggest a Jewish practice of offering prayers to cleanse the souls of the departed.

And yes, it has always been the common practice of believers who are still living to offer prayers and sacrifices for the departed. (Older Catholics might remember when they were little and complained to their mothers about something, the response would be, "Offer it up for the souls in purgatory?")

As for the exact nature of what that purification after death may be, we just don't know. It might even be instantaneous. And regarding your speculation as to what percentage will wind up in purgatory, we've never been told; but speaking personally, spiritual and moral perfection seem a long way away, so my own guess is that a lot of us will need some remediation.

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

Q. Our current priest always looks exhausted. He is attempting to pastor three parishes that were merged into one. Our parish has no deacons. With the shortage of priests and deacons, will the Church ever allow women to become deacons? (Evansville, Indiana)

A. This same issue, in fact, is currently being studied by the Church. In April 2020, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis had created a new commission to study the question of a female diaconate in the Catholic Church. This followed the suggestion by the 2019 Synod of Bishops on the Amazon, which had recommended that women be considered for certain ministries in the Church, including the permanent diaconate.

An earlier study on the same topic had been commissioned by Pope Francis in August 2013, soon after his election as pontiff. At a 2016 meeting with the women's International Union of Superiors General, Pope Francis told the sisters that his understanding at that point was that women described as deaconesses in the New Testament were not ordained, as permanent deacons are, but were commissioned to assist with baptism by immersion of other women.

In 2019, aboard a papal flight with journalists, Pope Francis told reporters that the first commission he had appointed to study the topic had not reached a unanimous conclusion.

"What is fundamental is that there was no certainty that there was an ordination with the same form and the same aim as the ordination of men," the pope told reporters on that May 7, 2019, flight from Macedonia to Rome.

In 2002, the same topic had been studied by the International Theological Commission, an advisory body to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which had cast some doubt as to whether female deacons in the early Church had a liturgical or sacramental function.

So the creation in 2020 of this new commission has given new hope to some that the ordination of women deacons could someday happen.

Q. Do Catholic priests forget what they are told in confession? (City and state withheld)

A. Yes, we do. Part of that is due, I'm sure, to the grace of God; but another reason might be the repetitive nature of most confessions. I always try to remind myself, when I enter the confessional box, to stay alert and to remember that my role is to put the penitent in touch with God.

Rather than have confession become simply a repetition of regular faults (and that is fine), I often try to engage penitents also with regard to their spiritual life by asking them, for example, "Do you try to pray each day?" Normally, within a few minutes of leaving the confessional, I have forgotten nearly all of the sins people have confessed.

Our Church, Our Story

Black Catholic Identity and Culture

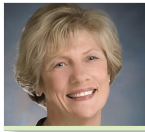
Mark your calendar!

In celebration of National Black Catholic History Month, The Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics and the National Black Catholic Congress Daniel Rudd Fund, in cooperation with All Saints Catholic School and the Richmond parishes of St. Elizabeth, St. Paul and Holy Rosary, are sponsoring "Our Church, Our Story: Black Catholic Identity and Culture, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 5 and 6.

Details about registration, keynote speaker, breakout sessions and liturgy will be released in the coming weeks. Information will also be available on the diocesan website or by calling Deacon Charles Williams, director of the Office for Black Catholics, at 804-359-5661.



Listen to what God says in the silence of your heart



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

Amid mounting national and worldwide catastrophes, more and more Catholics are turning to God by spending time in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. While eucharistic adoration is nothing new, there seems to be a renewed appreciation for the practice during recent decades.

For centuries, parishes held what was known as “Forty Hours Devotion” during which the Blessed Sacrament was exposed continuously for 40 hours so that parishioners could venerate Jesus in the Eucharist where the host was visible rather than behind the closed doors of the tabernacle.

When I was a child, the annual event was bookended by opening and closing services, which usually included processions with children dressed in first Communion finery and altar servers who accompanied the priest while hymns were being sung by the faithful. At the time, I didn’t understand the importance of the devotion, but it obviously made an impression that remains with me.

A recent Google search dates the practice of Forty Hours Devo-

tion to medieval times, but even during the earliest years of Christianity, the sacred species of Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament was revered. However, the practice of sitting in the presence of the Lord can be traced to the Hebrew Scripture where “King David went in and sat before the Lord, and said, ‘Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?’” (1 Chr 17:16).

Although times have changed, devotion to the Blessed Sacrament remains strong. Today many parishes have weekly adoration or even perpetual adoration. But even in churches where the Blessed Sacrament is not exposed, the invitation to visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament remains constant.

Spending time with our Lord in quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament is time well spent. We may never know how our prayer has helped others, but commending them to the Lord is the best help we can give to those we love and especially for those whose faith is either too weak or perhaps nonexistent to come to the Lord on their own.

It’s been said that prayer changes the one who prays, and when, like David, we come and sit before the Lord, we are placing

ourselves, our thoughts, concerns and, yes, even our questions and doubts in God’s hands. We may not always come away feeling as if God has spoken directly to us, but that’s what faith is all about.

Faith calls us to believe that Jesus is present in the consecrated bread, whether the host is exposed on the altar or remains in the tabernacle. Faith is also about believing that every visit is an encounter with Christ whether we feel the closeness of God or not.

Faith has never been a matter of feelings because feelings come and go. Although God may allow his presence to be felt through a sense of warmth and consolation, we can neither expect nor depend on feelings to determine whether we will remain faithful to prayer.

Like emotions, our thoughts and judgment are equally unreliable indicators of where we or others are in relation to God. We know that God sees things and people very differently than we do. But the more we spend time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the more we will come to see as God sees.

No human criteria, no earthly calculation, no system or theory, no opinion, power or desire can vindicate a person. For that we need the mercy of God. And so, the real question we need to

ask our self is: How does God see me when I sit before the Lord in prayer?

The biblical meaning of “sitting” represents permanency, stability, security and certainty. It means that two of us are here together. God is touching me just as I am touching God. Thus, I might ask: Do I believe that God speaks to me in the silence of my heart? The answer should be a resounding, “Of course!” Why would the Word exist if not to speak and if not to be heard?

Our task is to develop ears to hear, and that can only happen when we sit before the Lord on a regular basis. When it seems that God remains silent, we might consider that even silence conveys a message, for nothing can be more profound than the sound of silence.

This we learn from Mary, who after the birth of Jesus and again after Simeon prophesized that a sword would pierce her heart Scripture says, “She pondered these things in the silence of her heart” (Lk 2:19).

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

Be afraid of what separates you from God forever



BELIEVE AS
YOU PRAY
MSGR. TIMOTHY KEENEY

Sometimes we fear the wrong things. When we are kids, we may have feared getting caught in a lie rather than fear that we might lose our parents’ trust or hurt our relationship with them by telling the lie.

The first might lead to a punishment; the second can lead to years of regret. The second is worthy of fear.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells John not to fear someone who is performing a mighty deed in Jesus’ name even if that someone is not a disciple.

The modern equivalent would be to be jealous because a neighboring Protestant church is having a great deal of success in attracting souls for Christ or for that same Protestant church to be jealous of the wonderful things that are happening at a local Catholic parish. This is the wrong thing to fear.

Jesus turns to what we should fear — being cast into Gehenna to find ourselves eternally separated from God in hell. Yet even

here, we can be tempted to be afraid of the wrong thing.

Our movies and TV programs are filled with the demonic. That fascination sometimes opens doors in our souls that should have remained shut.

Ask any of the priests in the diocese and they will tell you that they have gotten telephone calls or requests from Catholics and non-Catholics to perform exorcisms at people’s houses or over family members.

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B

Nm 11:25-29;

Ps 19:8, 10, 12-13, 14;

Jas 5:1-6;

Mk 9:38-43, 47-48

Although formal exorcisms are limited to specific priests in very specific situations, most priests are more than willing to bless the homes of those who make these requests and pray for their loved ones.

But I often tell these people, “Don’t be afraid.” Jesus is more powerful than any demon. Even the name of Jesus is more powerful than any demon. Fear just gives the evil one an entry point.

Yet Jesus does tell us to be afraid of one thing. Be afraid of what separates us from God. In the version of the Act of Contrition that most of you have prayed, we say, “O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments and the loss of heaven and

the pains of hell.”

The pains of hell are something of which to be afraid, but a healthier fear is expressed in the next line of the Act of Contrition: “But most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love.”

Most people who are not afraid of hell have that lack of fear because they don’t really grasp that their actions have any real consequences. They don’t fear hell because they are not in love with the living God. God has a universal salvific will, but he will not save us against our will.

Because they are not in love with the living God, the only God in their minds is an imaginary God of their own making. And they could never imagine that God might look at us and say to us, “Not my will, but yours be done.”

Although it is good to have this kind of fear, it is not enough. We won’t be saved simply because we fear the pains of hell or even the separation from God’s love.

We are saved only when, with the help of his grace, self-centered fear is actively conquered by self-transcending love.

Msgr. Timothy Keeney is pastor of Incarnation, Charlottesville.

Bill honoring abolitionist focuses on trafficking prevention

DENNIS SADOWSKI
Catholic News Service

CLEVELAND — Two members of Congress have introduced a bill to expand successful trafficking prevention efforts in schools and businesses.

Reps. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) and Karen Bass (D-Calif.) introduced the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection and Reauthorization Act of 2021 in the House of Representatives Sept. 3.

“During COVID ... the exploitation of children has risen substantially, mostly online, and there is kind of like a pent-up demand to exploit, it’s lingering there,” Smith said during a livestreamed news conference prior to the bill’s introduction.

“As COVID further diminishes, we’re going to see people who feel they’re entitled to exploit young women or boys and we have to make sure we have all the tools arrayed against them,” he said.

The date the bill was introduced is significant because it is the day in 1838 that the 20-year-old Douglass self-emancipated himself in Baltimore and, disguised as a sailor, made his way via steamship and train to New York. He subsequently played a leading role as an abolitionist, social reformer, speaker and writer.

Smith, who is Catholic, has been a longtime supporter of federal anti-trafficking efforts, having



Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist and former slave, is seen in this image circa 1850. (CNS photo/National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution via Reuters)

authored legislation that dates to 2000. The new bill would expand on measures enacted by passage of a 2018 bill that also carried Douglass’ name.

Bass’ collaboration with Smith has focused on children within public welfare systems to ensure they have adequate support, including housing, to limit potentially falling victim to traffickers or being exploited again.

The bill includes a measure to provide \$35 million for housing assistance grants to trafficking victims.

Kenneth B. Morris Jr., great-great-great-grandson of Douglass and great-great grandson of educa-

tor Booker T. Washington, told the news conference the reauthorization bill is needed to continue the progress made on human trafficking prevention.

The current law’s support for age-appropriate prevention programs in elementary and secondary schools has enabled more children and teachers to recognize the signs of exploitation and to develop the skills to step in to help, said Morris, president of the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, an anti-trafficking organization based in Rochester, New York.

The organization has introduced the PROTECT trafficking prevention program in partner-

ship with two California-based nonprofit organizations and has reached 500,000 students and 60,000 adults, according to the program’s website.

Smith told Catholic News Service that private schools are equally as eligible as public schools to receive funding for anti-trafficking education through grants administered by the Department of Health and Human Services.

One section of the bill would reauthorize and enhance International Megan’s Law to track convicted sex offenders living abroad who return to the U.S.

Other provisions include bolstering protections for victims and witnesses during trafficking investigations; establishing restitution for trafficking survivors; adding accountability for the U.S. and foreign governments, hotels, and airlines through anti-trafficking training and codes of conduct; and introducing stricter sanctions for traffickers and “Tier 3” countries that do not meet minimum standards to address or eliminate trafficking.

Smith said he hopes Congress acts quickly on the bill. Funding for programs under the 2018 law ends Sept. 30, the end of the federal government’s current fiscal year. If not passed by the deadline, Smith anticipates Congress will pass a continuing resolution so programs do not end.

Foster the GOOD

A LUNCH SPEAKER SERIES

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

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

SEPTEMBER 28, 2021
12:30-1:30PM

Register for FREE at: [Bit.ly/FostertheGoodSeptember2021](https://bit.ly/FostertheGoodSeptember2021)

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

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Tee: \$250

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

Afghan refugee's plan to attend Catholic school halted

Student says, 'I was hoping for a brighter future in the US'

APRILLE HANSON SPIVEY
Catholic News Service

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Shadab, 18, was ready to leave Afghanistan to travel nearly 7,500 miles to begin his senior year of high school at Subiaco Academy — a Benedictine high school which is both a day school and a boarding school — just before the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

The student knows six languages and had high hopes of studying at an American college next year.

The college-preparatory environment and challenging curriculum at the all-boys school in Subiaco drew him in after just a simple internet search of U.S. schools. He knew that's where he wanted to study; he applied and was accepted.

But within a month, his entire world changed.

"We have no future," Shadab said bluntly, with the sting of desperation in his voice during a phone call from Pakistan with the Arkansas Catholic, diocesan newspaper of Little Rock, Aug. 31.

Shadab, who preferred to use only his first name, had his student visa denied a second time Aug. 26.

"I have no future, my younger sister has no future because I'm not able to go to school anymore. As an immigrant in Pakistan, I'm not allowed to do my school in Pakistan," he said. "My visa got denied, I can't go back to Afghanistan as I have American documents with me as well. I'm scared now. I'm more scared now."

Shadab's plight is a familiar one for countless young people after the Taliban overtook Afghanistan Aug. 15, entering the capital of Kabul as President Ashraf Ghani fled. The U.S. withdrew its final troops Aug. 30, after 20 years.

Shadab was born in the Ghazni province of Afghanistan as a Hazara Muslim. Representing just 9% of the population, Hazaras are one of the most persecuted religious minorities by the Taliban, according to Amnesty International.

The family moved to Kabul when he was 7.

"That movement was also because of Taliban, as we had no access to the primary rights, like having a good school with a high quality of education," he said.

Shadab explained for most Afghan children, there were "no typical nights and days at all" for his family. There were no family vacations, as traveling came with its own risk of being killed by extremists.

His uncle and grandfather were murdered by the Taliban in Ghazni. He declined to go into detail about what happened.

"We are from Afghanistan, we have the right to travel to each city we want, like for a picnic or travel for something like that, but we were not able to do that because we have been killed," Shadab said. "There are so many examples of Hazara people who have been killed on the roads. We have no access to our primary rights as a human being."

Despite living in a country with few opportunities, Shadab felt safer in Kabul and was hopeful for his future.

He had spoken with the headmaster and some of the teachers at Subiaco and said they were supportive and motivating. He planned



Shadab, who is not using his last name to protect his family in Afghanistan, leans on his hands in a home where he's staying in Pakistan Sept. 1, 2021. The Afghan high school senior was twice denied a student visa to study at Subiaco Academy, a Benedictine high school in Subiaco, Ark. (CNS photo/Handout via Arkansas Catholic)

to study business administration in college and chose Subiaco Academy because of its business and economy classes.

Marion Dunagan, assistant head of enrollment management at Subiaco Academy, said Shadab is "the kind of kid that Subiaco really wants."

"Academically, he's exceptional," she said. "We are looking for students who are already well-rounded — he checks all the boxes to be a wonderful student academically, from a cultural standpoint, from an athletic standpoint; he was nationally ranked as a soccer player in Afghanistan."

Shadab's student visa was first denied July 6 and then again Aug. 26. He traveled to Pakistan because the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan was closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I traveled to Pakistan by land, I crossed the border and I saw them. I saw them with my own eyes," he said of the Taliban soldiers. "It was dangerous; looking at their faces was dangerous. Everyone is scared of dying."

Despite all the paperwork, he was told he was denied because he has no "strong ties to my country," he said.

"I had all the acceptance documents, all the proper information," Shadab said. "I was shocked when my visa was denied because U.S. people were (letting) many, many, many people from Afghanistan without having a single document, from the airport. But I had all the documents."

Dunagan contacted the office of Sen. John Boozman (R-Ark.) office several times about this situation and said his office was very gracious about contacting the embassy before the student's visa interview. She has not heard back following the second denial.

Boozman's spokesman Matthew Wester said in a Sept. 1 email that the office is working with the school about helping the prospective student's visa application process. "This case is ongoing and our office remains engaged in pursuing a resolution," he said.

Dunagan said she is terribly worried about Shadab and his family — his parents and younger sister.

For now, Shadab is staying in Islamabad with friends of his family. He is not a resident of Pakistan so he cannot enroll in school. He

cannot return to his family in Afghanistan, for fear of Taliban retaliation. Currently, the borders are closed.

"I am worried about them and disappointed because of the situation. I just can't express my feelings. It's hard to see your family is suffering, and I'm not able to do anything ... For a school student, it's too hard to handle these big responsibilities. It is killing me every day thinking about this all," Shadab said. "And considering my situation in Pakistan right now, I can't do anything for them. So it is heartbreaking for me, and it's hard. I'm just worried and pray and that's all."

While his own future is in jeopardy, Shadab is most worried about his 14-year-old sister.

"I have seen the news. They say they will allow the girls to study at the universities and schools, but I am not sure about that," he said.

"The Taliban is the old Taliban. They have not changed. Their faces have not changed; their style has not changed; the way they talk has not changed."

The Taliban has not allowed women to drive, learn English or go to school.

"She's still young and oh God, she is so scared," he said of his sister. "I know what she was hoping for in her future. I know that and all of them (girls), it just suddenly got changed."

"I was hoping for a brighter future in the U.S. For now, there is no plan for me. I lost my motivation," he said with a sigh.

Shadab said the one thing he hopes Arkansans will do is raise their voice for the people of Afghanistan who cannot.

"They are losing their loved ones every day," Shadab said. "We are scared ... They have to raise their voice and defend us against the Taliban. That's all I want."

Holocaust

Continued from Page 1

Francis recognized the importance of the synagogue that once stood alongside the Cathedral of St. Martin.

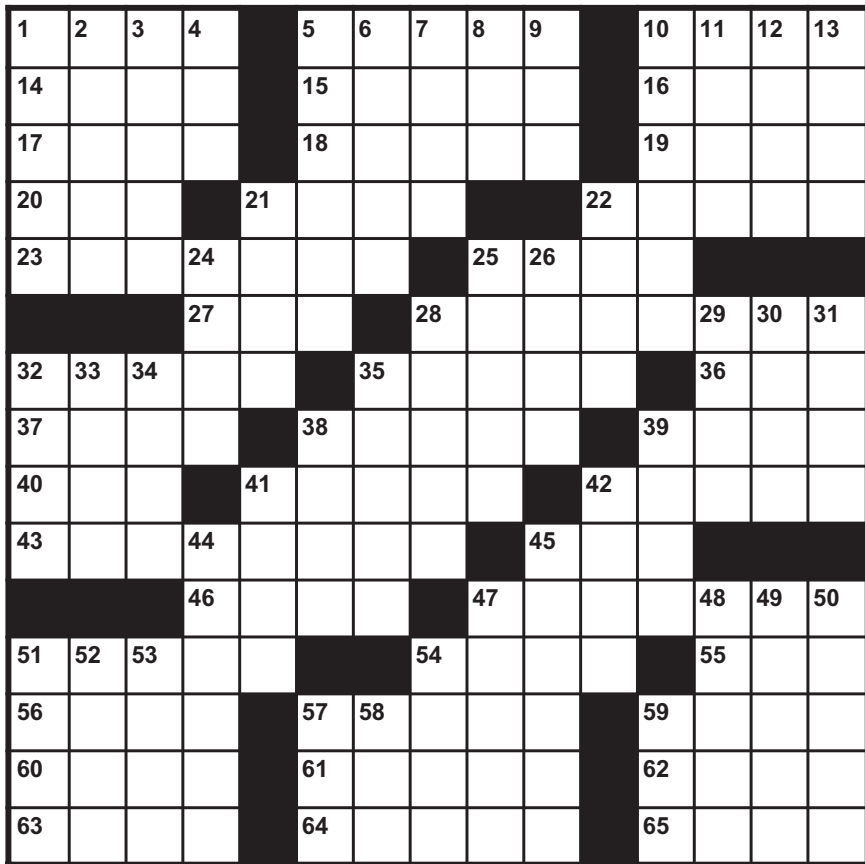
The presence of both spiritual edifices, he said, was "an expression of the peaceful coexistence of the two communities, an unusual and evocative symbol, and a striking sign of unity in the name of the God of our fathers."

The pope remembered the victims of the Holocaust and said it was "the worst form of blasphemy" that violated the second Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."

"Here, in this place, the name of God was dishonored, for the worst form of blasphemy is to exploit it for our own purposes, refusing to respect and love others."

Noting the word "Remember" etched on the memorial, Pope Francis said that the memory of the horrors of the Holocaust "must not give way to forgetfulness," indifference and "forms of manipulation that would exploit religion in the service of power or else reduce it to irrelevance."

"I repeat: let us unite in condemning all violence and every form of anti-Semitism, and in working to ensure that God's image, present in the humanity he created, will never be profaned," the pope said.



www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

ACROSS

- 1 Commandment carrier, and others
- 5 They have their "ears" on
- 10 "There is a ___ in Gilead"
- 14 Departs
- 15 Bathsheba's first husband
- 16 What a catechumen participates in (abbr.)
- 17 Muslim titles of honor
- 18 Amphetamine tablet (slang)
- 19 Elvis' middle name
- 20 Writing instrument
- 21 "It is more blessed to ___ than to receive" (Acts 20:35)
- 22 Form of oxygen
- 23 Learned
- 25 Gift bearers
- 27 Suppositions
- 28 Without weariness
- 32 Commandment word
- 35 Physical power
- 36 Catholic comedian Costello
- 37 "___ Ben Adhem"
- 38 One of the seven deadly sins
- 39 Discontinued Dodge
- 40 Do goo
- 41 Direction from Nazareth to Jerusalem
- 42 Raise
- 43 Canine of the jaw
- 45 She takes vows
- 46 Jesus was offered this on the cross
- 47 Water to wine, for example
- 51 Jesus compared a rich man to this animal
- 54 Fine and delicate
- 55 Masc. pronoun
- 56 Type of history
- 57 ___ Gay
- 59 Abbr. for two OT books
- 60 305, to Cato
- 61 Pretty girl
- 62 Sound amplifier
- 63 1974 Wimbledon champ
- 64 Light wood
- 65 Scottish Gaelic

DOWN

- 1 Christian love
- 2 Catholic United States Chief Justice Taney
- 3 Sandra's "The Lake House" co-star
- 4 Sound of bacon frying
- 5 Noah's boat was measured in these
- 6 Papal letter signed by the Pope's secretary and sealed with the Pope's ring
- 7 "___ Kleine Nacht Musik"
- 8 Hurried
- 9 Bashful
- 10 Country with the largest Catholic population
- 11 Height (comb.)
- 12 First of the four living creatures in Revelation 4
- 13 Long luxuriant hair
- 21 Gold, frankincense, or myrrh
- 22 Double curve
- 24 God, in Paris
- 25 Merriment
- 26 Opening for the largest diocese in a province
- 28 "...for eye, ___ for..." (Ex 21:24)
- 29 Patron saint of sailors
- 30 Esau and Jacob, to Rebekah
- 31 Hearts or diamonds
- 32 Oscar-winning actor of "Leaving Las Vegas" fame
- 33 Comply
- 34 Rodent
- 35 Biblical instrument
- 38 Before long
- 39 Lady Chaplin
- 41 Earth
- 42 "Let the dead ___ their dead..." (Lk 9:60)
- 44 Apostle number
- 45 Council of 325 AD
- 47 Shopping centers
- 48 From the ___ of Peter
- 49 Salt deposits
- 50 Intro giver
- 51 Catholic comedienne of "Your Show of Shows"
- 52 Curves
- 53 Speed-of-sound measure
- 54 Recline in a relaxed manner
- 57 Flow back
- 58 PBS funder
- 59 Nice Mrs.

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



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Parish Partner Spotlight



Thank You
*Saint Mary
Star of the Sea*

Saint Mary Star of the Sea was established in 1860 and more than 160 years later is still serving the needs of the Ft. Monroe and Hampton communities. In partnership with the other parishes in the Peninsula Cluster - St. Joseph and St. Vincent DePaul - the parish lives out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy by teaching the faith, giving alms to the poor, visiting the sick, comforting the sorrowful, welcoming the stranger and so much more! Whether the parish is supporting the Foodbank, survivors of domestic abuse or Catholic Charities' programs, they are living out the call to the new evangelization of the church and we are incredibly grateful for their support.

"Saint Mary Star of the Sea, pray for us!"

Letters

Continued from Page 6

comic on Page 6 of the most recent volume — the comic that is making fun of anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers – and enjoying their “bad karma.” I find this comic highly disgusting and highly un-Christian. I would expect it in a partisan, secular magazine, and not in a non-partisan, Christian magazine.

Because you find this funny, would it also be funny to laugh at obese people who are in the hospital because of heart attacks or diabetes? Would it also be funny to laugh at smokers who are in the hospital because of lung cancer?

What if women in Texas started having ‘coat-hanger’ abortions and ended up in the hospital? Funny? Would it be OK to have “Schadenfreude”?

All of these people would be in the hospital because of medically unwise personal choices. I assume the humor would apply to all.

You should be ashamed for letting that go to print. If you had any decency, you would print this email in the next edition, along with an apology. For some reason I highly doubt you will. It’s better to score laughs than to be Christian.

– Mike Pearl
Charlottesville

Mean-spirited, tasteless’

I always looked forward to

reading new issues of The Catholic Virginian because the articles and commentaries inspired my personal “walk with Christ.” That is why I was so surprised to read the cartoon in the Sept. 6 issue.

To me, the cartoon was mean-spirited and tasteless. Did Jesus teach us to enjoy another person’s tragedy? That we are to tell others, “I told you so?”

Did he teach that we get what we deserve? The Bible teaches, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Eph 3:23-24).

Jesus loves us in spite of what we deserve. It troubles me greatly that we have become so divided, including the vaccinated versus the unvaccinated. There are people who cannot take the vaccine; I can’t help but wonder what they thought reading this cartoon.

As Christians, we are taught to love one another. Instead of sitting there “enjoying” the result of the person’s “bad karma,” we should be sitting by their side, giving comfort and praying over them. That is what Jesus would want me to do.

– Jodie A. Reha
Virginia Beach

Is any war just?

In the article “Whatever it’s called, does it meet just-war criteria?” (Catholic Virginian, Sept. 6), Mark Pattison lists wars Amer-

ica has taken part in. He gives the criteria for a just war and continues to discuss who in our country decides to go to war.

So, how come Jesus’ followers who are to love their enemies and do good to those who harm them are included in this group who are discussing just wars? Once Jesus’ followers joined with the powerful leadership when church and state united under Constantine, the crucified life of the peaceful Jesus was abandoned and just war theory began to take shape.

Shouldn’t the Church today, rather than trying to find ways to intellectually justify war, be counter-cultural and assert the Jesus teaching of love thy neighbor?

In his World Day of Peace address in 2017, Pope Francis endorsed nonviolence as “a style of politics.”

Where should we go from here? Is any war just?

– Maureen Marroni
Norfolk

Don’t insist that we wear masks

Re: “Diocese should issue mask mandate” (Catholic Virginian, Sept. 6):

Tom Bosse, if you want to wear a mask, please do. But don’t insist on those of us that have followed the CDC and been vaccinated and repeatedly told we don’t need to wear masks. Don’t insist on those of us that have

serious concerns about the vaccinations in and of themselves.

Study after study shows that there is great concern, and when as many as 40% of our nurses are leaving rather than take “the jab” and lose their jobs, and doctors are leaving for the same reason, that should set off red flags and alarm bells for everyone.

On Sept. 2, the CDC, in yet another change of direction, changed the definition of “vaccine” from providing “immunity” to providing “protection.”

There have been tests on masks and found were: bacteria, parasites, fungi, dangerous pathogenic and pneumonia-causing bacteria. Yup, I want to be breathing that in. And I won’t even begin to address the amount of masks in landfills, laying on the sidewalks, parking lots and even on the lawns at local schools.

Dr. Robert Malone, inventor of mRNA vaccine technology, which the COVID-19 vaccine is based on, says, “Even if we had 100% vaccine uptake with these vaccines... we would not be able to stop the spread of the virus.”

Mask wearing hasn’t slowed the spread, hasn’t kept anyone from getting the virus. To think that mandating masks is going to be of any help is delusional.

Again, if you want to wear a mask, please do. But don’t insist on me wearing one.

– Denise Reece
Pulaski

WHAT WE’VE HEARD



Make a difference: One of the best-known saints among Catholics and non-Catholics is St. Francis of Assisi. Thus, it stands to reason that if any saint is going to have a “giving day” named in his honor, it would be him. On Monday, Oct. 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Saint Francis Home in Richmond is having its first ever giving day.

As the area’s only faith-based assisted living community exclusively serving low-income seniors, Saint Francis Home needs \$1.4 million annually in philanthropic support to subsidize room and board for half of its residents, as well as to meet other expenses.

You can get involved as a contributor and/or fundraiser by visiting <https://givingday.saintfrancishome.org> or by contacting Christy Heinen, the home’s development director, at 804-237-5602 or cheinen@SaintFrancisHome.com. You can also send your contribution to Saint Francis Home, 65 West Clopton St., Richmond, VA 23225.

Made a difference: Speaking of Saint Francis Home, the July 12 Catholic Virginian story about the home becoming the beneficiary of funds raised by the Thrifty Sisters’ store in Richmond made an impact. According to Bruce Slough, executive director, a family was liquidating a trust and were so inspired by the story that they made a “sizeable donation” to the home.

Making a difference: If a portion of Princess Anne Road in Norfolk looked cleaner last month, credit 13 parishioners from Sacred Heart Church for their quarterly trash pick-up. The group collected 50 pounds of trash that they sorted as recyclable and non-recyclable items.



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OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of the Bishop seeks a full-time coordinator, bishop's visitations and office support to provide the office with scheduling and travel coordination support and general administrative support. The coordinator will coordinate the bishop's visitations and pastor installations to include parish or school staff surveys, preparing location support materials, arranging follow-up visits and attending visitations, installations or other diocesan liturgies as requested.

The coordinator assists with sacrament of confirmation schedules and coordinates ongoing calendar and travel requests. The coordinator also provides various office administrative support assistance. Minimum of three to five years' administrative and coordination support experience, preferably working and collaborating with multiple offices and staff in a parish or diocesan environment. An associate's degree is desired.

Requirements include initiative, strong interpersonal skills, strong professional writing skills, customer service orientation, confidentiality, strong planning and organizational abilities, detail orientation and proficiency in MS Office (Word, Excel, Outlook). A practicing Catholic with working knowledge of Church hierarchy and Catholic Church teaching is required. Interested candidates should send a cover letter, résumé and completed Diocese of Richmond employment application to jobs@richmonddioocese.org

The Benedictine Schools of Richmond are looking for a self-motivated, energetic person to work in our reception area as a full-time employee. Duties will include, but are not limited to, greeting parents, students and vendors; answering phones on a multi-line phone system; organizing online medical records; managing clinic supplies and documentation and ordering office supplies. The ideal applicant will have excellent communication skills, be well organized and enjoy working in a team atmosphere. Helpful skills include proficiency in Google and Office platforms.

To apply, please submit a cover letter, résumé, a completed application and an essay titled "My View of America" to the human resources manager: Jaime Harmeyer at jharmeyer@benedictineschools.org. You may find our application on our websites at: <https://www.saintgertrude.org/about-us/careers/> or <https://www.benedictinecollegeprep.org/about-bcp/employment>.

Full-Time Director of Music: St. Jerome Catholic Church, Newport News, is a diverse, engaged parish in need of a full-time director of music.

The right individual will have a master's degree in music (or equivalent education/experience), knowledge of the Roman Catholic Liturgy and at least three to five years' related experience. The position includes planning and directing a comprehensive musical program for the parish, with an adult and youth choir. The individual would also be responsible for planning, rehearsing and coordinating music for weddings, funerals and faith formation events.

Position would be 35 hours per week and compensation would be according to diocesan scale. Please send a résumé to stjerome@stjeromennva.org.

Knights of Columbus: The Abbate Agency is hiring. Lead a life of service to Catholic families in your community! Join us for a virtual job fair on Thursday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m. or submit your resume now online. More information, including registration for the virtual job fair, is available at abbatekofc.com/career-opportunities, email abbateagency@mail2@kofc.org or call 866-868-1492.

St. Bridget Catholic Church, Richmond, has the following openings:
Director of social ministry (DSM) to respond to the needs of St. Bridget parishioners and its surrounding communities. Will be empowered to discern and promote the dignity of all human persons through direct service, legislative advocacy, parish and community organizing. The director of social ministry will interface with clergy, staff, parishioners, outside communities and charitable organizations on a daily basis. This is a full-time position.

Coordinator of youth ministry (CYM) to coordinate middle and high school youth groups and confirmation formation (10th grade) as part of a team approach to forming lifelong disciples. Successful candidates will have a commitment and passion for working with teenagers and their families. This position will develop and implement a comprehensive ministry to the youth of the parish community encompassing faith formation programs, evangelization and community building activities. The youth leader will report to the pastor and the director of faith formation, and will be responsible to recruit, train and supervise program volunteers. This is a full-time position and combines weekday office hours with regular evening and weekend ministry work.

Custodian/janitor to perform janitorial work in our church and rectory. Basic job duties include, but are not limited to, sweeping, mopping, vacuuming, surface cleaning, trash removal, cleaning bathrooms, restocking (soap dispenser/hand sanitizer/toilet paper rolls) and window cleaning. Interested candidates should email Joyce Romito with a

diocesan application to jromito@saintbridgetchurch.org.

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 Venti, 8901 Winterpock Rd, Chesterfield, VA 23832 or thereseventi@saintgabriel.org.

dinner and awards. Visit www.blessed-sacrament.com/golftournament or call 757-550-4793 for more information regarding player registration, sponsorships, donations and volunteer opportunities.

St. Theresa Catholic Church, 709 Buffalo St, Farmville, hosting its Holiday Bazaar on Friday, Nov. 5, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 6, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. For additional information or questions, please contact Lynn Skakum at lmskakum@gmail.com.

Norfolk Catholic High School, Class of 1971 is celebrating its 50th reunion on Saturday, Oct. 16, 6-10 p.m., Vista Point Conference Center, Naval Station Norfolk. Note: Because this event is on a U.S. Military base, all attendees must complete, print, sign and either scan and email a completed DoD Visitor Form to:

Mary Jane Carpenter
2963 Sugar Maple Dr
Virginia Beach, VA 23453

Information and registration are available at www.norfolkcatholic1971.com or join Facebook Group "NCHS Class of 71 Reunion Group" (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/723359975136224>).

High School Information Fair: St. Mary School, 9501 Gayton Road, Richmond, invites middle school parents and students to meet representatives from more than 20 area high schools to gather admittance information and ask questions, Thursday, Sept. 30. Session one: 6:30-7:15 p.m. Session two: 7:15-8 p.m. Register online today to reserve your family's spot at one of our 45-minute sessions. For further information, email jossjennifer@gmail.com.

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

SHORTTAKES

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.

Blessed Sacrament, Norfolk, is hosting its first Autumn Bazaar & Craft Show, Sunday, Oct. 16, from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. The fall craft show provides an opportunity for crafters to display and sell their handcrafted products, outdoors, in a one-stop shopping environment. This event is open to the public. Contact Claire McCrary at cmcrary@blessed-sacrament.com if you are interested in reserving a spot as a vendor.

The Blessed Sacrament Golf Classic, Friday, Oct. 22, Sewells Point Golf Course. This year, the parish celebrates 100 years of faith and service in Norfolk. Proceeds from this event benefit the church's ministries and outreach programs such as the Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team, youth mission trips and work camps, and the new Centennial Community Garden. Check-in starts at 11 a.m. with a Florida Best Ball format starting at noon. Participation includes a cart, range balls, complimentary beverages, a cookout

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

Ángelus del Papa. Hay una sordera interior que es peor que la física: la del corazón

Todos tenemos oídos, pero muchas veces no logramos escuchar. Atrapados en nuestras prisas, con mil cosas que decir y hacer, no encontramos tiempo para detenernos a escuchar a quien nos habla. Corremos el riesgo de volvernos impermeables a todo y de no dar cabida a quienes necesitan ser escuchados. Comentando el Evangelio del día, el Santo Padre invitó a abrirnos a la Palabra de Dios y a la escucha de nuestro prójimo

“Jesús es la Palabra: si no nos detenemos a escucharlo, pasa de largo. Pero si dedicamos tiempo al Evangelio, encontraremos un secreto para nuestra salud espiritual”. Fueron palabras del Papa Francisco, quien, como cada domingo se asomó a la ventana del Palacio Apostólico Vaticano para rezar junto con los fieles la oración mariana del Ángelus. Al comentar el Evangelio del día (Mc 7, 31-37), que en el XXIII domingo del Tiempo Ordinario presenta a Jesús que obra la curación de una persona sordomuda, el Santo Padre animó en este día, para nuestra salud espiritual, a dedicar más tiempo al Evangelio: cada día un poco de silencio y de escucha, -dijo- algunas palabras inútiles de menos y algunas Palabras más de Dios. Pero, además, refiriéndose a modo de ejemplo a nuestra vida familiar, invitó a fijarse en las veces que “se habla sin escuchar primero, repitiendo los propios estribillos siempre iguales”. Y afirmó que el renacimiento de un diálogo a menudo no viene de las palabras, sino del silencio, del no obcecarse, de volver a empezar con paciencia a escuchar a la otra persona, sus afanes, lo que lleva dentro. “La curación del corazón – aseguró – comienza con la escucha.

¡Ábrete!

Lo que llama la atención en el relato – comenzó diciendo el Papa – es la forma en que el Señor realiza este signo prodigioso: toma al sordomudo a un lado, le pone los dedos en las orejas y con la saliva le toca la lengua, luego mira hacia el cielo, suspira y dice: “Efatá”, es decir, “¡Ábrete!” (cfr. v. 34).

En otras curaciones de enfermedades igualmente graves, como la parálisis o la lepra, Jesús no hace tantos gestos. ¿Por qué hace todo esto ahora, aunque sólo se le ha pedido que imponga su mano sobre el enfermo (cf. v. 32)? ¿Por qué hace este gesto? Quizás porque la condición de esa persona tiene



El Papa Francisco da la bienvenida mientras dirige el Ángelus desde la ventana de su estudio con vista a la Plaza de San Pedro en el Vaticano el 5 de septiembre de 2021. El Papa ofreció oraciones a las víctimas y familias afectadas por el huracán Ida, que devastó el sur y el noreste de los Estados Unidos. También ofreció oraciones por los refugiados afganos. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

un valor simbólico particular y tiene algo que decirnos a todos. ¿De qué se trata? Se trata de la sordera. El hombre no podía hablar porque no podía oír. De hecho, Jesús, para curar la causa de su malestar, primero le pone los dedos en los oídos.

Primero escuchar, luego responder

“Todos tenemos orejas, pero muchas veces no logramos escuchar”, continuó diciendo Francisco. De hecho, hay una sordera interior, que hoy podemos pedir a Jesús que toque y sane. Se trata de una sordera que “es peor que aquella física” porque es “la sordera del corazón”:

Atrapados en nuestras prisas, con mil cosas que decir y hacer, no encontramos tiempo para detenernos a escuchar a quien nos habla. Corremos el riesgo de volvernos impermeables a todo y de no dar cabida a quienes necesitan ser escuchados: pienso en los niños, en los jóvenes, en los ancianos, en muchos que no necesitan tanto palabras y sermones, sino ser escuchados. Preguntémosnos: ¿cómo va mi escucha? **¿Me dejo tocar por la vida de las personas, sé dedicar tiempo a los que están cerca de mí, para escucharla? Esto es para todos nosotros, pero en modo particular, para los sacerdotes, la gente: el sacerdote debe escuchar a la gente, no ir de prisa. Escuchar y ver cómo los puede ayudar, pero después de haber escuchado. Y todos nosotros: primero escuchar, y luego responder.**

“La curación del corazón comienza con la escucha”

Así, como escribimos en la introducción y repetimos, el Santo Padre invitó a pensar en la vida familiar: “¡cuántas veces se habla sin escuchar primero, repitiendo los propios estribillos siempre iguales!”

Incapaces de escuchar, decimos siempre las mismas cosas, o no dejamos que el otro termine de hablar, de expresarse, y nosotros lo interrumpimos. El renacimiento de un diálogo a menudo no viene de las palabras, sino del silencio, del no obcecarse, de volver a empezar con paciencia a escuchar a la otra persona, sus afanes, lo que lleva dentro. La curación del corazón comienza con la escucha. Escuchar. Y esto, sana el corazón. “Pero, padre hay gente aburrída que siempre dice las mismas cosas” ¡Escúchalo! Y luego cuando terminará de hablar; di tu palabra, pero escucha todo.

¿Nos acordamos de ponernos a la escucha del Señor?

“Lo mismo vale para el Señor”, prosiguió Francisco:

*Hacemos bien en inundarle con peticiones, pero haríamos mejor en escucharle primero. Jesús lo pide. En el Evangelio, cuando le preguntan cuál es el primer mandamiento, responde: “Escucha, Israel”. Luego añade el primer mandamiento: “Amarás al Señor tu Dios con todo tu corazón [...] y a tu prójimo como a ti mismo” (Mc 12,28-31). Pero en primer lugar dice: “Escucha Israel”, escucha tú. ¿Nos acordamos ponernos a la escucha del Señor? **Somos cristianos, pero quizás, entre***

las miles de palabras que escuchamos cada día, no encontramos unos segundos para dejar que resuenen en nosotros unas palabras del Evangelio. Jesús es la Palabra: si no nos detenemos a escucharlo, pasa de largo. ¡Si no nos detenemos para escuchar a Jesús, pasa de largo! San Agustín decía: “tengo miedo del Señor cuando pasa”, pero el miedo era que pasase, sin escucharlo.

El “secreto” para nuestra salud espiritual

Y así llegó el Obispo de Roma a decirnos el “secreto” para nuestra salud espiritual, que encontramos “si dedicamos tiempo al Evangelio”:

He aquí la medicina: cada día un poco de silencio y de escucha, algunas palabras inútiles de menos y algunas Palabras más de Dios. Escuchemos hoy, como el día de nuestro bautismo, las palabras de Jesús: “Efatá, ábrete”. Jesús, deseo abrirme a tu Palabra, abrirme a la escucha. Sana mi corazón de la cerrazón, la prisa y la impaciencia.

En la conclusión, y antes de elevar al cielo la oración mariana, pidió “que la Virgen María, abierta a la escucha de la Palabra, que se hizo carne en ella, nos ayude cada día a escuchar a su Hijo en el Evangelio y a nuestros hermanos con un corazón dócil, con corazón paciente y con corazón atento”.

Palabras del Papa y saludos tras el Ángelus

Tras el Ángelus, en primer lugar, Francisco celebró la beatificación de Fray Mamerto Esquiú, ayer, en Argentina. Inmediatamente después, elevó su oración por toda la población afgana: por los que se han quedado, por los que están en tránsito y por los que están en los países de acogida. También dirigió su mirada y su oración a la población de los Estados Unidos de América afectada por un fuerte huracán en los últimos días. Seguidamente Francisco dirigió sus buenos deseos a la comunidad judía que dentro de pocos días celebrará Año Nuevo judío “Rosh Ha-Shanah”. Luego hizo presente la peregrinación a Hungría y Eslovaquia que comenzará el próximo domingo con motivo de la clausura del Congreso Eucarístico que inicia hoy en Budapest. Además, en la memoria del pontífice, Santa Teresa de Calcuta en su día y, por último, la bendición a la Legión de María, que hoy celebra su centenario.

Ida outreach inspired by Acts of the Apostles

CHRISTINE BORDELON
Catholic News Service

LA PLACE, La. — The saying goes: “It takes a village to raise a child.”

While it will take more than a village, including help from local, state and federal government agencies, to bring relief to southern Louisiana from the devastation left by Hurricane Ida, Covington resident Betty-Ann Hickey recently learned that one person doing one small thing can have an impact.

Hickey, with her son James, her friend Tammy Morris and Morris’ sons Kenneth and Matthew, traveled from St. Tammany Parish to help her friend Father David Ducote, pastor of St. Joan of Arc Church, LaPlace, an area that was heavily devastated during Ida.

“I have never done anything like this before,” said Hickey, director of music at Most Holy Trinity Church in Covington and associate director of the Office of Worship for the Archdiocese of New Orleans. “A true friend means you will be there to help people when they need it.”

‘We want to be part of it’

Once the storm had passed, Hickey was posting on Facebook to friends and family that she was OK, since phones and emails weren’t going through. While many were responding, it was a plea from Father Ducote about the need in his area for manpower to do clean up, remove trees, gut houses that impelled her to act.

“I didn’t have any damage to my home, so once we got power back, I didn’t want to sit around feeling sorry for myself,” Hickey told the Clarion Herald, archdiocesan newspaper of New Orleans.

Her husband Dennis, who works for St. Tammany Parish and is a permanent deacon, was telling her daily how bad the damage was in the area.

“We who weren’t badly affected have the responsibility to help,” Hickey said. “Today, it’s not us, but the next time, it might be. I would want someone to come help cut a tree off my house.”

She and the Morrisises gutted one house that day, helping a family stop mold from spreading further. The reaction to her efforts floored Hickey.

“I posted it on Facebook, and people started reaching out and saying, ‘If you do it again, we want to be part of it,’” Hickey said. “What started last week with me and a friend now has six Catholic parishes and over 50 volunteers (as of Sept. 8).”

On Sept. 9, she took a crew carrying a truckload of supplies from Most Holy Trinity, Covington, to Lafitte to help.

Others need more

Jeannie Callaway, administrative assistant to Father Jared



In the aftermath of Hurricane Ida, Tiffany Miller of Golden Meadow, La., embraces her daughter Desilynn, 6, outside their home Sept. 1, 2021, as she holds her 1-year-old godchild, Charleigh. Inspired by the Acts of the Apostles, members of St. Tammany Parish, Covington, La., aided hurricane victims. (CNS photo/Adrees Latif, Reuters)

Rodrigue, pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Church, Slidell, is helping Hickey coordinate volunteers and get donations of supplies and money to the parishes and people who need it most.

Father Rodrigue traveled first Sept. 3 to Destrehan with several parishioners and \$3,000 in donations and helped with the relief effort of food coordinated by the local Knights of Columbus.

Then about 50 St. Luke parishioners helped Sept. 7 with manpower and donations in LaPlace, where they gutted houses and cut down trees (with the help of fraternity brothers with three chain saws) from a list compiled by St. Joan of Arc Church.

The priest said the parish put the word out about what’s happening with New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond and the local government in Slidell.

“We’ve canceled all events in our parish to respond to the needs. We haven’t been affected too much, so we are helping others who need more.”

Manpower needed

St. Luke has established a website – <https://saintlukeslidell.org/ida> – where those who want to help can donate money or buy supplies that parishes in affected areas desperately need. In less than 24 hours of the site’s establishment, \$5,600 and 80 items (tents, pressure washers, hoses, etc.) were donated.

“The hardest part we’ve found is getting manpower,” Father Rodrigue said, especially now that people are returning to work.

“There is a lot of need,” Callaway said. “We’re trying to build a consen-

sus of organizations.”

She has reached out to other local parishes, youth groups and high schools to find able bodies to help with cleanup in LaPlace and Lafitte.

St. Luke is working directly with Father Luke Nguyen, pastor of St. Anthony Church, Lafitte, where several Lafitte residents are being housed, to discover immediate needs.

“As people give us their needs, we are meeting their needs,” Callaway said. “It’s important.”

“It is unfortunate that it takes a tragedy to see Catholic Church teaching in its essence – to see faith in action,” Father Rodrigue said. “Hopefully, those who have less damage are seeing they can be of service.”

“There’s great hope in knowing we are capable of giving time and resources and yet it poses a challenge in learning how to do this better and more often in the future, not just when a tragedy strikes,” the priest added.

St. Luke’s Good Sams (Samaritans) ministry that helps with emergency food and utility expenses has been distributing a lot of food and water to hurricane victims.

‘Best of the Church’

“We’re kind of a jack-of-all-trades right now,” director Sue Rotolo said. She mentioned how former St. Luke parishioners now living in Georgia filled a U-Haul and their truck full of water, Gatorade, 5-gallon containers of gas and non-perishable food and delivered it to St. Luke to give out to those in need. They came full circle, she said, returning the help they received after Hurricane Katrina.

“They couldn’t wait to get back

to help,” Rotolo said. “It truly is a beautiful thing. This may be hard to go through, but people pull through in this community. Everybody wants to help.”

While working on houses in LaPlace, Hickey said Archbishop Aymond told her how bad it was in Lafitte and how they could use anything sent to them.

When Hickey first went to Lafitte Sept. 8, she wasn’t prepared for what she saw. People were living in cars or out in the open because their homes and cars were destroyed by floodwaters.

“There are so many houses still with water; some houses are not even accessible. There is so much water and mud in the yards,” said Hickey, who helped serve 500 prepared meals from World Central Kitchen.

“It’s great that these people sent the food, but you need people to serve the food,” Hickey said. “I am going back to Lafitte where cleaning supplies of any kind (bleach, brooms, wipes, blankets, towels, sheets, rubber boots) are needed.”

Hickey said she is inspired by her Catholic faith to help others.

“In all of this, I see the best of the Church. When you read the Acts of the Apostles, the apostles were of one accord – everyone cared for everyone. One who has more should care for one who has less. The Church that Jesus founded is that you share what you have. ... If we believe in the mission of the Church, we have a responsibility to be the hands and hearts of the Lord.”

Hickey said her small volunteer effort has grown well beyond her expectations.

“I never imagined this,” she said. “This proves to me that all it takes is initiative and a couple of phone numbers.”