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How to bridge Church's racial divide

MARK PATTISON
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The racial divide in American society and within the Catholic Church is one that needs to be bridged so that healing and progress can take place, said retired Bishop Edward K. Braxton of Belleville, Illinois.

“My hope is to move some people to make realistic efforts to bridge the racial divide. This can only come about by deep interior conversion of hearts and minds,” Bishop Braxton said Oct. 8.

He made the comments in an address, “The Catholic Church and the Racial Divide in the United States,” for Department of Africana Studies’ Colloquy on Black Church Studies at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana.

“This is a high and distant goal,” he added.

His address came during the 31st annual meeting of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium Oct. 7-9 at the university.

Bishop Braxton said he prefers to use the term “racial divide” as a broad description, from which he singled out racism as “the most damning and most egregious example.”

The racial divide, he said, began with slavery “to provide free laborers ... by working as beasts of burden” on plantations. The divide, Bishop Braxton added, includes time in U.S. history spanned by the Civil War, “the Lost Cause era” and the Dred Scott decision.

“This Dred Scott opinion was written by Chief Justice Roger Taney, himself a Catholic who owned enslaved free human beings,” Bishop Braxton said. “Taney did not allow his faith in Jesus Christ to open his eyes.”

It has continued, he said, with “Jim Crow laws, the frequent

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Reaching out in love



Outreach in Love, a catechetical program for people with disabilities, celebrated its opening Mass on Wednesday, Oct. 6, at St. Edward the Confessor, North Chesterfield. Above: From left, volunteer Jane Gray, Judith Woolney and Margaret Disney, mothers of participants, and Katie Disney, a participant in the program, visit following the Mass. Right: Ryan Rieck, a program participant, provides music during the celebration. (Photos/Candace Aud)



Pope sees synod as healing process

Emphasizes listening to the Holy Spirit

CAROL GLATZ
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A synod calls on everyone to become experts in “the art of encounter” in a way that is uplifting and transformative, Pope Francis said, formally opening the process leading up to the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 2023.

“Celebrating a synod means walking on the same road, together” just like Jesus did — encountering, listening and discerning with all who one meets, the pope said in his homily at the Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica Oct. 10.

“Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey? Or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses: ‘It’s useless’ or ‘We’ve always done it this way?’” he asked.

The weekend of events began the “synodal journey,” which will explore the theme, “For a synodal Church: communion, participation

and mission.” Bishops around the world were to open the process in their dioceses Oct. 17. The diocesan phase, which runs until April, will focus on listening to and consulting the people of God.

In his homily, the pope said they should begin the synodal process “by asking ourselves — all of us, pope, bishops, priests, religious and laity — whether we, the Christian community, embody this ‘style’ of God, who travels the paths of history and shares in the life of humanity.”

The day’s Gospel reading (Mk 10:17-30) of Jesus setting out on a journey and encountering a rich man offers just one example of how Jesus “walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts,” he said. “He shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side.”

Power of encounter

Celebrating a synod, he said, means walking on the same road as others and living out the “three verbs” that characterize a synod: to encounter, listen and discern.

“We too are called to become experts in the art of encounter. Not so much by organizing events or theorizing about problems as in taking time to encounter the Lord and one another,” to devote time to prayer and adoration, and to listen to what the Holy Spirit wants to say to the Church, the pope said.

Jesus shows that an encounter has the power to change someone’s life — “the Gospel is full of such encounters with Christ, encounters that uplift and bring healing,” the pope said. In fact, Jesus was never in a hurry, and he would never have looked at a watch to signal it was time to wrap things up. “He was al-

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Synod is journeying together locally, universally



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

Pope Francis celebrated Mass on October 10 for the official opening of the World Synod of Bishops and invited dioceses to do the same with a Mass on October 17. This past Sunday at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, I celebrated a Mass for a Council or Synod to mark the opening of the Synod of Bishops, which will be held in October 2023.

The preparatory documents indicate that the theme for the Synod is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.” If that sounds familiar, you might recall that “Communion and Mission” was the theme of our bicentennial year.

As puzzling as the terms “synodality” and “synodal Church” might sound, they are a re-statement of what our Church does. “Synod” is a Greek word that literally means “on the same path” so the Holy Father has asked the whole Church to “journey together” on the same path in communion with one another.

In communion, we join with one another to listen to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and prayerfully discern God’s will for us. Our mission, as a faith community, is to act upon what we’ve heard.

Contrary to the emphasis our culture places upon quantifiable outcomes in measuring success, synodality is an ongoing process expressed in our willingness to journey together. The 2023 World Synod of Bishops will not be an end, i.e., an outcome, for the process. Rather, it will mark a continuation, as we continue journeying together as a Church.

Our world, and sometimes even the Church, can seem divided along cultural, political and economic lines. We experience division from one another because of our own selfishness and sinfulness.

As a counter to this experience, synodality leads us to listening, speaking, accepting co-responsibility for participation in the process, discerning and deciding. With the guidance of pastors and, more importantly, the inspiration of and dependence upon the Holy Spirit, we journey together in fortifying communion within the Universal Church as well as our local Church.

It is imperative that the Church continually seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, keeping in mind that the work of the Holy Spirit is not our activity. It is God’s activity in us – enabling and engaging us, inspiring and assisting us, and walking with us.

As the Holy Father has expressed, synodality is neither a program nor a slogan. It is a style for evangelization, a way of life for individuals and for the Catholic community, and an impetus for proclaiming the Gospel — which is why the Church exists.

Over the next several months, our ad hoc Diocesan Evangelization Commission will be working to facilitate responses from diocesan advisory groups as well as from parish councils on these synodal questions:

- How is journeying together happening today in our parishes and diocese?
- What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our journeying together?
- What experiences of our local Church does this question call to mind? What joys did they bring? What difficulties and obstacles have they encountered? What wounds did they reveal?

What insights have they revealed? Where in these experiences does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound?

- What is the Spirit asking of us?
- What are the points to be confirmed, the prospects for change, the steps to be taken?
- Where do we register a consensus? What paths are opening up for our local Church?

As in any consultative process, we will be looking at larger trends, threads that are common among the entities that are consulted. The input from these representative bodies will be compiled and included in a synthesis of all the U.S. dioceses’ responses. That will be compiled by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and submitted to the Vatican’s General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops.

The *Vademecum* — a handbook for the synod — notes that the objective for the synod “is to listen, as the entire People of God, to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church.” That leads us to ask: How can the Church make that come alive and express it in a practical way?

As we join with Pope Francis in the opening of the synod, I invite you to pray the Prayer for the Synod that our journey together will prove fruitful in proclaiming and living the will of God in our local Church and in the Church Universal.

Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus (Here we are, Holy Spirit)

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the
wrong path nor partiality influence our
actions.
Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to
eternal life and not stray from the way of
truth and what is right.
All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the
Son, forever and ever. Amen.



Our Sacred Duty Vote

October 2021

Election Day is November 2, and early voting has already begun. Virginia voters will elect a governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general and all 100 members of the Virginia House of Delegates. Much is at stake, and it is our sacred duty to form our consciences and vote.

May we join with Catholics across the commonwealth in voting for leaders committed to policy positions that uphold the truth reflected in our Catholic beliefs, most notably the protection of all human life, especially those in greatest need. We begin this process with prayer and reflection, standing upon the fundamental teachings of our Catholic Faith.

These three foundational principles must guide how we vote:

- Many issues are important.
- Not all issues have equal moral weight.
- Protecting life is paramount.

As Catholics, we must protect the sacredness of all human life. The right to life is “the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, no. 49). It must be “defended with maximum determination” (Saint John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, no. 38). In the United States, the tragically pervasive acceptance of abortion underscores the urgency of this message. There have been more than 62 million abortions since *Roe v. Wade*. Still, elected officials in Washington and here in Virginia are working to advance an even more radical abortion-driven agenda. Protecting life to the fullest extent possible is of the utmost importance and must be our highest priority.

For side-by-side comparisons of the policy positions of the major-party candidates for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general on issues of importance to Catholics (in their own words), visit www.vacatholic.org.

We are blessed to live in a country where we have the freedom to elect our leaders. At the same time, we know that politics have become more divisive and destructive in our communities and even, at times, within our families. Our unity and peace must be founded in and inspired by the healing power of Jesus Christ. May we bring his truth, peace and unity with us to the ballot box in this election, and always.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Michael F. Burbidge

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington

Barry C. Knestout

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Bishop of Richmond

Dog is ‘visible guardian angel’ for blind priest

Duffy provides Father Joly with protection, guidance

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

Father Mike Joly, pastor of St. Joan of Arc, Yorktown, is having “a blast” with his new guide dog Duffy.

The German shepherd gives Father Joly, who has been blind since childhood, the capability, independence and confidence to explore familiar and new places. Prior to Duffy, he used a cane or held onto someone’s arm for guidance, both slow-going.

Duffy, on the other hand, “zips” through airports with him, maneuvers around tables and people in restaurants, leads him in hospitals and guides him in banks, malls and other venues.

“He’s like a visible guardian angel,” parishioner Chris Ladnier said, explaining that Duffy guides Father Joly safely and protects him.

Father Joly, who was ordained in 1994, had a guide dog, Zeke, a “fun-loving big dopey lab,” from his junior year in college to mid-seminary, a span of six years.

“Now, 30 years later, I’m having a blast with this dog,” he said. “He does some really cool things.”

One “really cool thing,” he said, is that the dog “keeps an eye” on Father Joly or tilts his head and points an ear up “no matter” where the two go, and Duffy communicates his need to relieve himself by nudging the priest’s hand with his snout and does the same when he is ready to come back in.

In addition to steering the priest away from obstacles at dog-height, Duffy helps him avoid obstacles at a human’s shoulder or head height. He can train Duffy to do other things more specific to him. For example, he can train Duffy within 15 minutes to always enter through a particular door in a mall.

Two work as one

Father Joly adopted Duffy this summer from “The Seeing Eye” in Morristown, New Jersey, where he trained with Duffy for three weeks. The school’s philosophy is to lavish praise on the guide dogs, Father Joly said, so when Duffy is working, he offers simple words of encouragement like “that’s a good boy” every 30 seconds or so and frequently at other times. He said giving positive re-encouragement to his dog lifts his mood as well.

“It ends up being a bit of leaven in the day,” he said.

The two work as a team. When walking outside, Father Joly uses a GPS app on his phone, which tells him the names of the street he is on, nearby roads and businesses they pass.

“It gives me an environment,” he said. “I have to know generally where I’m going. His job is to get me there safely.”

Parishioner Cathy Mueller, who drives Father Joly to many of his appointments, said it’s “amazing” to watch the two work together.

“It’s almost like one,” she said.

When Duffy is in his harness, he’s “working and on guard,” Father Joly said. People must not pet him, feed him, call his name or make eye contact. Doing so can distract Duffy, which can be dangerous for the priest – which he experienced during a visit to his sister’s over the summer.

Duffy is trained to stop at the foot and head of steps and on curbs at street crossings until Father Joly gives the “forward” command. However, when the priest’s sister saw them at the top of stairs, she greeted Duffy by name, and in excitement, the dog lunged forward, causing Father Joly to fall down six steps.



Father Mike Joly, pastor of St. Joan of Arc, Yorktown, plays with Duffy, his first seeing-eye dog in 30 years. The priest adopted the dog this summer from “The Seeing Eye” in Morristown, New Jersey, where he trained with Duffy for three weeks. (Photo/Mary Ann Vogelbein)

‘Speaks to everybody’

An exception to the no-touch policy is when Father Joly visits parishioners in the hospital. He will let the patients pet Duffy, which often elicits a giggle or brings a smile to the individual’s face. The patients, even those in dementia wards, are “overjoyed” to see the dog, he said.

“A dog is like a song. He speaks to everybody,” he explained. “If there’s someone who is sick, and if there’s any way that grace or hope can come to them just by petting a beautiful dog, then I’m going to let them do it.”

Duffy doesn’t go to Masses because Father Joly wants the congregation’s attention on the liturgy, not on the dog. However, his canine companion is with him nearly everywhere else.

Father Joly said he gives Duffy time to just be a dog. Off harness, they play catch, and Duffy plays with other dogs. He sniffs poles or other places where other canines have been. People can pet and talk to him.

Jennifer Strash, coordinator of faith formation, said when Father Joly takes the dog to Sunday school, Duffy adds “a spark.” Sometimes

he can be comical, such as when he was at a summer concert at SJA, he howled when people clapped.

“Duffy has created a lot of excitement in the parish,” Strash said, adding that Father Joly is more “approachable and relatable” to some pet owners now.

Father Joly said Duffy “is a lot of work.” He feeds him twice a day, takes him out four to five times a day and grooms him every other day. Because the priest likes “a very clean and meticulous house,” he washes Duffy’s paws whenever he comes inside, making sure he doesn’t track things in.

But the effort is worth it.

Father Joly said he “enjoys” the “increased sense of independence, the greater flexibility and speed of movement” that Duffy brings him.

“He’s turning out to be an excellent guide,” Father Joly said. “While he’s not first a pet, he is first and foremost a highly trained seeing-eye dog; nonetheless, having a beautiful animal to receive some joy from and also to bring joy to other people – that’s my satisfaction.”

Braille, audio resources available

For Father Mike Joly, the Xavier Society for the Blind (XSB) has been “a wonderful” and “an invaluable resource” since his days in the seminary. The blind pastor of St. Joan of Arc Parish, Yorktown, said XSB’s materials have fostered his own spirituality and provided “continuing education” for himself.

XSB provides spiritual and inspirational reading materials, most of which are in the Catholic tradition, in braille and audio format to blind and visually-impaired individuals of all faiths worldwide at no cost to them.

Originally called Catholic Free Publication Society for the Blind, XSB was founded in 1900 by Jesuit Father Joseph Stadelman and by Margaret Coffey, a blind teacher of blind children. Today, the non-profit organi-

zation has a library with more than 1,900 titles and is adding more each month, said Aisling Redican, XSB fundraising and communications coordinator. XSB transcribes, embosses and sends out nearly all of its braille materials in house.

Some of their braille books can “cost well over \$500” and can take up to six months to produce, according to the website. Nevertheless, Redican said the organization welcomes suggestions for braille and audio reading materials and tries its best to accommodate the requests.

So far this year, XSB has fulfilled more than 1,700 requests for audio and braille to patrons of all ages, lay and religious, to help them “learn about, develop and practice

their faith,” Redican said.

Upon request, XSB will provide “The New American Bible” and Bible stories for children. Other materials include biographies of saints, theological dissertations and contemporary titles by popular authors including Matthew Kelly, Teresa Tomeo and Jesuit Father James Martin.

The audio books are compatible with the Talking Book machines provided free of charge by the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled.

Because it receives no government or Church funding, Redican said XSB relies on donations

For more information about the organization, visit xavierocietyfortheblind.org or call 800-637-9193. – Jennifer Neville

'Quietly listening' led to answering ministerial call

Deacon Fursman says time in eucharistic adoration was key

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

I'm a big believer in quietly listening for the Holy Spirit to direct you," said Deacon Thomas Fursman.

That belief mapped out his entire adult life, from enlisting in the United States Navy on a whim to now approaching his eleventh year as a permanent deacon.

"Stuff comes out of the clear blue, and if you don't have quiet in your life, you won't hear that," he continued. "In general, God doesn't yell at you; he's whispering."

Deacon Fursman grew up in the suburbs of Minneapolis, where he attended Catholic school for first through eighth grade and was an altar server. He attended a Christian Brothers school for his first year of high school and spent his sophomore and junior years at a preparatory seminary.

'Turning' into the Navy

In 1968, Deacon Fursman had just finished his freshman year at the University of Minnesota – an experience he said he did not enjoy. While walking to the bus stop after having lunch with his father, he passed the federal building.

"I just took a right turn and walked up and enlisted in the Navy. Just out of the clear blue. I hadn't thought about that," he said.

Two weeks later, Deacon Fursman was in boot camp in San Diego. It was August of 1968, and he got a draft notice – number six.

"So I asked my (drill instructor), 'What do I do with this?' He said, 'Oh, don't worry about it. The Navy already has you,'" Deacon Fursman recalled. "But if I hadn't walked in there, I would have been in the Army. Ground forces in Vietnam."

Deacon Fursman became a sonar technician on submarines. When the opportunity arose, he participated in an officer training program, was selected in 1971 and got commissioned.

"I ended up in command of two submarines, which were the exact same class that I was a sonar tech on, 20 years later," he said. "It was listening to that voice. And when the diaconate came up, you know, you see things."

Seeds of vocation

In 1995, Deacon Fursman and his wife of nearly 52 years, Jackie, were members of St. Mark, Virginia Beach, where Deacon Fursman



Deacon Thomas Fursman

taught confirmation classes. They got to know the pastor, Father Dan Klem, well, and Deacon Fursman spoke to him about the diaconate.

"That was the first time I was actually discussing the possibility of the diaconate, and, of course, I'm doing all this in between going to sea," he said. "And Father Dan says, 'Well, trying to get into diaconate formation in between everything else you're doing, that probably is almost impossible.' But that was always in the back of my head."

In 1999, Deacon Fursman retired from the Navy.

As they had to choose where to settle, he and Jackie considered where their three children lived. Their oldest son was a bachelor in Minnesota, and their middle son was in the Army at that time. Ultimately, they settled in Louisa County because their daughter and her husband were in the Charlottesville area, and they wanted to be near any future grandchildren.

Although they lived within the Richmond Diocese by two miles, the Fursmans became members of St. Mark, Gordonsville, in the Arlington Diocese because the parish was just four miles from their home. (The nearest Richmond Diocese parish was 18 miles away.) St. Mark and St. John, Orange, merged to form St. Isidore the Farmer, Orange, in 2002.

Discerning the call

When Bishop Paul Loverde reinstated Arlington's diaconate program in 2005, Deacon

Fursman again considered ordained ministry.

"So you spend some time in quiet reflection, you pray about it, go to adoration and sit in front of the tabernacle for an hour, and you run that through your mind to make sure it's a real call," he said.

It was.

Bishop Loverde ordained Deacon Fursman on January 15, 2011. He was assigned to his parish, St. Isidore.

"Obviously you have your liturgical duties you do as a deacon, and a big part of that, at least from my standpoint, is making sure the liturgy is ready to go. I love liturgy," he said.

In April 2019, Deacon Fursman began serving in the Richmond Diocese and was assigned to St. Jude, Mineral, and Immaculate Conception, Buckner.

"I love doing what I'm doing, and my interactions on all facets, whether it's liturgy or teaching or visiting the homebound, the dying, the sick, I love doing that out of love for God and love for those that are under my care as deacon," he said.

Open to what occurs

Deacon Fursman said his goal has always been to best assist his pastor, and because of that, his duties as deacon change daily.

"I pray each day, 'Let me have an open mind, open ears, open eyes and an open heart to be aware of what's going on around me,'" he said.

Eucharistic adoration at St. Jude on Friday nights is a favorite aspect of Deacon Fursman's ministry.

"For me, it's the perfect event at the end of a week to sit in front of the Lord for an hour and just wind down."

The life of a deacon is a busy one, so Deacon Fursman credits Jackie for her role as a deacon's wife.

"I've had people come up and say, 'Thanks for being our deacon,' and I say, 'Thank my wife.' ... I say, 'Don't forget my wife over here' because every hour I spend doing this is an hour that I'm not a husband, a father and a grandfather."

Despite the challenges and the time he devotes to his ministry, Deacon Fursman is a "firm believer" that those who serve God are called to do so.

"But once again," he said, "you just have to listen for his voice."

Synod

Continued from Page 1

ways at the service of people he met in order to listen to them."

Each encounter requires "openness, courage and a willingness to let ourselves be challenged by the presence and the stories of others," the pope said. It means not hiding behind a facade or stiff formalities indicative of a spirit of clericalism or of courtiers, but it means being a father.

To that end, the pope said he would be meeting a group of people who live on the streets later that day. He said they had already started meeting because another group of people had gone to listen to them and from there, "they have

been able to begin the journey."

Listen with your heart

Sincere listening involves the heart, not just the ears, Pope Francis said. The aim is not to be able to answer people's questions, especially with pre-packaged or "artificial and shallow responses," but to provide an opportunity to tell one's story and speak freely.

"Whenever we listen with the heart, people feel that they are being heard, not judged; they feel free to recount their own experiences and their spiritual journey," he said.

Listening to one another "is a slow and perhaps tiring exercise" but it must be done, including listening to "the questions, concerns

and hopes of every church, people and nation," and to the "challenges and changes" that world presents, he added.

Encountering and listening "are not ends in themselves" where everything stays the same, but must lead to discernment, he said.

"Whenever we enter into dialogue, we allow ourselves to be challenged, to advance on a journey. And in the end, we are no longer the same; we are changed," he said.

The synod is "a journey of spiritual discernment that takes place in adoration, in prayer and in dialogue with the word of God," the pope said.

Discernment is what lights the way and guides the synod,

"preventing it from becoming a Church convention, a study group or a political congress, but rather a grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Holy Spirit," Pope Francis said.

Like he asked the rich man in the Gospel reading, Jesus is asking everyone "to empty ourselves, to free ourselves from all that is worldly, including our inward-looking and outworn pastoral models, and to ask ourselves what it is that God wants to say to us in this time and the direction in which he wants to lead us," he said.

Pope Francis wished everyone "a good journey together! May we be pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Spirit."

'Adventure' is education in diocese's southwest

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

I didn't go to school this past summer, but I did get an education.

If visiting 21 parishes over 1,100 miles in five days were a graduate school course, it would be titled "Introduction to the Diocese of Richmond — the Southwest."

Earlier this year, Edie Jeter, the diocese's archivist, knowing that during the four years I have been in the diocese that I had not been to the southwest, asked if I would be interested in visiting it.

"It'll be an adventure," she said.

Kurt Hickman, the diocese's director of Risk Management, has been visiting the area every two years since 1998 in order to do safety inspections at churches. For the last 10 years, Edie has gone along to talk to the pastors and other staff members about patrimony, i.e., vestments, liturgical accoutrements, as well as answer questions about parish records.

While this course intertwined lessons in history, economics and geography, they were often explained in terms of family, outreach and gratitude. The parishioners who presented them — and how they presented them — reminded me of my years in Catholic elementary school when, whatever the subject matter, there was an underlying spiritual element.

Every "instructor" — a few who were paid staff but most of whom were volunteers — was passionate about their faith and their parishes.

Among them, some were in their 60s, but

more in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. Asked what will happen to their parishes when they die, the answer was always a variation of a matter-of-fact, "We don't know."

Focus on what is

Yet, rather than dwell on what might be, several, like Barbara Blanton, 78, of Sacred Heart, Big Stone Gap, spoke about what is.

"Our faith keeps us going," she said. "We have strong faith."

She was excited to report that there were 26 people in church the previous Sunday — "I count everyone." A new family with seven children had joined the parish in April.

At Holy Spirit, Jonesville, where 70 families are registered at the only Catholic church in Lee County, Brenda Molony noted that there were 12 people at Mass on Sunday.

"We are totally volunteer," she said. "Everybody volunteers, everybody pitches in."

Mary Byrd, the business manager for Christ the King, Abingdon, described her parish as "very friendly, very welcoming."

At Risen Lord, Stuart, Julia Hennessey was setting up for the parish rummage sale. Calling herself "a good Irish Catholic," Hennessey serves as the office manager who does "whatever needs to be done," e.g., set up for the 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass, launder altar linens.

"I love my faith," said the 82-year-old widow. "This is my family."

'We live like family'

Hennessey wasn't alone in viewing her parish

as family.

There is deep love between parishioners and their pastors. Neither takes the other for granted. As Father Eric Baffour Asamoah, a native of Ghana and pastor of the Holy Trinity Cluster Parishes Holy Spir

it, Jonesville; Sacred Heart, Big Stone Gap; St. Anthony, Norton; and St. Joseph, Clintwood, said, "Life is so different. Life is about community. We live like family."

St. Elizabeth, Pocahontas, is part of the Holy Family Parish, which also includes St. Theresa, Tazewell; St. Mary, Richlands; and St. Joseph, Grundy. Life-long member Vince Shumate, 80, got right to the point.

"We're not just Church members; we're family," he said. "If something needs to be done, it's pitch in and do it. I don't know how else to explain it."

Father Xavier Banasula, administrator of the Spirit of the Mountain Cluster: St. Mary, Coeburn; St. Therese, St. Paul; and Good Shepherd, Lebanon, drives 115 miles each weekend as he celebrates Masses Saturday, 5 p.m., Coeburn; Sunday, 8:30 a.m., St. Paul; 11 a.m., Lebanon. It totals 160 when he goes to the campus ministry center at UV-Wise.

A 39-year-old native of Uganda who came to

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Bishop Barry C. Knestout to preside at Masses for Hope & Healing *"Christ our Light and Hope"*

You are invited to come and pray for victim survivors of sexual abuse and their families.

Eastern Vicariate:

Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021 at 7pm

Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk

Central Vicariate:

Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022 at 7pm

Saint Thomas Aquinas University Parish, Charlottesville

Light refreshments will be served after Mass. Counselors will be available before and after Mass.

For information, contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 877-887-9603



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

Amid false accusations, little heartbeat is forgotten

GUEST COMMENTARY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Most public issues these days seem to elicit angry dispute and mutual recriminations. Those divisions can tempt people to misstate or exaggerate facts, to persuade others (or even themselves) that they are right and their opponents are not worth thinking about.

Abortion is one topic where emotions run high and create that temptation. Which brings me to the new Texas “heartbeat law” that is in the news. The most remarkable things have been said about this law by people who apparently have not read or understood it.

The law requires a physician, before performing an abortion, to determine whether the unborn child has a heartbeat detectable by usual medical standards. If so, the abortion is allowed only if there is a “medical emergency” that “places the woman in danger of death or a serious risk of substantial impairment of a major bodily function.”

The law does not say this is “when life begins.” It says a fetal heartbeat has become “a key medical predictor that an unborn child will reach live birth,” and a woman should have that information in deciding about her pregnancy.

One column in a Texas newspaper calls

this the state’s “latest attack on women,” which “criminalizes abortion after six weeks, before most women realize they’re pregnant.” In a major medical journal that should have standards for accuracy, a law professor accuses the law of “prohibiting even the earliest abortions.”

But the Texas law has no criminal penalty for anyone, and no legal liability of any kind for women seeking abortions. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control says 40% of abortions in the U.S. (39% in Texas) are performed at or before six weeks, about half of them by drugs rather than surgery. Over-the-counter pregnancy tests show a positive result well before this point.

The wildest rhetoric is reserved for the law’s mode of enforcement. A private citizen may bring a civil suit against the abortion practitioner and others who helped make sure an illegal abortion was performed.

U.S. attorney general Merrick Garland says this makes citizens “bounty hunters.” The aforementioned journal article, titled “Vigilante Injustice — Deputizing and Weaponizing the Public to Stop Abortions,” likens Texas to “the East German Stasi” that used private informants to help imprison dissidents. A Yale law professor says Texas has created a “private army,” a “militia” that undermines government’s obligation to “monopolize the use of force.”

I know litigation attorneys have been called “hired guns.” But this equating of lawyers with

an armed paramilitary force is a ridiculous way to trivialize actual violence.

The fact is that, for many years, laws against abortion as well as assisted suicide have been enforced in whole or in part through such civil suits. So have environmental laws. A competent law professor should know this.

And since 2013, a bill in Congress has endorsed this approach as a way to promote abortion throughout the nine months of pregnancy. Pro-life legislators in Texas simply borrowed their opponents’ idea.

This Women’s Health Protection Act, endorsed by President Joe Biden and approved by the House of Representatives, authorizes lawsuits and collection of damages by “any individual or entity” who claims to be “adversely affected” by even a modest limit or regulation of abortion.

The House-approved version adds suits against those who try to sue illegal abortionists in Texas. Should we call this Garland’s private army?

Amid the false and disingenuous accusations, what is at risk of being forgotten is that little heartbeat, trying to survive against some powerful forces that want it stopped.

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

Don’t turn people away from Mass

I was flummoxed to read a question to Father Doyle (Catholic Virginian, Oct. 4) regarding an individual who was disruptive during Mass. It seems a long-time parishioner has been disruptive for some time yet appears not to be a threat to anyone.

Yet the parish priest has asked the individual not to attend Mass. Further, Father Doyle advocates for getting the police involved! Stunning to say the least.

I was raised to believe that the Catholic Church is an inclusive Church, particularly for those suffering in some way. It’s not a stretch to assume this individual may have a mental illness of some sort. That our Church would turn a person like that away seems beyond the pale.

Does the Church then ask parents who refuse to remove their screaming children from the sanctuary to no longer attend Mass? How about all the individuals who forget to turn off their cell phones?

Jesus taught us to love our neighbor, particularly those neighbors who are less fortunate or suffer in some way. Let’s face it: one need only to look around at any Mass to realize the Church

grows steadily older every day.

There are two places I still feel young at age 61: the cardiologist’s waiting room and weekend Mass. The last thing we should be doing is turning people away.

— **Charlie Flocco**
Richmond

Stop spreading misinformation

I realize that Facebook and other internet sources are not always reliable sources, but I was surprised to see The Catholic Virginian (Oct. 4) spreading misinformation about the coronavirus vaccine.

In both of the letters to the editor, the writers make the claim that the vaccine killed thousands or “tens of thousands” of people. I’d ask what the source of that information is. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) has reported 8,390 deaths following vaccination from December 2020 through Oct. 4, 2021, out of almost 400 million vaccinations (.0021% of vaccinations).

The CDC has reported there has not been any established causal relationship between the reviewed

deaths and the administration of the vaccine. In the same time period, there have been around 43 million cases of COVID and almost 700,000 deaths (1.6% of cases).

I know “opinions expressed by letter writers do not necessarily reflect those of the Catholic Virginian or the Diocese of Richmond,” but allowing the entirety of the letters to the editor to be comprised of misinformation calls into question the trustworthiness of the publication, and makes it seem like it’s the only opinion of Catholics in Virginia.

In addition, the comparison to Jewish people being persecuted during the Holocaust was also in very poor taste.

— **Benjamin Moran**
Richmond

Print facts, not lies

Please do not publish letters like that from Linda Browning-Kaloski with lies in them (Catholic Virginian, Oct. 4). We do not have millions of people die from the flu each year — it’s generally 30,000 to 40,000 in the U.S., and 250,000 to 500,000 worldwide.

And thousands have died from vaccinations? The CDC tracks the number who

have died shortly after being vaccinated (about 8,000) — but they do not know how many died from the vaccine.

If Browning-Kaloski wants to disagree with

someone else’s opinion, she can. She should not, however, be able to cite “facts” which are not true.

— **Bernard Caton**
Glen Allen

CV letters policy

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

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Retreat to focus on Black Catholic community's story

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

A cooperative venture between the Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics and the Richmond parishes of St. Elizabeth, Holy Rosary and St. Paul, and All Saints School, Richmond, will address local, national and international topics relevant to the Black Catholic community and others.

With the theme "Our Church, Our Story: Black Catholic Identity and Culture," the Friday and Saturday, Nov. 5 and 6 spiritual retreat, underwritten with a \$3,000 grant from the National Black Catholic Congress' Daniel Rudd Fund, will be held via Zoom and, for a limited number of people, in-person at the Rosalyn Retreat Center.

"It's not just for the Black community," according to Deacon Charles Williams, director of the Office for Black Catholics. "I want the rest of the diocese to say, 'Hey, there is a Black Catholic community in the Diocese of Richmond, and there is a history behind that — that they just didn't show up one day and be here,'" he said. "We've been here from the beginning of this diocese."

Calling the event an opportunity to "shine a light for everybody to see," Deacon Williams said that over the last 12 months he has learned what people don't know.

"They're shocked at the history of the African American Catholic community in this diocese," he said. "They're amazed at the tragedy of the late 1960s and early '70s when

churches were closed for the sake of integration and it didn't work."

The deacon said that even though the Black Catholic community is small, "We're a viable, close-knit community, and it was centered around the Catholic faith."

Dr. Tia Noelle Pratt, director of Mission Engagement and Strategic Initiatives and affiliate faculty, Department of Sociology and Criminology, at Villanova University, Philadelphia, is scheduled to be the keynote speaker.

Having received her doctorate from Fordham University in 2010, Pratt is an educator, researcher, and inclusion and diversity specialist. Her research examines the intersection of race and religion and the ways systemic racism impacts the experience of reli-

gion, including the Catholic Church as an institution.

The event will feature four breakout sessions:

Pratt will address racism in the Catholic Church and explore how the Church has responded to it.

Msgr. Walter Barrett, the first Black priest ordained for the Diocese of Richmond, Sister of Mercy Cora Marie Billings and seminarian Chase Imoru will speak about Black vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Fathers Peter Naah, Tochi Iwuji and John Kazibwe and Comboni Sister Tiberh Hagos will speak about the Catholic experience in Africa.

Chloe Carter will lead a session on youth empowerment in which she will explain how they have a voice in the Church.



Dr. Tia Noelle Pratt

Bishop Barry C. Knestout will celebrate the closing Mass of the gathering, at 5 p.m. on Saturday at St. Elizabeth Church.

Editor's note: For registration details, contact the Office for Black Catholics at <https://richmonddiocese.org/office-of-fice-for-black-catholics/> or by calling 804-359-5661.

Bridge

Continued from Page 1

lynching of African American men, women and children" as well as "the cruel murder of Emmett Till, the murder of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and now as we reflect upon the death of George Floyd and so many African American people since him in the name of law enforcement."

Bishop Braxton said the Catholic Church and its institutions "have helped perpetuate this divide."

He recalled one time when he, still a priest in Chicago, took a group of Black non-Catholic schoolchildren to a Catholic Church.

Typical of the questions posed to him that day, he said, were "Father, does the Catholic Church believe that only white people are in heaven?" "Why are they all pictured with blond hair, blue eyes and rosy cheeks?" and "Why are there no Black, Asian or Latino saints in the windows of this Church?"

Doing something about "the invisibility of color" in religious art could be "one small step that could bridge the racial divide," Bishop Braxton said. "Wouldn't Catholics find that a welcome change, or would they object," he said, and stop giving

money to the Church.

Acknowledging the Church "was largely on the wrong side of history from the beginning of the racial divide," Bishop Braxton said, "does not lead to the conclusion that all Catholics are intrinsically racist."

It takes reflection and conversation to begin the process of conversion, he noted — something forgotten by one speaker on the topic he remembers hearing years ago.

"The first words that came out of his mouth were, 'Whether you know it or not, all of you are white racists.' The possibility of dialogue ended right there," Bishop Braxton said.

Nor are Americans in general able to dive deeper into the racial divide and its effects, using the subject of reparations as an example.

Bishop Braxton cited a House bill to create a commission to explore the possibility of reparations. "What would be appropriate remedies for slavery? Money? To whom, from whom? Poor Americans? How poor? Whose money?" he asked aloud. "Most Americans do not support the idea of reparations, period."

He said in one poll, 59% of Black Americans favored cash payments as reparations, but just 6% of whites

did; 63% of Blacks favored education and job training as a form of reparations, as opposed to 19% of whites who supported this.

"Reparations mean repair — healing what has been broken," Bishop Braxton said. "A structure has been broken at the foundation and it cannot stand unless it is repaired."

While some have offered a price tag of \$500 billion for reparations, he contrasted that to the \$6 trillion spent "for wars since 2001 alone."

Reparation, he added, "requires us to acknowledge the racial divide among us."

Bishop Braxton noted during his address that the U.S. bishops have never made a statement on reparations, and said in response to a question posed after his remarks that they did not mention it in their 2018 anti-racism pastoral letter, "Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love."

"A bishops' public statement can only be published with the consensus of nearly 300 bishops," he said. "An individual bishop may" address an issue — "and I wouldn't be surprised if he writes about this topic," he continued, "but from the point of view of a large ecclesiastical com-

munity like the Catholic Church, the topic is not mature for the bishops to make a helpful comment on it."

"Someone could be prophetic," he added.

It is possible that religious bodies may make the first "modest steps" toward reparations, Bishop Braxton said, citing a \$1.7 million reparations fund established by Virginia Theological Seminary.

In the U.S. Catholic Church, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Louisiana have begun efforts to make amends for their role in slavery. To be "once owned by Catholic religious sisters — wrap your hands around that," Bishop Braxton said.

Descendants of enslaved people who had been owned by the Jesuits and Georgetown University in Washington have been in talks with the university about how it can provide redress.

"Some of the descendants have asked for a \$1 billion fund to meet the education, housing and health needs," the bishop said, although the university has not given an answer to that request.

"It has the potential of being addressed to some degree," he said. "When and to what degree, who knows."

V O C E S 8



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Reason for Church's male-only priesthood is historical



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. I know that currently women are not ordained as priests in the Catholic Church. I have always wondered why this is, as we live in a society that emphasizes gender equality. I have asked many people about this but have received vague answers — or answers that don't fully address the issue.

Would you explain why women are not allowed to be ordained in the Catholic Church? I am open-minded to the answer, and I just want some peace on the matter. (Richmond)

A. The fundamental reason why the Catholic Church ordains only males to the priesthood is historical: Jesus chose only men in selecting the Twelve Apostles and the Church feels bound by that choice made by Jesus. And so, an all-male priesthood has been an unbroken tradition in the 2,000 years of the Church's history.

In his 1994 apostolic letter "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis," St. John Paul II declared that "the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women."

There are those who say that women might well make better priests because they seem more equipped to minister to people pastorally and more likely to be sympathetic in the confessional. But the

debate is not over who might make better priests but over what Jesus intended.

Some might argue that Jesus felt bound by the customs of his day that limited power in society to males and that, if he were living now, he would have chosen women for priestly ministry.

But the fallacy of that argument is this: Jesus broke all kinds of cultural barriers and regularly rejected societal customs.

He spoke to a Samaritan woman, which was forbidden to Jews; he welcomed Mary Magdalene as one of his closest followers, revealed his risen body to her first and asked her to spread the news of his resurrection; he freed the woman caught in adultery from being stoned.

So Jesus was clearly not afraid to go beyond the expectations of his time — which leads one to think that if he wanted to select women for the priesthood he would have done so, regardless of what the surrounding culture thought.

The Church's unbroken tradition of an all-male priesthood has nothing to do with "gender equality," which the Church supports, but everything to do with Jesus and the history of the Church.

Q. I have a question about the eucharistic fast. This morning I went to the 7:30 Mass and had a cup of coffee with a protein shake in it before I left for church. The church was only a few minutes away, and I received Communion at the Mass, not thinking

anything about the fast.

Is this a mortal sin? It was a complete mistake, but I feel so horrible for accidentally disrespecting the Eucharist, and I would greatly appreciate your guidance. (City and state withheld)

A. Of course it's not a mortal sin — or any sin at all. It was simply — as you said — a mistake, done without any thought at all. Sin requires a deliberate intention to do something wrong. And here is my question for you: What do you think God is really like?

For me, God is not some giant scorekeeper in the sky whose primary interest it is to keep track of rights and wrongs. God is the person who brought you into existence out of love, wants you to be happy here on earth and to be with him forever in heaven. So try to relax and know how much God loves you.

Follow-up to my previous column

In the Oct. 4 Catholic Virginian, I responded in this column to a question from a reader in Richmond about disruptions at Mass. The letter writer said that a parishioner had been creating a scene regularly in church — throwing her arms toward the sky, shouting out in a loud voice and walking up to the altar before anyone is invited to. The writer asked what could be done about the woman to maintain quiet and reverence.

I answered that the pastor should have a quiet conversation with her about the sense of prayerfulness needed in a church, and I quoted one

diocese's written policy regarding an individual who causes a disturbance during the liturgy.

Several people wrote in comments on that response, criticizing me for not discussing disability or mental illness and what might be a way to help that parishioner. Those comments are valid, I accept the criticism and I apologize.

Here were some of the comments: "I certainly understand that your response is technically correct and that protecting the sanctity of the Mass is important, but I was surprised to find that the response never even mentioned the possibility that the individual causing the disruption may have some sort of disability or neurological condition causing that behavior."


Still another wrote: "I was shocked at your answer. ... It may be the most unchristian thing I've ever seen in this paper. My husband, who had Alzheimer's disease, often called out during Mass, waved at the priest and was otherwise 'disruptive.' ... The other parishioners were loving and understanding. The church created a special room where parents or caregivers could take a child or disabled adult if the disruption became too great."

But the most comforting comment of all came from Virginia from a fellow parishioner of the original letter writer. He said: "Our parish staff, including our wonderful pastor, know this lady very well and they are very kind and patient. ... Yes, the lady can be disruptive and a little startling to people who are not familiar with her, but our parish is filled with loving, kind members who understand her behavior."

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

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This month features Chris West, from Catholic Relief Services, for a discussion on human migration. We'll look at several factors that compel people to leave their homes and how the Church, specifically through CRS, responds. We will also look at CRS's Learn to Lead Campaign, which has a positive impact for people on the move.

OCTOBER 26, 2021
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Nothing nourishes us as completely as Communion



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

It's the time of year when pumpkins seem to be everywhere. Few vegetables — or are pumpkins considered a fruit? — are as distinctly seasonal as pumpkins. Not only do they appear on front porches as decorative items, but they entice our senses with everything from pumpkin scented candles to pumpkin pies, breads, cookies and even pumpkin chili.

Although canned pumpkin is readily available at every grocery store, I've discovered that nothing compares in flavor with the real thing when it comes to making pumpkin bread.

Ever since I discovered the savory excellence of using fresh pumpkin, anything less just won't do. So, after bringing my pumpkins in from the front porch, I begin what has become a labor of love: baking, peeling, pureeing and transforming pumpkins into what has become my signature pumpkin bread.

Over the years, gifting the savory loaves to family and friends during December has become an annual ritual. Admittedly, the process involves a lot more time than

opening a can of packed pumpkin, but the results are well worth the extra effort. It's what transforms the ordinary into something extraordinary, and when it comes to transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary, nothing can quite compare with the Eucharist.

The fact that I'm writing this column while also preparing a series of classes on the sacraments, it's only natural that thoughts about giving the best we have to offer are on my mind. Not only did Jesus give us the best he had to offer, but he also gave us himself under the appearance of bread and wine.

Jesus' gift of himself to us is more than a symbol or sign. It is his real flesh and real blood! The Son of God paid the price through his passion and death, and although none of us were present when those events took place, as Catholics, we believe that each time Mass is celebrated, Jesus offers himself to the Father for us as a most pure gift.

Jesus did and continues to do what was needed to reconcile humanity with divinity, not once, but every time the Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated. The celebratory and sacrificial aspects of the Last Supper and Jesus' death on the cross are intrinsical-

ly woven into the celebration of the Eucharist because at the Last Supper, Jesus did what no other human person could do. Knowing that his passion and death were immanent, God drew the Church wholly into himself, bringing it into existence in a perfect sense.

Mystic Adrienne Von Speyer noted that Jesus seemingly stood beside himself momentarily, taking into himself the Church which was already in existence in the mind of the Father in order to generate the Church once and always from the cross.

"This taking her [the Church] back into himself keeps the Lord's office alive. He alone is high priest on the cross through whom everything that is official in the Church can receive life and bear fruit" (Adrienne Von Speyer, "The Passion Within").

Jesus' celebration of the Eucharist in anticipation of his passion and death served as a bridge from the Old to the New Covenant. Therefore, the Church can suffer together with Christ because she has already received his body, which already lives in her. It truly is the gift that keeps on giving.

These are difficult concepts to understand, and although we will never fully understand all that we are called to accept on faith, we

can come to a deeper appreciation for the gift that God has given us in the Eucharist by drawing from our human experiences.

Using the analogy of gifting that involves time, effort and sacrifice as a more meaningful expression of love may seem rather simplistic and homey by comparison with the self-giving of Jesus on the cross. However, reflecting on our lived human experiences offers a glimpse into the transcendent mysteries of God, which we are called not only to believe, but into which we enter.

Jesus enters us as spiritual food so that we can enter into him. Nothing in this life can nourish us as completely as partaking of the bread that truly is a holy Communion because only God can satisfy our deepest hunger for wholeness. It was Jesus who taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Even if we are not able to receive Eucharist daily, we can make a spiritual Communion often throughout the day because God's self-giving cannot be limited by human boundaries of time or place. And so we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

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

Like Bartimaeus, our faith saves us



BELIEVE AS
YOU PRAY
MELANIE CODDINGTON

The destruction of Jerusalem and the deporting of Judah's notable citizenry in 587 B.C. mark the start of what biblical scholars call the Babylonian captivity. Though God eventually brought the people back to the site of the former city through the agency of one Cyrus of Persia, the Jewish people never quite recovered from the loss. Their 50-plus years in a strange land had strong and lasting effects.

In today's first reading, a hopeful oracle composed in response to the destruction of the northern kingdom, Israel, by its Assyrian conquerors has been reframed by Jeremiah, in the context of the Babylonian captivity. Many of the exiles had once been rural folk of some means, so living in Babylon gave them a taste for the bright lights, urban style.

They adapted well to a new language, Aramaic, and being without a temple, they made do with a new style of prayer in and around the synagogue. What it means to be Jewish became a major emphasis of thought and writing. Exile was not all bad, and many Jews prospered.

Meanwhile, back in what remained of

Jerusalem, the surviving poor, not considered valuable enough to kidnap and carry away, were left to fend for themselves in the rubble. They endured by merging with other inhabitants of the region and became the Samaritans.

According to one local legend, "Neither man nor beast, fowl nor fish, was to be found there." Another said that for seven years the soil was brimstone and fire, and the Samaritans found it impossible to sow seed. It was even said that the right hand of God was bound while the Jewish people remained in exile.

Granted freedom by King Cyrus and firmly encouraged to go home, the Jews in exile faced a difficult choice — stay in Babylon or return to their roots and their God in Jerusalem. Imagine them finally leaving the big city, bound for their homeland, with Psalm 126 on their lips. Picture the priestly cantors urging them on, keeping spirits high to prevent their turning back.

This Sunday, we hear all six verses of Psalm 126, with the refrain coming from verse 3. The first half of the psalm references the return from exile, calling to mind the joy, the laughter and the spontaneous praise that arose from it. Then the reality of return to a ravaged homeland sets in.

Beginning with verse 4, grateful recounting turns into persuasive lament: "Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the torrents in the southern desert." The psalmist references the rare but memorable phenomenon of parched land burst-

ing into bloom overnight, hoping for a similar miracle in the life of the people.

The last two verses project the return journey into the future: "Although they go forth weeping ... they shall come back rejoicing." This shift of tense implies a vow to praise, when God's rescue turns the tide of misfortune, inspiring joy, laughter and bursts of, "The Lord has done great things for us."

Psalm 126's flexible tense structure reflects all times when the people of God have gathered — and still gather — to remember God's kindness in the past, while expressing their need in the present and hope for the future.

The healing of blind Bartimaeus in today's Gospel links to Jeremiah's inclusion of blind persons in the throng of returning exiles. This connection projects the prophet's vision into the universal and eternal context of salvation — God's delivering humanity from the exile of sin into restored relationship through Jesus Christ.

Mark uses this story of sight restored (10:46-52) along with another (8:22-26) to frame accounts of the disciples' persistent lack of understanding (metaphorical blindness). Despite Jesus' repeated predictions and explanations of his approaching passion, death and resurrection, they refuse to envision the possibility of a suffering Messiah.

They will come to see, as will Mark's readers (including us), by grace, through faith, as demonstrated by Bartimaeus.

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

KNOW THE POSITIONS OF THE Candidates for Governor



“Human dignity is respected and the common good is fostered only if human rights are protected and basic responsibilities are met. Every human being has a right to life, the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible, and a right to access those things required for human decency – food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing, freedom of religion and family life.”
 – Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, No. 49, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019.

In keeping with its mission, the Virginia Catholic Conference (vacatholic.org) aims to educate and inform Catholics about a wide range of issues. The information listed here was compiled as of September 16, 2021, from policies, public statements, official and campaign websites and other resources to help voters inform their consciences before heading to the voting booth. The issues do not represent a complete list of issues that may be of importance to Catholics. The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office.

Terry McAuliffe
Democrat



ABORTION

According to his website, McAuliffe supports “passing an amendment to the Constitution of Virginia that permanently enshrines and codifies the protections of *Roe v Wade* in Virginia law.”

In 2016 and 2017 McAuliffe vetoed legislation that would have prohibited the Virginia Department of Health from contracting with or making grants to any entity that performs non-federally qualified abortions.

McAuliffe called the new law restricting abortion in Texas a “horrible draconian law” and said “it will be a job killer.”

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

According to his website, McAuliffe supports eliminating Virginia’s conscience law for private child-placing agencies. The conscience law provides that an agency shall not be required to participate in a foster care or adoption placement “when the proposed placement would violate the agency’s written religious or moral convictions or policies.”

In 2016 and 2017 McAuliffe vetoed legislation to provide that no clergy or religious organization would be subject to any penalty, civil liability or other action by the state “solely on account of ... belief, speech, or action in accordance with a sincerely held religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman.”

ECONOMY

According to his website, McAuliffe “will make bold, targeted investments in building and training the workforce of the future and ensure that people of all ages have the skills they need to be successful in the jobs of today and tomorrow. Terry will also require employers to offer paid sick days and family medical leave, deliver families affordable childcare for families, accelerate the path to a \$15 minimum wage, and hold industries accountable to closing gender pay gaps. And he will partner with businesses and education institutions to re-skill and retrain Virginians, while also reimagining our postsecondary education experience.”

Glenn Youngkin
Republican



ABORTION

Youngkin stated, “I’m pro-life, and I believe that there should be exceptions for rape, incest and when the life of the mother is at risk.”

Youngkin “supports funding for women’s health centers, believes that fewer abortions is a good thing ... and opposes ... forcing taxpayers to fund abortions.”

Youngkin stated, “You’ll never hear me support Planned Parenthood, what you’ll hear me talk about is actually taking back the radical abortion policies that Virginians don’t want.”

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

Youngkin stated, “The ability to practice our faith and express our religious beliefs is absolutely paramount.”

Youngkin posted, “A person’s religious beliefs should not be a reason to be canceled from a job.”

ECONOMY

Youngkin wrote, “My Day One Game Plan tackles the rising cost of living and cuts costs for all Virginians by eliminating the grocery tax and suspending the most recent gas tax hike for a year, giving Virginia voters a voice in their real estate property taxes by requiring a vote for any proposed increase, cutting taxes on veteran retirement pay and cutting income taxes for all taxpayers by doubling the standard deduction. This will give a typical Virginia family of four almost \$1,500 back next year. ... We’ll launch #JumpstartJobs to train workers, develop talent, attract investment and make Virginia an easier place to start a business to add 400,000 jobs and grow 10,000 start-ups.”

Terry McAuliffe
Democrat

EDUCATION

In 2014 McAuliffe signed into law a bill that removed a one-year delay for claiming credits through the Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits program, which provides a tax credit for donations that fund scholarships for income-eligible students to attend nonpublic K-12 schools.

ENVIRONMENT

McAuliffe’s environmental plan on his website includes many action items, including “equitably improve access to clean public transportation, electric vehicles and EV charging infrastructure.” According to his policy page, “Securing Virginia’s clean energy future is critical to securing our future. I promise you Virginia will lead the nation in tackling climate change and transitioning to clean energy.”

HEALTHCARE

McAuliffe’s plan seeks to “lower premiums and increase assistance for Virginians who can’t afford their premiums”; “lower prescription drug costs by passing a Prescription Drug Sunlight Law, setting price limits on certain drugs, and holding big Pharma accountable”; and “increase funding for mental health and substance use disorder treatment.” [Note: McAuliffe’s plan also lists “enshrine *Roe v. Wade* in Virginia’s constitution,” which is included in the Abortion section of this document.]

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In 2015 McAuliffe signed into law legislation creating new felonies for trafficking of persons for commercial sexual activity.

Glenn Youngkin
Republican

EDUCATION

Youngkin said “to introduce school choice—charter schools, education savings accounts ... is how we will reform K-12 education.”

ENVIRONMENT

Youngkin’s economic plan calls for “invest[ing] in environmental challenges.” He also stated, “We need an electrical grid which is stable, and we absolutely have to change direction. We must change direction from the ‘clean energy’ plan that was passed. We must change direction because it is not doable, affordable, or good for Virginia.” In a September 16 debate Youngkin said, “I believe in all energy sources. We can use wind and solar, but we need to preserve our clean natural gas.”

HEALTHCARE

A spokesman for Youngkin stated, “Glenn Youngkin will work hard to fix the problems that exist in our health care system. Virginians deserve better access, better choices and better care, and Glenn will focus on lowering costs, increasing price transparency, and creating more competition so that patients are better served.”

According to Youngkin’s website he will “fund Virginia’s mental health care crisis plan.”

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In June 2021 Youngkin announced a plan to combat human trafficking: “We will not only bring the full weight of the law down on traffickers and buyers, we will also equip survivors to heal and flourish.” His plan to “enforce, empower and educate” would, e.g., increase prosecutions and impose jail time as opposed to just a fine; provide resources survivors need for mental and behavioral recovery and wellness; and increase education about recognizing trafficking victims and appropriate ways to take action.

KNOW THE POSITIONS OF THE Candidates for Lieutenant Governor



“Human dignity is respected and the common good is fostered only if human rights are protected and basic responsibilities are met. Every human being has a right to life, the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible, and a right to access those things required for human decency – food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing, freedom of religion and family life.”
– Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, No. 49, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019.

In keeping with its mission, the Virginia Catholic Conference (vacatholic.org) aims to educate and inform Catholics about a wide range of issues. The information listed here was compiled as of September 16, 2021, from policies, public statements, official and campaign websites and other resources to help voters inform their consciences before heading to the voting booth. The issues do not represent a complete list of issues that may be of importance to Catholics. The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office.

Hala Ayala
Democrat



ABORTION

Ayala’s plan states that “now more than ever before, we must ensure that the right to safe, legal abortion is enshrined in our Virginia Constitution.” Her plan also refers to crisis pregnancy centers as “fake clinics” that “outnumber abortion clinics in Virginia by 4 to 1.”
In 2020, as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Ayala voted for a bill that allowed non-doctors to perform first trimester abortions, removed most sections of the informed consent law for women considering abortions, and removed regulations for abortion facilities.
In 2021 Ayala co-patroned and voted for a bill that expanded abortion coverage on Virginia’s health exchange.

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

In 2021 Ayala co-patroned and voted for a bill to eliminate Virginia’s conscience law for private child-placing agencies. The conscience law provides that an agency shall not be required to participate in a foster care or adoption placement “when the proposed placement would violate the agency’s written religious or moral convictions or policies.”

ECONOMY

Ayala posted, “All of Virginia’s workers deserve \$15/hr, paid family and medical leave, and access to affordable health care.” According to her website, Ayala “patroned the [2021] paid family and medical legislation, which would provide every Virginian worker with 12 weeks of paid leave for major events such as an adoption or childbirth.” Her website adds, “The cost of living is rising here in Virginia, and our minimum wage needs to keep up. Furthermore, our Commonwealth needs to invest in affordable housing and combat the economic factors that price families out of neighborhoods they’ve lived in for generations.”
In 2021 Ayala co-patroned and voted for legislation expanding eligibility for childcare subsidies.

Winsome Sears
Republican



ABORTION

Sears said in an interview, “When did it become the wrong thing for us to support the babies in the womb?”
In 2002, as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Sears co-patroned and voted for a bill to require a physician to obtain parental consent prior to performing an abortion on a minor. She also co-patroned and voted for a bill to void any provision in a surrogacy contract that would require or encourage the surrogate mother to have an abortion under any circumstance.

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

In 2002 Sears co-patroned and voted for a bill to include, within Virginia’s healthcare conscience clause, an exemption stating that no healthcare professional who objects to abortion “on personal, ethical, moral or religious grounds” would be required to dispense any medication “for the purpose of performing an abortion.”

ECONOMY

According to her website, Sears will support policies that “keep taxes low, reduce regulations ... and promote small businesses” and that “reduce the cost of living for Virginians.” Her plan includes enacting a 12-month small business tax holiday; cutting unnecessary regulations by 25 percent; eliminating Virginia’s grocery tax and suspending the recent gas tax hike for 12 months; providing a one-time tax rebate of \$600 for joint filers and \$300 for individuals; requiring voter approval for property tax increases; and doubling the standard deduction.
In 2002 Sears patroned and voted for legislation to ensure access to health insurance for children through child support agreements.

Hala Ayala
Democrat

EDUCATION

In 2019 Ayala voted for a bill that expanded the Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits program to include income-eligible pre-K students.
In 2019 Ayala voted against a bill that would have required prior written consent of a student’s parent in order for the student to participate in a public school’s “family life education program.”

ENVIRONMENT

According to her website, Ayala “will work to ensure our Commonwealth can transition to clean energy like solar and wind, protect communities who are impacted by flooding, and make sure every Virginian has access to clean air and clean drinking water.”

HEALTHCARE

Ayala’s website lists ways she “will expand access to affordable healthcare for all,” including “strengthen our Medicaid program by creating a statewide Medicaid ‘buy-in’ option on the exchange” and “provide financial support for families struggling with healthcare premiums.”
In a Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association podcast, Ayala cited affordability, transparency, mental healthcare, equity and modernization as ways she would advance the healthcare system in Virginia.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In 2019 Ayala voted for legislation to raise awareness of human trafficking.
In 2021 Ayala voted for legislation to provide judicial remedies to human trafficking victims.

Winsome Sears
Republican

EDUCATION

According to her website, Sears will “empower parents with choices” and supports “promoting choice by creating more opportunities, especially in failing school districts.”

ENVIRONMENT

Sears served as a Virginia Co-Chair of “Explore Offshore”, a coalition which supports increased access to offshore U.S. oil and natural gas resources. In support of this coalition, she stated that “responsible offshore oil and natural gas development can make our nation more secure, while growing our economy here in the Commonwealth.”

HEALTHCARE

As a congressional candidate in 2004, Sears stated, “Every citizen should have access to quality and affordable healthcare. We need to ensure that those without private healthcare have access to Medicaid and Medicare. Public healthcare must be affordable, convenient, and meet the needs. If we minimize waste, fraud, and abuse, then there would be more money for Medicaid and Medicare.”
In a Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association podcast, Sears stated, “What we need to do is to increase competition across state lines so that we can have access to the more affordable policies that come when there is competition.”

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In an August 2021 interview Sears said: “I was talking to another organization in VA Beach, where there is a high level of sex trafficking and I found two teenagers who they rescued from the system. There were no beds available for them, so they had to go to Montana to find a bed. That’s unacceptable!”
As a congressional candidate in 2004, Sears said: “We must protect our children by guarding them from criminals, ensuring their safety while in school, and defending them from predators. ... While a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, I sponsored legislation to ... keep our children’s school records confidential and away from the prying eyes of criminals.”

KNOW THE POSITIONS OF THE Candidates for Attorney General



In keeping with its mission, the Virginia Catholic Conference (vacatholic.org) aims to educate and inform Catholics about a wide range of issues. The information listed here was compiled as of September 16, 2021, from policies, public statements, official and campaign websites and other resources to help voters inform their consciences before heading to the voting booth. The issues do not represent a complete list of issues that may be of importance to Catholics. The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office.

“Human dignity is respected and the common good is fostered only if human rights are protected and basic responsibilities are met. Every human being has a right to life, the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible, and a right to access those things required for human decency – food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing, freedom of religion and family life.”
 – Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, No. 49, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019.

Mark Herring
Democrat



ABORTION

Herring tweeted, “You can always count on me to stand up and fight to protect a woman’s right to an abortion - because I believe her body, her choice.”

In June 2021, Herring submitted testimony in support of the Women’s Health Protection Act, which would invalidate state laws banning abortion at any stage of pregnancy. He stated that this legislation “would protect the constitutional right to access an abortion.”

Herring filed briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the abortion providers in *Whole Women’s Health v. Hellerstedt* and *June Medical Services v. Gee*. He filed a Circuit Court brief in support of the abortion providers in *Planned Parenthood South Atlantic v. Wilson*.

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

In 2012, as a member of the Virginia Senate, Herring voted against legislation that established Virginia’s conscience law for private child-placing agencies. The conscience law provides that an agency shall not be required to participate in a foster care or adoption placement “when the proposed placement would violate the agency’s written religious or moral convictions or policies.”

ECONOMY

According to Herring’s website, “In an increasingly global economy, Attorney General Herring is working to create a Commonwealth where businesses, entrepreneurs, and talented workers from around the world feel welcome to start, grow, or work at a Virginia business.”

In 2010 Herring introduced and voted for legislation to curtail predatory lending, and introduced and voted for legislation to create a capital gains tax exemption (enacted).

Jason Miyares
Republican



ABORTION

In 2020, as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Miyares voted against a bill that allowed non-doctors to perform first trimester abortions, removed most sections of the informed consent law for women considering abortions, and removed regulations for abortion facilities.

In 2021 Miyares voted against a bill that expanded abortion coverage on Virginia’s health exchange.

In 2016 and 2017 Miyares voted for legislation that would have prohibited the Virginia Department of Health from contracting with or making grants to any entity that performs non-federally qualified abortions.

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS

In 2021 Miyares voted to preserve Virginia’s conscience law for private child-placing agencies. The conscience law provides that an agency shall not be required to participate in a foster care or adoption placement “when the proposed placement would violate the agency’s written religious or moral convictions or policies.”

In 2016 and 2017 Miyares voted for legislation to provide that no clergy or religious organization would be subject to any penalty, civil liability or other action by the state “solely on account of ... belief, speech, or action in accordance with a sincerely held religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman.”

ECONOMY

Miyares’ website states, “Small businesses and entrepreneurs are struggling under high taxation, litigation and regulation coming out of Richmond. Jason ... is a passionate believer in a ‘bottom-up’ economy that doesn’t favor big corporations but instead supports the policies that allow small business owners to grow, thrive and most importantly, hire.”

In 2017 and 2018 Miyares introduced and voted for legislation to create a property tax exemption for the spouses of disabled veterans. In 2018 he introduced tax relief legislation for disabled veterans and their spouses. In 2020 he voted against legislation to increase the minimum wage.

Mark Herring
Democrat

EDUCATION

In 2012 Herring voted against legislation that established the Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits program, which provides a tax credit for donations that fund scholarships for income-eligible students to attend nonpublic K-12 schools.

ENVIRONMENT

In a 2018 interview Herring stated, “What I’ve done is used the visibility of the office to speak out about the dangers of climate change, because it is real, it is happening, and we need to do everything we can in Virginia to move to a more clean energy future. ... [W]e should be investing more in clean energy.”

According to Herring’s website, he “has fought for clean air and water, open spaces, clean energy, and to hold polluters accountable.” Herring’s website also cites “Virginia’s unique vulnerability to climate change and sea-level rise.”

HEALTHCARE

In a Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association podcast, Herring stated that “access to quality affordable healthcare is essential for Virginians,” that he “went to the Supreme Court twice” to protect the Affordable Care Act, and that he would “continue to do everything I can to expand access, to protect people’s access to healthcare.”

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In 2017 “Herring signed a memorandum of understanding creating the Hampton Roads Human Trafficking Task Force, a partnership involving his office, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Virginia State Police and Hampton Roads law enforcement agencies, and Samaritan House.” In 2020 Herring “secured \$525,000 in federal grant funding to continue the work of the [HRHTTF] for at least three more years and allow the Task Force to expand into new localities.”

In August 2021 Herring posted, “Human trafficking robs its victims of their humanity and oftentimes preys on vulnerable individuals. My office is working to get more funding to expand our human trafficking initiatives across our Commonwealth because we have to do more.”

Jason Miyares
Republican

EDUCATION

In 2019 Miyares voted for a bill that expanded the Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits program to include income-eligible pre-K students.

In 2019 Miyares voted for a bill that would have required prior written consent of a student’s parent in order for the student to participate in a public school’s “family life education program.”

ENVIRONMENT

According to notes from a March 29, 2019 meeting of the 2040 Vision to Action Community Coalition, “Delegate Miyares’ message to other state representatives who do not believe flooding is or should be a state issue, is that flooding is a state issue. [His] hope is ... [to] make the state of Virginia an official non-federal sponsor of flooding mitigation just like Louisiana became one after Hurricane Katrina.” Miyares believes that “we need to be proactive and not wait for something to happen especially since we are statistically due for another category 3 catastrophic flooding or hurricane event.”

HEALTHCARE

In a Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association podcast, Miyares stated, “I’m a big believer in patient empowerment,” which “gives you more options controlled by you.” Miyares called Medicaid fraud a “huge, huge problem” because it results in less money going to “protect Virginia’s most vulnerable citizens.” Miyares said he would “bring a prosecutor’s mindset” to the Medicaid fraud unit and would make that “one of my top priorities.”

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Miyares has introduced or supported bills to stiffen penalties, expand training and enforcement efforts, provide judicial relief and safe haven for victims, and create greater public awareness to prosecute and convict traffickers.

In a recent interview Miyares stated, “I am determined to make sure Virginia is leading the fight against Human Trafficking. I was recognized by the Safe House Project for my work combating this crime in the House of Delegates, and as Attorney General I will work with survivors, experts and activists to raise awareness and teach Virginians how we can prevent and eventually eradicate this horrible crime.”

The issues listed here represent a snapshot of the candidates’ positions as of September 16, 2021.

The Conference neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office. Published by the Virginia Catholic Conference, the public policy agency of Virginia’s Catholic Bishops.

Pope OKs beatification for John Paul I

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has signed a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of Pope John Paul I, clearing the way for his beatification. The Italian pope served only 33 days as pontiff; he died in the papal apartments Sept. 28, 1978, at the age of 65, shocking the world and a church that had just mourned the death of St. Paul VI. The Vatican announced Pope Francis' decision Oct. 13.

In the sainthood cause of Pope John Paul I, the approved miracle involved a young girl in Buenos Aires, Argentina, who developed a severe case of acute encephalitis and uncontrol-

lable and life-threatening brain seizures, and eventually entered septic shock. After doctors told family members her death was "imminent," the local priest encouraged the family, nurses and others to pray to the late pope for his intercession, according to the website of the Congregation for Saints' Causes.

A panel of experts studying the cause determined there was no scientific explanation for her complete recovery in 2011 and that it could be attributed to the late pope's intercession. The Vatican did not immediately announce a date for the beatification ceremony.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Standing up for the unborn: Catholic parishes were well represented at the ninth annual Greater Williamsburg Life Chain, Sunday afternoon Oct. 3, on the sidewalk facing Richmond Road starting at Centerville Road. Life Chain is a prayer chain and public witness against abortion. Participating parishes included St. Joan of Arc, Yorktown; St. Elizabeth, Quinton; and the Williamsburg parishes of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church, St. Bede and St. Olaf. The St. Olaf Respect Life Ministry and St. Bede Friends for Life Ministry organized the event.

Good people doing a good thing: Members of Knights of Columbus Council 11984 at St. Stephen, Martyr, Chesapeake, recently built a wheelchair ramp for a disabled Navy retiree. Retired Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Ed Farrel, a Knight from St. James Council 11541 in Gulfport, Mississippi, reached out to Council 11984 and asked them to build the ramp for his long-time friend, retired Navy Chief Ray Reardon.

What have you heard? The CV would like to know what you've heard — or read — regarding Catholics in your community receiving honors and awards, as well as achievements, accomplishments and other good stuff. We'll try to publish a selection of submissions in each issue of The CV. Put "What we've heard" in the subject line and email your item to akrebs@catholicvirginian.org. Include your name and phone number in case we need to follow up. Information cannot be taken over the phone.

MORE@
catholicvirginian.org

IN MEMORIAM

Laurier 'Larry' Hilaire Lemay

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 1 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 19, at St. Edward the Confessor, North Chesterfield, for Laurier "Larry" Hilaire Lemay. Mr. Lemay, 98, passed away on Sunday, Sept. 26.

A native of Auburn, Maine, Mr. Lemay served on the USS Belleau Wood in the Pacific War Arena during World War II. His career with the Philips-Elmet Corp, Lewiston, Maine, spanned 33 years. He moved to North Chesterfield in 2015.

Mr. Lemay is remembered as being genuine, gentle, kind, hardworking, dependable and accommodating. He was a heroic and dedicated caregiver to his wife during decades of illness and disability.

He is survived by his son, Father Donald "Don" H. Lemay, pastor of St. Edward the Confessor, and by several nieces and nephews.

Mr. Lemay was preceded in death by his wife, Jeanette Marie (Champagne); parents, Henry and Georgianna; brothers, Richard, Tom and Ronaldo; and sister, Loraine.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Edward the Confessor Catholic Church, 2700 Dolfield Dr., North Chesterfield, VA 23235.

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Alice Jean Goldsmith



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Wednesday, Oct. 6, at St. John the Baptist, Front Royal, for Mary Alice Jean Goldsmith. Mrs. Goldsmith, 71, passed away on Thursday, Sept. 30.

A native of Youngstown, Ohio, Mrs. Goldsmith was an active member of St. John the Baptist Parish, where she participated in numerous ministries. She was a beloved and caring wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and friend whose primary joy was sharing her faith with everyone she met.

Survivors include her husband of 50 years, Rafael Goldsmith; sons, Christopher Goldsmith (Kim) and Father Joseph Goldsmith, pastor of the cluster parishes in Dinwiddie, Prince George and Hopewell; daughters, Anne Knowles (Daniel), Rebecca Webb (Craig) and Rosemary Cordonnier (Joshua); sisters, Mary Joan Grunenwald and Mary Rita Clemente (Don); brothers, Charles Grunenwald (Barbara), David Grunenwald and Mark Grunenwald (Marnie); 17 grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.

Memorials may be made to St. John the Baptist Church, 120 W. Main St., Front Royal, VA 22630.

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g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers # (page X3))		34	30
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		0	0
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* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 2 of 4)

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16. Electronic Copy Circulation

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I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

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 Brian T. Olzewski, Editor
 Date: 10/08/2021

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including civil penalties).

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OPPORTUNITIES

Commonwealth Catholic Charities chief financial officer. This position is responsible for directing financial activities of the agency. Responsibilities include managing payroll, personnel, accounts payable and receivable; maintaining the general ledger; preparing reports; directing the preparation of budgets; coordinating audits; and developing accounting policies, among others. Qualified applicants will have a bachelor's degree and 10 years of accounting experience. Five years of supervisory experience is required. CPA certification required. Experience working for a similar organization preferred. One full-time position is available. For full job descriptions and to apply for any of our open positions, visit our website at www.cccofva.org/openpositions. We only review applications submitted through our applicant tracking system and will contact you if we are interested in moving forward with you as a qualified candidate.

St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, is seeking a part-time, 20 hours a week, custodian/janitor to perform janitorial work in the 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), grounds maintenance, room setups and window cleaning. Interested candidates please email Sue Miyashita with a diocesan application (richmonddioocese.org/office-of-human-resources/) to admin@saint-mikes.org.

SHORTAKES

Eighth Annual Fall Festival, Saturday, Oct. 30, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., St. Ann Catholic Church, 17111 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Colonial Heights. Sponsored by St. Ann youth group. Contact Elise Chapman at echapman@stanncc.com for information and/or a vendor application.

The 40 Days for Life Fall 2021 Campaign continues through Oct. 31. Christians throughout Richmond and beyond are praying at Planned Parenthood, 201 N. Hamilton Street, Richmond, Monday-Saturday, from as early as 7 a.m. to as late as 7 p.m. More information is available at www.40daysforlife.com/en/Richmond.

Trinity Organ Concert: Join St. Bede Catholic Church director and associate director of music, Aaron

Renninger and Carina Brackin, for a free concert of organ duets, noon, Wednesday, Nov. 3, at the church, 3686 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg. They will play duets from different musical eras including works by Bach, Rutter and one of Beethoven's teachers. The concert is available in-person in the nave and online at www.facebook.com/MusicofSaintBede. For more information, call 757-229-3631 or visit www.bede.va.org/concerts.

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

Annual Memorial Mass in memory of All Saints and Souls, Saturday, Nov. 6, 9:30 a.m., Mount Calvary Cemetery Mausoleum Chapel. Bishop Barry C. Knestout will be the celebrant. Contact Jim Glass at 355-5271 for more information.

Annual All Souls Day Mass, Sunday, Nov. 7, 2 p.m., in front of the garden mausoleum of St. Mary Cemetery, Norfolk. Celebrant will be Father Tim Kuhneman, the Diocese of Richmond's vicar for clergy. Please adhere to diocesan COVID guidelines if attending. For further information or to volunteer, contact Jim Fitzpatrick at 757-572-1420 or fitzpatrick1100@aol.com.

St. Andrew Catholic Church, 613 North Jefferson St., Roanoke, is hosting a parish mission on Sunday and Monday, Nov. 7 and 8, 7-8:30 p.m.

Jon Leonetti, international Catholic speaker, best-selling author and radio host, will be leading the mission titled, "Surge of the Heart."

All are welcome! Contact Linda Allison at lallison@standrewsva.org with questions.

Annual Craft Fair, Saturday, Nov. 13, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Sts. Peter and Paul Parish Hall, 4309 Thomas Jefferson Parkway on Rt. 53, Palmyra. Vendors, baked goods and homemade crafts. Any questions, please contact Cynthia Aycock at 434-996-6065 or cynthia.b.aycock@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@awakeningthedomeschurch.com or call 757-814-1706.

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ACROSS

- 1 Donate a portion of money to church
- 6 His Holiness
- 10 Head of Québec
- 14 What Catholics receive on the first day of Lent
- 15 Gemstone
- 16 Affirmative votes
- 17 Sears subsidiary
- 18 Paris pop
- 19 Our Lady, ___ of Christians
- 20 Like some colleagues
- 22 Young girl
- 24 The Dead and the Red
- 25 Penny
- 26 Yucky
- 28 Prayer-song
- 32 NT epistle
- 33 Commits a capital sin
- 34 Haunch
- 35 Meadows
- 36 St. Francis de ___
- 37 Veni, vidi, ___
- 38 Female members of religious orders (abbr.)
- 39 Fragments
- 40 Baby's ailment
- 41 The Eucharistic Prayer
- 43 Servant
- 44 Solid
- 45 Small yeast cake
- 46 Mark with oil
- 49 Best friend of David
- 53 Monk's room
- 54 To me, to Pierre
- 56 Lasso
- 57 112, to Nero
- 58 Certain letters
- 59 Young eel
- 60 Car with removable panels
- 61 She, in Paris
- 62 Tiny

DOWN

- 1 "___ and eat; this is my body." (Mt 26:26)
- 2 Doctrines
- 3 Demonstrative pronoun
- 4 Arianism and Gnosticism
- 5 Holds in high regard
- 6 John, Paul, and John Paul
- 7 Newspaper essay
- 8 Golf goal
- 9 Bread and Wine
- 10 Island from which the Bounty sailed
- 11 Looked at
- 12 Cast leader?
- 13 Sports buff's TV station
- 21 Marian month
- 23 Insects
- 25 Lawsuits
- 26 Severe
- 27 Capital of Tibet
- 28 Mea ___
- 29 Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, is patron saint of this South American country
- 30 Lawful
- 31 Big picture
- 32 "Casablanca" role
- 33 Landed proprietor of Scotland
- 36 Deficiency in quantity
- 37 Evaporating rapidly
- 39 Chinese literary detective
- 40 Nightclub
- 42 One of the Twelve
- 43 Sometimes it's mini
- 45 Diocese in Idaho
- 46 Bookkeeper (abbr.)
- 47 Immediately following
- 48 Medley
- 49 Second of the twelve Minor Prophets of the Old Testament
- 50 Possess
- 51 "A dillar, a dollar, ___ o'clock scholar"
- 52 Not one, down home
- 55 Gibson, director of The Passion of the Christ

If you enjoy the Scripture Search and/or the crossword puzzle, please let us know. Email akrebs@catholicvirginian.org or call 804-359-5654.

Correction

A photo cutline in the Oct. 4 Catholic Virginian incorrectly identified Elaine Ward, an elder of the parish community, as being a 103-year-old member of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk. Leronia Jones, who is 103, is the oldest member of the basilica. We apologies for the error.

El Papa: crear un movimiento mundial contra la indiferencia y por el amor

En un mensaje escrito para el encuentro de la Pontificia Academia de Ciencias Sociales con la primera bienaventuranza en el centro, el Papa Francisco señala el espíritu de pobreza como el camino para asegurar la felicidad de las personas y los pueblos. La búsqueda ilimitada de beneficios y riqueza escribe, genera pobreza, desigualdad y conflicto. Y recomienda: Eduquemos a los jóvenes en la globalización de la solidaridad, construyamos la civilización del amor.

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

Hoy y mañana se lleva a cabo en el Vaticano el encuentro organizado por la Academia Pontificia de las Ciencias Sociales, y lleva por título: *Cáritas, la amistad social y el fin de la pobreza. Ciencia y ética de la felicidad*, (Caritas, Social Friendship, and the End of Poverty. Science and Ethics of Happiness), un encuentro que tratará sobre la primera Bienaventuranza.

En su mensaje, el Papa refiriéndose a la primera Bienaventuranza, recordó a san Agustín, quien afirma que “toda la perfección de nuestra vida está contenida en el “sermón de la montaña”; y lo demuestra por el hecho de que Jesucristo incluye en ellas el fin al que nos conduce, es decir, la promesa de la felicidad. Ser feliz es aquello que más anhela el ser humano”, dijo Francisco, de ahí, añadió, que el Señor promete la felicidad a los que quieran vivir según su estilo y ser reconocidos como *bienaventurados*.

La felicidad hoy día

Francisco afirmó que “hoy nos topamos con un paradigma imperante, muy difundido por el “pensamiento único”, que confunde la utilidad con la felicidad, pasarla bien con vivir bien y pretende volverse el único criterio válido de discernimiento. Una forma sutil de colonialismo ideológico. Se trata de imponer la ideología según la cual la felicidad sólo consistiría en lo útil, en las cosas y en los bienes, en la abundancia de cosas, de fama y de dinero”.

Cualquier forma de escasez provoca la aidez

Esta búsqueda de satisfacción egoísta produce el miedo a no tener lo suficiente y conduce a la codicia y a la avaricia en individuos y países, ricos y pobres, así como a un “materialismo asfixiante y a un estado general de conflicto”. Esto socava la dignidad de las personas y del propio planeta, y aumenta la pobreza y la desigualdad. El Papa Francisco escribe:

“En estos tiempos de opulencia, en los que debería ser posible poner fin a la pobreza, los poderes del pensamiento único no dicen nada de los pobres, ni de los ancianos, ni de los inmigrantes, ni de las personas por nacer, ni de los gravemente enfermos. Invisibles para la mayoría, son tratados como descartables. Y cuando se los hace visibles, se los suele presentar como una carga indigna para el erario público. Es un crimen de lesa humanidad que, a consecuencia de este paradigma avaro y egoísta predominante, nuestros jóvenes sean explotados por la nueva creciente esclavitud del tráfico de personas, especialmente en el trabajo forzado, la prostitución y la venta de órganos”.

El Pontífice aconseja que, para salir de esta situación mundial, lo que necesitamos, no es seguir acumulando, ni una mayor riqueza, ni más tecnología, sino actuar “el paradigma siempre nuevo y revolucionario de las bienaventuranzas de Jesús empezando por la primera”. Ser pobres de espíritu: “el espíritu de pobreza es aquel punto de inflexión que nos abre el camino hacia la felicidad mediante un giro completo de paradigma”. La paradoja de la pobreza de espíritu a la que somos llamados, es que “siendo la llave de la felicidad para todos, no todos quieren escucharla”. Es el camino angosto y estrecho pero seguro para que lo alcancemos todos.



La miseria como resultado de la injusticia es un infierno

El Papa Francisco subraya la distinción entre la pobreza de espíritu, de la que habla Jesús, y la pobreza material, es decir, la privación de las necesidades de la vida, que describe con palabras duras. El mensaje dice:

La pobreza como privación de lo necesario -es decir, la miseria- es socialmente, como vieron claramente L. Bloy y Péguy, una especie de infierno, porque debilita la libertad humana y pone a quienes la padecen en situación de ser víctimas de las nuevas formas de esclavitud (trabajo forzado, prostitución, tráfico de órganos, etc.) para sobrevivir. Son condiciones criminales que en estricta justicia deben ser denunciadas y combatidas sin

Eduardo David Rodríguez, de 40 años, se lava la cara fuera de su casa en Lomas de Zamora, en las afueras de Buenos Aires, Argentina, el 28 de septiembre de 2021. En un mensaje del 3 de octubre a los participantes en una reunión patrocinada por el Pontificio Academia de Ciencias Sociales, el Papa Francisco dijo que, a pesar de la abundancia de riqueza en el mundo, “la pobreza y la desigualdad persisten”. (Foto del CNS / Agustín Marcarian, Reuters)

tregua. Todos, según su responsabilidad, y en particular los gobiernos, las empresas multinacionales y nacionales, la sociedad civil y las comunidades religiosas, deben hacerlo. Son las peores degradaciones de la dignidad humana y, para un cristiano, las heridas abiertas del cuerpo de Cristo que grita desde su cruz: Tengo sed.

Los pobres de espíritu, dijo Francisco son los que socorren al enfermo y al pobre con alimentos, salud, refugio, vestimentas y otras necesidades básicas. Es un deber, por tanto, ayudar a los pobres, pues para Jesús, escribe el Papa, todos serán medidos según lo que hayan hecho para ayudar a “sus hermanos necesitados”. Y cita dos modelos ejemplares: San Francisco de Asís y la Madre Teresa de Calcuta, pero también señala que muchos hombres y mujeres “han recibido gracias de los pobres, porque en cada hermano y hermana en dificultad abrazamos la carne de Cristo sufriente”.



Nuestro deber sagrado Votar

Octubre de 2021

El Día de las Elecciones es el 2 de noviembre y ya ha comenzado la votación anticipada. Los votantes de Virginia elegirán a un gobernador, un vicegobernador, un fiscal general y la totalidad de los 100 miembros de la Cámara de Delegados de Virginia. Hay muchos asuntos en juego y tenemos el deber sagrado de formar nuestra conciencia y de votar.

Unámonos a los católicos de todo el Estado de Virginia para votar por dirigentes comprometidos a adoptar posturas políticas que respeten la verdad reflejada en nuestras creencias católicas, muy particularmente en la protección de toda la vida humana, sobre todo de quienes más la necesitan. Comencemos este proceso con oración y reflexión, afianzados en las enseñanzas fundamentales de nuestra fe católica.

Estos tres principios fundamentales deben guiar nuestra forma de votar:

- Hay muchos asuntos importantes.
- No todos los asuntos tienen igual importancia moral.
- La protección de la vida es fundamental.

Como católicos, debemos proteger la sacralidad de toda la vida humana. El derecho a la vida es “un derecho fundamental que hace posibles todos los demás derechos” (Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, [Formando la conciencia para ser ciudadanos fieles](#), no. 49). Se debe “defender con la máxima determinación” (San Juan Pablo II, [Christifideles Laici](#), no. 38). En los Estados Unidos, la aceptación trágicamente generalizada del aborto destaca la urgencia de este mensaje. Ha habido más de 62 millones de abortos desde el fallo en el caso de *Roe contra Wade*. Con todo, los funcionarios elegidos en Washington y aquí en Virginia trabajan por introducir una agenda aún más radical impulsada por el aborto. La protección de la vida en la máxima medida posible es de fundamental importancia y debe ser nuestra principal prioridad.

Para ver las comparaciones lado a lado de las posturas políticas de los candidatos de los principales partidos para ocupar los cargos de gobernador, vicegobernador y fiscal general en asuntos de importancia para los católicos (en sus propias palabras), visiten www.vacatholic.org.

Hemos recibido la bendición de vivir en un país donde tenemos libertad para elegir a nuestros dirigentes. Al mismo tiempo, sabemos que la política ha adquirido un carácter cada vez más divisivo y destructivo en nuestras comunidades aun, a veces, dentro de nuestras familias. Nuestra unidad y paz se deben fundamentar e inspirar en el poder sanador de Jesucristo. Llevemos esta verdad, esta paz y esta unidad dentro de nosotros a las urnas en esta elección y siempre.

Fielmente en Cristo,

Michael F. Burbidge

Monseñor Michael F. Burbidge
Obispo de la Diócesis de Arlington

Barry C. Knestout

Monseñor Barry C. Knestout
Obispo de la Diócesis de Richmond

Commemorating Year of St. Joseph



To commemorate the Year of St. Joseph, parishioners at St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Tabb, were invited to participate in a build-a-bench project. They were provided with materials and instructions. As of Oct. 13, 45 benches and had been placed in various places on parish grounds. Above: Benches were used for Vacation Bible School. Left: Anthony Scimeca and his father, Johnny, build one of the benches. (Submitted photos)

'Adventure'

Continued from Page 5

the Diocese of Richmond in 2016, Father Xavier said with a laugh that he “didn’t drive real well” when he came to Virginia, but that parishioners helped him learn.

“They have been good to me,” he said. “They mentored me. We have gotten to know one another deeply; we depend on each other.”

'It's in our blood'

Witness to the Gospel is expressed through outreach. At Sacred Heart, Big Stone Gap, it's Rita's Shoppe where people can get bargains on clothes and other items.

“The outreach is more important than the money,” Blanton said.

At St. Joseph, Grundy, Frannie Minton notes the outreach to the town's pharmacy and law students, as well as what they mean to the community.

“We're so blessed by the students,” she said.

Handing me a booklet listing the outreach ministries in which Christ the King parishioners are involved, Byrd said, “It's in our blood.”

Some parishes, like St. Joseph, Clintwood, are the beneficiary of a twinning relationship. It has one with St. Joseph Parish in Appleton, Wisconsin, that spans 15 years. The latter sends money as well as jackets, sweaters and coats that the Clintwood parish makes available to those in need.

Other parishioners mentioned gratitude for the support they receive from parishes in the Diocese of Richmond, e.g., St. Nicholas, Virginia Beach; St. Augustine, Richmond; and St. Michael the Archangel,

Glen Allen; and St. Edward, North Chesterfield.

Wringing out the sponge

Often at the start of a course, the instructor will ask, “What do you hope to get out of this?”

As I prepared for this one, I wanted to be a sponge — soak up as much as I could about the aforementioned parishes and their members, as well as those at St. Edward, Pulaski; St. Mary, Mother of God, Wytheville; St. John, Marion; St. Patrick, Dungannon; St. Bernard, Gate City; St. Joseph, Woodlawn; St. Ann, Bristol and All Saints, Floyd.

I continue to wring out that sponge, processing what I absorbed. As I do, I recall two things that Andrew Satmary, a 95-year-old lifelong member of St. Elizabeth, Pocahontas, shared with me.

First, he mentioned how his parish has survived.

“When the mines started to close, we stayed together as a parish. We had some hard going, but, thank God, we had some hard working people that stayed with the church.”

Then, as we finished talking, he referred to the Baltimore Catechism.

“Why did God make you? To know him, love him and serve him in this world.’ That's what I've been doing.”

For Satmary and the Catholic faithful in the southwest, it's *the* Catholic story.

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Our Church, Our Story

Celebrate Black Catholic Identity and Culture

You're invited!

In celebration of Black Catholic History Month, the Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics, in cooperation with All Saints Catholic School and the Richmond parishes of St. Elizabeth, St. Paul and Holy Rosary invite you to explore the story of Black Catholic identity in the Church and culture.

Friday, Nov. 5, and Saturday, Nov. 6

Our event features Dr. Tia Noelle Pratt, Ph.D., of Villanova University. Breakout sessions will focus upon youth, vocations, the Catholic experience in Africa and the Church's response to racism.

Details about this virtual and in-person celebration are available by calling Deacon Charles Williams, director of the Office for Black Catholics, at 804-359-5661 and at <https://richmonddiocese.org/office/office-for-black-catholics/>.

