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Ministry leader 'walked by faith, not by sight'

Deacon Williams remembered as compassionate, spiritually deep

BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI
The Catholic Virginian

It was 1994. The son of a friend had a daughter who was receiving her first Communion at St. Paul Church, Richmond, and he invited Charles Williams to attend. Williams had been away from the Catholic Church since 1969, angry that the Diocese of Richmond closed his parish, St. Joseph, Richmond. But he agreed to come to the first Communion Mass.

And then?

"The Holy Spirit took hold of him. He came flooding back to the Church, and when he came back, he came back full speed," said Deacon John Tucker, relating how Deacon Charles Williams would describe his own spiritual journey.

Deacon Tucker, who met Deacon Williams shortly after his return to the Church, was the homilist at the Mass of Christian Burial for him on Friday, Feb. 4 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Deacon Williams, 70, a native Richmonder

from Jackson Ward, passed away on Thursday, Jan. 27.

"He told me a year or so ago, 'If I don't wake up tomorrow, I'm prepared to go,'" Deacon Tucker said. "He was a man of unshakeable faith. Even in his last hours, he told me, 'These doctors tell me, I'm nearing the end. If so, I'm OK with that.'"

When Deacon Tucker, who serves at St. Paul Parish, spoke with The Catholic Virginian on Tuesday, Feb. 1, he was still gathering his thoughts for what he would say in his homily.

"I want to give people a sense of the man and his journey in his life," he said. "Charles came full circle with the Church."

That "full circle," according to Deacon Tucker, is what his diaconate formation classmate would describe as his "mutual reconciliation" with the Church.

"He forgave the Church for what, in his perception, they had done to his childhood parish. In turn, the Church and God had for-

given him for being away," Deacon Tucker said.

Noting Deacon Williams' "tall, commanding presence," Deacon Tucker said that people naturally gravitated toward him.

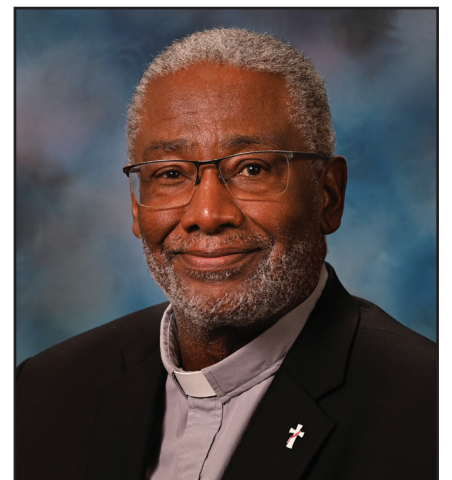
"He got a lot of requests to do many things. He needed to learn how to say no," Deacon Tucker said with a laugh.

He said he was still processing the loss of his diaconate formation classmate. Both began the program in 2007. Deacon Tucker was ordained at the cathedral in fall 2012; Deacon Williams at St. Paul in summer 2013.

"We had a standing lunch date on Mondays for the last 20 years," Deacon Tucker said of the personal bond between the two. "This is a big blow to me. I have lost my best friend and confidant."

'Led by the Holy Spirit'

Deacon Francis "Frank" Nelson Jr., who serves at Holy Rosary Parish, Richmond, spoke of the "broth-



Deacon Charles Williams

er relationship" he had with Deacon Williams, whom he had met prior to their applying for diaconate formation.

"We seemed to connect very quickly and easily during formation. Out of that relationship, we were a support for each other. He was such a brother to me in my journey as a man and as a deacon,"

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Practicing what they're taught



Tom Caulder, left, and Dev Saharwal, third grade students at St. Mary Catholic School in Richmond, sort items collected for Common-wealth Catholic Charities as part of a school-wide service project during Catholic Schools week. Attendees of the school's Jan. 29 Chili Cook-Off were asked to bring an item to donate as they enjoyed a warm meal. (Photo/Katie Botha)

Nuncio: UN must protect civilians in armed conflicts

UNITED NATIONS — Efforts by the United Nations to limit the use of explosive weaponry in highly populated urban areas gained the support of the Vatican's nuncio to the world organization.

Archbishop Gabriele Caccia said civilian populations in cities must be protected in armed conflicts so that lives are not lost and daily life is not massively disrupted.

He made the comments during a U.N. Security Council meeting Jan. 25.

Saying that protocols under the Geneva Conventions extend protections for civilians in conflict zones, Archbishop Caccia said such safeguards have "proven inadequate in the face of what Pope Francis calls 'another

world war ... fought piecemeal.'"

"Tens of millions of people each year now suffer the consequences of armed conflict in cities, which includes the disruption of essential services, and the risk of displacement, injury and death," Archbishop Caccia said.

He reiterated the findings of a May 2021 report from U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres that found civilians make up 90% of those killed and injured by explosive weapons in urban settings.

Guterres also addressed the Security Council, explaining how more than 50 million people worldwide are affected by conflict in urban areas and face the risk of being killed or injured.

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The Catholic Virginian
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Illness potential source for growth in holiness



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

When St. John Paul II established the World Day of the Sick in 1992 — a day to be commemorated annually on Feb. 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes — he wrote that “the Church consistently emphasizes the salvific nature of the offering of suffering, which, lived in communion with Christ, belongs to the very essence of redemption.”

During the nearly two years of the pandemic, all of us have become much more aware of and appreciative of the burdens of illness and the challenges it poses in terms of day-to-day life and activities.

As St. John Paul II noted, the Church provides us with a perspective on this in that the suffering we experience in illness is evidence in the human person, of something with which we contend in every age and every place and, most importantly, that is part of our communion with Christ.

We bring to bear against illness and frailty all the genius and efforts we can as human beings — from the use of our intellectual abilities and from science and technology. Those are great blessings that enable us to respond to illness in such a way that they can mitigate the damage caused by illness and disease.

However, as Christians, we have another perspective when it comes to illness and those who bear the burden of it: We see it as a potential source of growth in holiness and a practical participation in the Paschal Mystery. That is the “salvific nature” of which St. John Paul II speaks.

That is an after effect. Our intention when we become ill is to get well. Yet, amid whatever we are enduring, we realize that good can come out of the worst of situations.

As we bear the burden of illness, frailty or disease, that are at times beyond the capacity

of modern medicine to remedy, if we do it with patience and trust in God — accepting that is part of his larger plan, even if we don’t understand it in this moment — it can become a source of grace.

When we identify with the frailties and conditions of people worldwide, we learn to be more patient with those who are struggling, and we can be much more charitable and empathetic in our response.

Bringing the good out of the bad is how our Church responds. This is what our faith calls us to do. Rather than only say, “This is an enemy to attack” or “This is a disease to overcome,” when we are in the midst of it, we seek the sources of good that can come from it.

Our faith in God helps us to bear that burden in a way that keeps us from becoming discouraged, bitter or angry. Instead, we look at that illness, that challenge, as an occasion of grace, of putting our sufferings in the hands of God. We pray, as the psalmist did, “I cried out to you for help and you healed me” (30:3).

In his message to mark the celebration of the first World Day of the Sick in 1993, St. Pope John Paul II expressed to health care workers the hope that the day would “be a renewed spur to continue in your delicate service with generous openness to the profound values of the person, to respect for human dignity, and to defense of life, from its beginning to its natural close.”

My mother and grandmother were nurses; my sister is a nurse. I have nieces and nephews who work in health-related fields. Thus, I hear a lot about what it is like to be on the front lines of caring for the sick, especially over the last two years.

My sister talks about the challenges COVID has presented at her hospital and how everything in health care has been affected with added layers of precautions, e.g., the now routine necessity for gloves, masks and other protective measures when caring for patients. With these

added necessary precautions, everything becomes more challenging to administer.

When health care workers are confronted daily with the most difficult of health issues, they can become magnified in one’s awareness. It is a unique burden and challenge to keep focused on the mission, to keep a positive approach and to remember why they first accepted the calling to this profession to bring healing to the sick and injured.

Add this to the heightened concern about COVID and the cultural and political response to it, and we can understand why many in the medical field are exhausted as they dedicate themselves to those they serve.

After two years of the pandemic, it is still not clear if there will ever be a conclusion to COVID or if it will be something with which we will be living for many years to come. The latter possibility is discouraging, especially for those who take care of the ailing. They want to help overcome the illness, but it remains despite their best efforts. The temptation to despair can be strong.

It is precisely in those moments when things are most discouraging that we — those who are sick and those who care for them — are called to immerse ourselves once again in renewed faith and hope.

As we mark the World Day of the Sick, I invite you to join me in prayer. First, let us pray for those who suffer the burden of illness that they may be open to grace that comes in bearing that which ails them, and that they offer that sacrifice to our loving and merciful God.

Secondly, let us pray for all who work in the health care field, those about whom Pope Francis, in his message for the World Day of the Sick, said, “... your service alongside the sick, carried out with love and competence, transcends the bounds of your profession and becomes a mission. Your hands, which touch the suffering flesh of Christ, can be a sign of the merciful hands of the Father.”

Cardinal Gregory: ‘Work for greater justice’

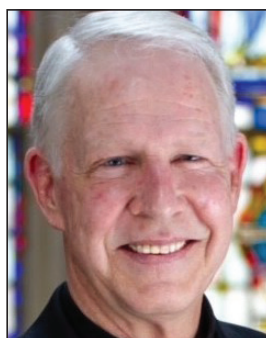
WASHINGTON (CNS) — “Time is never meant to be useless,” said Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington in his homily at the opening Mass this year’s Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, and he advised the gathering’s 800-plus registrants to “work for greater justice in our world. God has intended that we, his creatures, encounter time according to his design. The passage of time always follows God’s wisdom and God’s providence,” Cardinal Gregory said Jan. 29, the first day of the four-day gathering ending Feb. 1.

“Time itself can be grace. It can be ordinary, or it can be existing. It can be fleeting, or it can be prolonged. However, time is never meant to be useless.” Therefore, he said, “we must exit this Mass with the assignment to renew the Church in our own time. We leave this moment in time with a burning desire to work for greater justice in our world.”

The tasks that remain are many, he acknowledged. “Continue to work to end racism and bigotry in our own time,” Cardinal Gregory said. “Seek to end the destruction of human life at all stages,” and “work to lessen the poverty that stifles the lives of too many young people.”

IN MEMORIAM

Deacon Patrick ‘Pat’ White



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Wednesday, Jan. 26, at St. Bridget, Richmond, for Deacon Patrick “Pat” White. Deacon White, 67, passed away on Wednesday, Jan. 19, after a 15-month battle with pancreatic cancer.

A native of Havre, Montana, Deacon White’s family eventually settled in Central Virginia. After graduating from Hopewell High School in 1972, he attended Washington and Lee for a short time before joining the Navy. Deacon White served as a Petty Officer First Class on the USS America from 1975 to 1981.

Upon honorably discharging, he moved to Richmond and met his wife, Katherine, with whom he had three children. He then worked full-time in the IT field while attending Virginia Commonwealth University to complete his degree.

After a successful career serving at Overnite Transportation and Markel Corporation,

Deacon White took an early retirement to teach theology at Benedictine College Preparatory from 2003 to 2016.

He saw the opportunity to help teach more people about their faith, so he studied for the diaconate, being ordained in 2015 after receiving a master’s degree in theology from St. Leo University. A highlight for Deacon White was being on the altar with Pope Francis in 2015 when the Holy Father celebrated Mass for the Jubilee of Deacons at the Vatican.

Deacon White is survived by his wife, Katherine; children, Elizabeth Singleton (Matthew), Christopher (Rebecca) and Bridget; two grandchildren, Lilly and Harvey Singleton; sisters, Charlene Morgan-Carr and Catherine Morgan (Dave); and many nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence E. White and Juanita M. White; and a sister, Juliana Pearson.

Memorial contributions may be made in Deacon White’s memory to Benedictine College Preparatory, 12829 River Road, Richmond, VA 23238 or VCU Massey Cancer Center, Box 843042, Richmond, VA 23284-3042.

Those he serves help silver jubilarian's faith grow

Deacon Allison's ministry began in Ohio, continues in Roanoke

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

It seems as though it's been a long time in coming, but at the same time, it all passed so quickly,"

Deacon Mark Allison said of his 25th anniversary as a permanent deacon.

"I've seen a lot in 25 years – changes to the (Roman) Missal, changes in the translation of the Lectionary, a different understanding being at parishes that had never had a deacon before... But in all of it, the faith is the same," he said, "and I try to tell people that's a testament to the Church."

Deacon Allison joined the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil Mass in 1985 in the Diocese of Columbus, Ohio. He married his wife, Linda, in May of that year. The couple share four children, Maggie, Marcella, Melina and Joseph, and three grandchildren, Michela, Heidi and Stella.

"Father Kenneth Wise, who was my first pastor as a Catholic, got me involved in the parish right off the bat," Deacon Allison said. "He was actually the one who got me started down the path to become a deacon."

The jubilarian said that Father Wise was an older priest who was responsible for administering two parishes.

"We had a number of conversations about what I could additionally take on to help him with. And at that time in the Diocese of Columbus, they had a program that was called 'Chrism,' which was a lay ministry formation program for two years. That was also a prerequisite for the diaconate, but at that time, I didn't even know it," Deacon Allison said with a laugh.

He recalled that those conversations with Father Wise and his involvement with the Chrism Program led to his discernment and



Deacon Mark Allison

eventual application to the permanent diaconate program.

Bishop James A. Griffin, then-bishop of Columbus, ordained Deacon Allison on Feb. 1, 1997.

"I served with him quite a bit because when he came out to the more rural areas of the diocese where I lived and ministered, often I was the only deacon available to assist at his celebrations," Deacon Allison said of the bishop. "So he got very close with my oldest child, who was very young

when I was ordained... so he was very special to me."

His first assignment was at St. Joseph Parish in Dover, Ohio, where he started the St. Vincent de Paul ministry and started the process to get Habitat for Humanity opened in the community. He was also involved with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), adult faith formation and catechetical work, liturgical work and Hispanic outreach.

In 2003, Deacon Allison was promoted to regional sales manager of the southeastern United States for Gradall, the commercial and industrial equipment supply company where he has worked for 35 years. Today, he is the director of the company's excavator project.

Because of his 2003 promotion, Deacon Allison and his family relocated to Richmond. He was given faculties to minister in the Diocese of Richmond and was assigned to Church of the Transfiguration, Fincastle, and St. John the Evangelist, New Castle.

In November 2009, the deacon was assigned to continue serving at St. John, New Castle. In March 2009, he was assigned to St. Andrew, Roanoke.

"Msgr. (Thomas) Miller at St. Andrew's when I was first assigned there was very kind,"

the deacon recalled. "We were going through a rough time, and he helped a lot to get us back on track, so he's very special as well."

Deacon Allison said he enjoys giving homilies and "being with the people, listening to them, helping them work through things in their lives – the good times and the bad times and the hard times."

In reflecting on his years as a deacon, Deacon Allison said that his personal faith has grown through those interactions with the people to whom he ministers.

"Hearing their stories, the trust that they put in you, it can be very humbling, and so I think that humility is very important in diaconal ministry," he said. "... You're not trying to figure out what your suggestions or recommendations are to help get them though, but you're simply walking the journey with them."

He credits his family with helping him reach this milestone: "I would never have considered becoming a deacon, nor could I have ministered so long without the help and support of my wife, Linda. We have been married for almost 37 years, and she ministers to me and with me every step of the way."

He added that he enjoys spending time with his family "every chance I get" and that "they have all been the basis and foundation of all I do."

As he approached his silver jubilee, Deacon Allison said he is pleased about the direction his own journey will take in the future.

"I'm looking forward at some point in the next 5-10 years maybe retiring from my regular job and being able to spend more time (in active ministry) like I was able to do when I was first ordained – when I had a regular 8-5 job and evenings (free)," Deacon Allison said. "I just look forward to continuing my ministry as much as I can."

Holy Spirit must be motivation, pope tells religious

JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The Holy Spirit, and not the need for recognition, must be the primary motivation in one's religious life, Pope Francis told consecrated men and women.

"Sometimes, even behind the appearance of good works, the canker of narcissism, or the need to stand out, can be concealed. In other cases, even as we go about doing many things, our religious communities can appear moved more by mechanical repetition — acting out of habit, just to keep busy — than by enthusiastic openness to the Holy Spirit," the pope said in his homily Feb. 2.

"Let us today examine our interior motivations and discern our spiritual movements, so that the renewal of consecrated life may come about, first and foremost, from there," he said.

Hundreds of men and women belonging to religious orders attended the Mass for the celebration of Candlemas — the feast of the Presentation of the Lord — which also marks the Vatican celebration of the

World Day for Consecrated Life.

During the Mass, Pope Francis exchanged consecrated bread and wine with Armenian Catholic Patriarch Raphaël Pierre XXI Minassian, who was elected in September, thus sealing their ecclesial communion.

In September, after the election, the pope granted the Armenian patriarch's request for unity, which is sealed with the gesture of partaking of the Eucharist together. The Armenian Patriarchate, based in Beirut, is one of 22 Eastern Catholic Churches that is in full unity with the Holy See and the Catholic Church.

The Mass began with the traditional blessing of candles. Led by several candle-bearing acolytes, Pope Francis processed toward the Altar of the Chair in a darkened St. Peter's Basilica, faintly lit by the congregation's candles as the choir sang, "O radiant light, eternal splendor of the father, Christ the Lord immortal."

Pope Francis blessed the candles and prayed that the Lord would guide all men and women "on the path of good" toward his Son, "the light that has no end."

In his homily, the pope reflected on the Gospel reading from St. Luke, in which the young Mary and Joseph, along with baby Jesus, meet the elderly Simeon and Anna, who "await in the Temple the fulfillment of the promise that God made to his people: the coming of the Messiah."

Just like the elderly Simeon recognizes the Messiah "in the guise of a poor little baby," religious men and women are called to be "moved by the Spirit" rather than success or prestige in their congregations.

"The Spirit moves us to see God in the littleness and vulnerability of a baby, yet we at times risk seeing our consecration only in terms of results, goals and success: We look for influence, for visibility, for numbers," the pope said. "The Spirit, on the other hand, asks for none of this. He wants us to cultivate daily fidelity and to be attentive to the little things entrusted to our care."

Secondly, Simeon's example of seeing and recognizing Christ is a testament to the "great miracle of faith" that "opens eyes, transforms gazes and changes perspectives."

While the world often sees con-

secrated life as "a waste, a relic of the past, something useless," the pope called on religious men and women to reflect on how they view religious life and whether their eyes are "turned only inward, yearning for something that no longer exists, or are we capable of a farsighted gaze of faith, one that looks both within and beyond."

"Let us open our eyes: The Spirit is inviting us amid our crises, decreasing numbers and diminishing forces, to renew our lives and our communities. Let us look at Simeon and Anna: Although they were advanced in years, they did not spend their days mourning a past that never comes back, but instead embraced the future opening up before them," he said.

Pope Francis said the act of Simeon taking baby Jesus in his arms reflects the calling to embrace Jesus in one's life, which is "the very heart of faith" and an important aspect of Christian life, especially at times when "losing our bearings, getting caught up in a thousand different things, obsessing about minor issues

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In solidarity with Haiti

Twinned parishes grow in faith, friendship

Father Jim Griffin, retired pastor of St. Paul, Richmond, and Father Withny Pierre, former pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows, Poulie, with Our Lady of Sorrows Parish children in 2018. (Photo/Tracey Wingold)



WENDY KLESCH

Special to The Catholic Virginian

In the village of Savanette, Haiti, beneath a calabash tree stands a small block building painted white and cobalt blue. From the outside, it's a modest-looking structure, but it houses a deep well and a water purification plant that is the fruit of a friendship between two parishes miles apart: one in the Diocese of Cap-Haïtien and one in the Diocese of Richmond.

It's named, aptly enough, Fontaine de Jean Baptiste, the fountain of John the Baptist.

"The beautiful thing about it is, it's a self-sustaining project," explained Richard Neves, chairman of the Haiti Ministry at St. Mary, Blacksburg.

The plant not only provides fresh water for the community, Neves said, but it also provides employment and a source of income for the parish, as extra bags of water are sold to surrounding villages.

There are few symbols more central to the Catholic faith than that of water, bringing new life and, with it, new hope. The small structure, built with funding from St. Mary and under the guidance of Father Nicolas Floréal, pastor of St. Jean Baptiste, is a testament to what can be accomplished when Catholics of two nations, united by one faith, work together for the benefit of all.

This February, the Diocese of Richmond is recognizing such achievements by observing Haiti Solidarity Month, a time of reflection and renewal, celebrating four decades of a friendship drawing two neighbors closer together.

'Encourage one another'

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, St. Paul writes, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as you have been doing" (5:11).

Such is the spirit of the diocesan twinning program, said Bishop Désinord Jean of the Diocese of Hinche, in which a parish, school or clinic in Haiti is paired with a sister parish in Richmond.

"The relationship established between the Diocese of Richmond and the Diocese of Hinche is in line with the primitive Church, where the found-

ing apostles of the various communities showed their solidarity toward one another," Bishop Jean said.

Today, more than 50 parishes in the Diocese of Richmond have twins, the majority of which lie in Hinche, as part of a diocesan program established in 1984. A few others, however, have formed friendships with parishes in Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien.

The Diocese of Richmond's Haiti Commission provides oversight, offering twinned parishes advice and support. There are also several teams devoted to working on specific issues, such as education, health care and sustainable development.

But, beyond that, "the twinning relationships can be as varied as the parishes themselves," said Rachael Lastrup, director of the Diocese of Richmond's Office of Social Ministries, depending upon the sizes, locations and priorities of the parishes involved.

Two parishes, one mission

"It was a pyramid scheme of sorts," Neves recalled with a laugh.

In 2017, Neves traveled to Haiti to meet with Father Floréal, pastor of St. Mary's twin, St. Jean Baptiste, to help him with a project devised to supply families in his community with dairy goats.

Neves accompanied Father Floréal to the local market, he said, but no sooner had they arrived than the priest asked him to make himself scarce.

"He told me to go to the other end of the market and to come back in around two hours," Neves said. "He knew the price of the goats would jump as soon as they saw me. When I got back — I couldn't believe it — he had about 20 goats tied to the bumper of his Land Rover."

Neves helped bring the goats back to the rectory of Savanette, about a five-mile journey.

"Father Nicolas had made a list of families who might benefit from the project," Neves said, "so, that evening, one by one, families stopped by the rectory to pick up their goat."

As part of the arrangement, parishioners

agreed that if their goat had a female kid, it would be brought back to the rectory so that it could be given to another family.

"It was a way of sharing the wealth — or, in this case, sharing the goats," Neves said.

Over the past six years, about 70 families have received dairy goats from the original 20. This simple project, reminiscent of the parable of the loaves and fishes, is an example of how such endeavors can grow, Neves said, sending a ripple effect throughout an entire community.

St. Mary and St. Jean Baptiste have worked together to support the parish school and clinic, as well as to build the water treatment plant. They've also embarked on a seed distribution program, helping families to maintain their home gardens.

But one of the most rewarding aspects of the twinning program, Neves said, is witnessing the ways in which those whose lives are touched by the ministry return to help it grow.

"We're currently sponsoring a medical student from Savanette," Neves said, "who is planning to return home after med school to serve as a doctor there."

St. Mary has also sponsored eight seminarians over the years, he said, who have, in turn, worked to help their communities thrive, bringing the ministry full circle.

"When I go to a feast day celebration, it's amazing," Neves said. "When I look around the altar, I see so many familiar faces."

"It's a changed community. When you help

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Haiti

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people to create success in their community, it just keeps growing.”

A growing family

St. Francis of Assisi, Staunton, has had one of the longest twinning relationships in the diocese. Its story began in 1979, when a Missionhurst priest based in Wilkesboro, PA, traveled down I-81 to share his experiences of working in Haiti.

The following year, St. Francis partnered with St. Louis, King of France, in Pointe-a-Raquette, a village on the southern end of the island of La Gonâve, which lies about 35 miles off the coast of Port-au-Prince.

“It’s fairly isolated,” Marie Thomas, co-coordinator of St. Francis’ Haiti Outreach Ministry said. “Its location offers it protection from the violence of the capital, but it makes travel difficult.”

It’s possible to reach the island by boat, she said, or by Mission Air, which lands planes on an airstrip on the north end of the island. From there, it’s about a three-hour walk on a fairly rough path.

“For years, St. Francis of Assisi took up a second collection once a month to send to St. Louis, and that was the extent of the relationship,” she said.

All that changed in 2002, Thomas said, when St. Francis parishioner Colette Pettit decided to make the journey to Pointe-a-Raquette.

“And that was our first real meeting with the parish,” Pettit said. “They were all so welcoming. Almost no sooner did they say, ‘We are so happy that you came to visit,’ that they were asking, ‘When are you coming you back?’”

Pettit spent about a week in the parish, visiting the various chapels placed throughout the countryside and meeting with the deacons there.

Soon afterward, under the guidance of Father Roosevelt Leriche, pastor of St. Louis, the twinned parishes began work on opening a school, which, today, includes a three-year kindergarten program through grade 10.

“Our hope is to add a grade every year,” Thomas said.

A clinic was established the following year, and then, for a third project, St. Francis of Assisi enlisted the support of a third parish, thereby growing their ministry family.

“We realized we needed more funding for the shelter and the food program,” Pettit said. “I had just moved to Waynesboro and had begun attending St. John the Evangelist, but I was still on the Haiti committee at St. Francis. So it was a natural progression.”

Soon thereafter, St. John the Evangelist, Waynesboro, assumed the support of a small house located just beside the rectory of St. Louis that served as a shelter for the elderly and homeless. In 2018, St. John and St. Louis worked to build a sturdier dwelling there called St. Anthony’s House.

The house provides a home for 10 people and also serves as the center for the parish food program. Basic staples such as rice, beans and oil are available for pickup, Pettit said, and it’s also the base of operations for the “Meals on Feet” ministry, in which prepared meals are delivered to those unable to come to the house.

Although visits to St. Louis ceased with the advent of the pandemic, Pettit said, the three parishes are still working to keep their relationship strong.

“We are still supporting the parish however we can,” she said, “but we miss that face-to-face.”

‘Right at our door’

For Paul Fletcher, chairman of the Haiti Ministry at St. Mary of the Presentation, Suffolk, the ministry has been a pilgrimage of faith and perseverance — much like a hike he once made with members of his parish’s youth group up a moun-



Father Jim Griffin, retired pastor of St. Paul, Richmond, and Father Withny Pierre, former pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows, Poulie, celebrate Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows in 2018. Father Griffin has visited Haiti more than 40 times during his priesthood.

(Photo/Tracey Wingold)

tain to visit the school of St. Mary’s sister parish in Belladere, Haiti, after a heavy rain.

It was in 2006, not long after his retirement from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, Fletcher recalled, when a fellow parishioner asked him if he would like to join the Haiti Ministry committee.

“At the time, I only knew what I read in the newspaper or saw on TV about Papa Doc (Jean-Claude Duvalier, president of Haiti, 1971-1986),” he said, “but she said, ‘You should think about it.’ And so, I thought about it. And I said, ‘OK.’”

“Next thing I knew, someone came up to me and said, ‘I understand you’re chairman of the Haiti committee,’” he said with a laugh.

Fletcher said that, to prepare, he attended a seminar in Miami, featuring speakers from the U.N. and Doctors without Borders, as well as Haitian-Americans prominent in various fields.

Later that year, he visited Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Mary’s twin parish in Belladere, in the Diocese of Hinche.

“That was the turning point,” Fletcher said.

He has since traveled to Haiti nine times. His last trip was in 2017.

“Going to Haiti is about learning, observing,” Fletcher said. “I just write down what I see, ask the priest what the needs are. ‘What would your parishioners, what would your teachers, like to see?’”

“You tell them, ‘You steer us, and tell us what you’d like supported. If it’s something doable, we will support it.’”

The central goal of St. Mary’s ministry, Fletcher said, has been to support the parish school of more than 200 students. St. Mary has held a number of fundraisers over the years — everything from spaghetti dinners to a painting auction — to raise money to pay teachers’ salaries, provide students with textbooks and to make improvements.

“Haiti Ministry is very hard,” Fletcher said.

“We take one step forward, and then we take three steps back. Not only because of the government, but because of the natural disasters — hurricanes, earthquakes.”

Fletcher said he has seen progress over the years, and ultimately, it’s the people who keep the ministry moving forward.

“The people there are wonderful,” Fletcher said. “It was never about pouring money into Haiti. It’s about a spiritual relationship, too, about working together.”

“I’ve had people say, ‘Why Haiti?’ And I always say, ‘These people are right here, right at our doorstep. They’re our neighbors. Just 90 miles away.’”

Building bridges

An integral part of building those relationships has been found in the help and support of Haitian advisors and expertise.

Since 2018, Father Herald Jean, executive vice rector of the University of Notre Dame of Haiti and director of the Diocesan Health Commission of Hinche, has been serving as a liaison between his diocese’s commission and the Diocese of Richmond’s Healthcare Support Team.

“I give advice about how they might work more effectively in Haiti,” Father Jean said. “If a priest wants to open a clinic in his parish, we will help.”

Father Jean’s office also works to mediate between the parish clinics and the Ministry of Health, he said, and conducts field studies to assess community well-being.

“We go out to try to reach the people,” he said. “Especially the children in the schools. We want to reach each school almost every year.”

Training programs are also key, Father Jean said, as they are responsible for creating a new generation of doctors and nurses who will, in turn, help their communities thrive.

‘Grow strong in that’

Even amid the drought of the pandemic and political upheaval, new life and new relationships spring — such as one of the newest diocesan friendships, that of St. Paul, Richmond, and Our Lady of Sorrows, Poulie, in Hinche.

A small group of St. Paul parishioners — Tracey Wingold and her teenaged son, Blaise, among them — made the first trip to Haiti in August 2018, to meet with Father Withny Pierre, Our Lady of Sorrows pastor.

“We were just getting the lay of the land and meeting people and learning,” Wingold said. “The biggest need — what Père Withny was looking for — was support for the school. It’s a fairly small village, and the children come from miles away.”

The parishes had only just begun to embark on their new journey, she said, when the pandemic hit.

“We were there in March of 2020,” said parishioner Edward Gerardo, a longtime volunteer with Haiti Ministry. “I think we might have been the last diocesan people out of Haiti.”

The parishes are keeping in touch through email, Gerardo said, and, despite the challenges of recent years, he would encourage other parishes to consider becoming involved in Haiti Ministry.

“Money comes and money goes,” Gerardo said. “There’s good times and bad times. I always go back to the mutuality of it, of the relationship between the parishes. Are you willing, are you committed to a relationship? Is there something that is there in this relationship that will help you to grow? If so, advocate that, grow strong in that.”

“It’s deepened my sense of gratitude,” he said. “It enabled me to let go of a lot of things that I thought were important. It changes us. It’s not just bringing change, but about how we are changed.”

“When God entrusts a mission, he always puts souls, hands and shoulders on our paths to help accomplish it,” Bishop Jean said. “We give thanks to God for all the lives touched and transformed on both sides from this relationship. We hope that this relationship continues to help our two communities grow in faith.”

Vaccine lets one act in community's best interest

GUEST COMMENTARY
JONATHAN ERPENBACH, MD

The guest commentary in the Jan. 24 Catholic Virginian provided selected statements without context to make the argument that COVID-19 vaccines are not effective or safe. My premise, as a physician, transcends this specific COVID-19 topic and is very simple: Be an educated consumer of medical information and honestly seek the best data and counsel when making decisions about your health.

We all have a responsibility to think about the validity of information we receive before making value assessments or taking action based upon it. This is particularly relevant for decisions where accurately evaluating the risks of an action or inaction could determine whether you live or die.

Look for reliable and trusted sources, ask questions, think criti-

cally and understand the assumptions or limitations associated with data. Find trusted health professionals who are able to explain the best available information and risks for all of your options. Consider motives for why something might be presented in a certain way.

Please do not listen to sources that present partial data to draw conclusions which the data as a whole does not support. Take the time to research all of the information on vaccines from a respected source such as the CDC, the Virginia Department of Health or the Mayo Clinic.

To be clear, there are risks associated with taking and not taking the COVID-19 vaccine. If your ultimate goal is to avoid serious illness and death, however, the data is unambiguous that the risk of taking the vaccine is significantly smaller than choosing to remain unvaccinated.

The same commentary also stated that coercion in any form,

with the example being encouragement or mandates for COVID-19 vaccines, destroys free will and thus precludes valid medical informed consent. This statement deserves further examination as the implications across our society and faith are significant.

Is this to mean that any medical treatment or evaluation somebody receives which has an associated law, statute, regulation or requirement from any source prevents the possibility of free will or valid informed consent? When we encourage family members and loved ones to do anything medically related, is that any different?

Public health regulations or laws in general, which decrease risk to the population as a whole, form the basis for a safe and orderly functioning society. It would be unethical, and highly unpleasant, to have a lawless community in this regard with no such standards.

Should we abolish laws on drunk driving, weapons in schools or requirements to have children

in car seats? These all diminish risk and harm to the population yet also limit free will in some way.

Our faith is built upon social justice in seeking the common good, the protection of vulnerable populations and love of others — this was the very core of Jesus' message. The COVID-19 vaccine is a means to decrease risk in our society, an opportunity to act in the best interest of our community and to limit unnecessary illness and suffering.

Of course you still have the free will to choose. But that choice should be one based on thoughtful and honest consideration of the risks and a full understanding of the implications for yourself, loved ones and your community.

Dr. Erpenbach is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, a radiologist and a member of the Catholic community in Virginia Beach.

Commentary inconsistent with pope's views

As a Catholic resident of far Southwest Virginia, I write to protest the decision of your journal to publish the views of anti-vaxxer Dr. John Seeds (Catholic Virginian, Jan. 10). The things he says in that commentary are inconsistent with the views of Pope Francis as displayed on your website.

The most significant omission in Seeds' column is his treatment of vaccination as a matter of individual choice. Nowhere in his commentary is there any awareness of the fact that vaccination is a way to protect others. I also can find no support for his bizarre claim that thousands of deaths in the U.S have resulted within 72 hours of injection.

I realize that your journal has a disclaimer, but I don't think that lets your paper or the diocese off the hook. Southwest Virginia is currently a hotbed of persons believing the stuff which the doctor wrote. As a result of those beliefs, nearly all deaths from COVID are among the unvaccinated. The publication of Seeds' column makes me ashamed and angry. It should never have happened.

— **Hugh F. O'Donnell**
St. Paul

Take the Holy See's advice on vaccines

"Thanks to God's grace and to the work of many,

we now have vaccines to protect us from COVID-19." This is what Pope Francis said this past August. He called getting the vaccine "an act of love." The Catholic Virginian published two letters (Jan. 24) questioning the derivation of the vaccine, its effectiveness, whether it inhibits our own body's natural defenses and so forth.

I am not going to question why The Catholic Virginian published these letters because, fortunately, I know most educated Catholics are going to take the advice of both the CDC and our Holy See.

— **David Woodburn**
North Chesterfield

Continue to publish both sides of debate

All the letters to the editor in the January 24 edition of The CV were declaring the commentary by Dr. Seeds as "misinformation." I'd like to thank the editor for printing both Dr. Seeds' thoughts as well as those of his critics.

It is critical that in situations like this that we can read both sides of an issue and judge for ourselves. This critical thinking has been mostly absent in the debates and policies around the COVID issues.

After two years of officials, medical professionals, government departments and news sources changing

their minds, contradicting each other and themselves, and saying things that just don't make any logical sense, I and many other reasonable, thinking people feel that we cannot simply take the words of the officials as gospel.

If masking and vaccinations work, why haven't masking and vaccines worked? This is not a conspiracy theory; it's a question. There are just too many questions that the officials have not answered.

Please continue to print both sides of these debates so we can judge for ourselves.

— **Laura Belchak**
Hampton

Seek God's truth amid information

I applaud The Catholic Virginian for allowing Dr. Seeds' commentary (Jan. 10) regarding the COVID-19 injection. While unpopular, his statements conveyed truths which are not often reported by media or federal agencies.

His detractors have labeled his statements as "misinformation." However, they themselves — along with like-minded individuals, e.g., politicians, medical professionals, celebrities — can also be sources of misinformation if they do not objectively consider both sides of available research and data.

The data to which Dr. Seeds refers can be found in the CDC's VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (<https://vaers.hhs.gov>), which is difficult to navigate. The same data can be viewed more easily on OpenVAERS (<https://openvaers.com>), which has

dropdowns for COVID Vaccine Data, all VAERS reports and FAQ. Long-term risks of COVID injections are not available, as long-term safety testing is not complete.

Providing information on adverse events and deaths associated with the

See Letters, Page 7

CV letters policy

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

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Letters

Continued from Page 6

COVID injections is not a scare tactic; it's an ethical responsibility. Research and medical ethics require that individuals be informed of all risks/benefits and be allowed to voluntarily accept or reject a procedure or treatment.

Fear of illness, fear of death — exacerbated by political and profit-driven solutions and conflicting information — can drive people to abandon reason and critical thinking. We all should prayerfully look at the data, read the research and ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and discernment to see God's truth amid so much information and misinformation.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim 1:7).

— Rosemarie Curley
Midlothian

One size does not fit all

I am responding to letters about Dr. Seeds' commentary (Catholic Virginian, Jan. 10) and the article about vaccine misinformation (Jan. 24): My father-in-law used to say, "No matter how thin the pancake, there are always two sides." Therefore, I felt it necessary to share some resources containing facts.

The Catholic Virginian is a forum we can use to present all sides. After all, what does it mean to be Catholic? "Open and receptive to all." We must be willing to hear the pros and cons before making an informed decision. One of the wonderful things about being Catholic is our diversity and inclusion of all humankind.

Based on the CDC's own website, the VAERS (COVID Vaccine Adverse Event Reports) (<https://openvares.com/covid-data>) dated Jan. 14, 2022, shows: 1,053,828 reports, 22,193 deaths, 27,674 myocarditis/pericarditis, 39,150 permanently disabled among other adverse events. Since Nov. 26, 2021, the number of deaths from the vaccine has increased by 13.6%, myocarditis/pericarditis has increased by 79% and permanent disabilities by 24%.

One of our greatest freedoms is our medical free-

dom. No one should be mandated to put something into their body. It should always be their choice. In addition, doctors should be allowed to be doctors and treat patients individually with early treatments, vaccines or what they decide is best for the patient. One size does not fit all.

— Neal Lineberry
Poquoson

Must have background for evaluating data

Recent letters to the editor were highly critical of Dr. John Seeds' commentary and of The Catholic Virginian for publishing it. Those who want to know where to find the data he cites should search the CDC's Vaccine Adverse Effects Reporting Systems (VAERS).

The COVID pandemic has produced many commentators who through their "research" have read and heard flawed, biased and exploitive information. They fail to realize that they may not have the background and education to evaluate what they are reading. Many seek out materials that reinforce their feelings or position regardless of the data.

I don't believe Dr. Seeds is one of those people, and I thank The Catholic Virginian for allowing him to present his viewpoint.

— Joan Craft
Riner

Understanding requires trust, discussion

Dr. James M. Cooper asks (Catholic Virginian, Jan. 24) where he can find the data Dr. Seeds referenced in his commentary describing CDC data showing thousands of deaths related to the COVID vaccines. That data can be found in the CDC's voluntary reporting system called VAERS, which it uses as an early warning system to detect unexpected vaccine-related adverse events. This data can be readily accessed by anyone who familiarizes themselves with the CDC's WONDER report system.

Since most folks don't have the time to learn the workings of the WONDER system, several websites have generated reports directly from the CDC data that aggregates the adverse report data and produces the CDC's information in a form readily useable by the public. One such facility, OpenVAERS,

produces weekly reports from the CDC data in an easy-to-understand form.

Note that these reports are voluntary and so the number of events reported are likely underestimated, sometimes significantly so depending on the event reported. It takes about 20 minutes to complete a full VAERS report, so transient adverse events are less likely to be reported than serious life-threatening events, but underreporting impacts all adverse events reporting.

Since the CDC data clearly shows thousands of deaths within 72 hours of inoculation and tens of thousands of serious adverse events, the observations made by Dr. Seeds in his article seem both appropriate and revelatory to those who had not encountered this data before.

Perhaps a bit more trust, dispassionate discussion and less accusatory language would bring more light to our understanding of this terrible pandemic in which we find ourselves.

— Bryan Walsh
Richmond

Putting faith in God, not vaccine

In reply to Amanda Keller's letter concerning the COVID-19 vaccines (Catholic Virginian, Jan. 10):

They never were a vaccine because they never had a gene of the disease in them to make you immune, nor were they ever tested on a human being. That is why they had to change the definition of the word vaccine, so "no one" is liable for the harmful side effects and deaths resulting from them.

There were very inexpensive treatments available from day one, but they were banned from use so all the promoters of the vaccines could make billions of dollars. The reason for it being mandated was to see if everyone would be scared enough to obey big government. They were and still are!

Yes, God did give us the best immune system, and that is why I am putting my faith in him at age 90 rather than in a shot that could kill me.

— Dot Hewitt
Dendron

Pope missed opportunity to teach about parenthood

I read with interest Pope Francis' recent comments on parenthood and his chiding of people who choose to be childless. While I agree with him in principle, he missed an opportunity to teach about parenthood.

Pope Francis' words come across as parenthood is somewhat obligatory. But parenthood is so much more than that! Parenthood is the most fulfilling vocation two people can have. The joy of having children is unsurpassable by any other human endeavor.

I cannot imagine life without my daughters. I now understand that their lives are the complete fulfillment of the promises my wife and I made on our wedding day. I understand now what I felt holding my daughters, moments after they were born, an energy flowing through me, that I recognize as my receipt of the transcendent grace of fatherhood directly from God.

Because I was open to having children in my life, I was able to recognize the receipt of this unique grace that has sustained me and enables me to love my daughters for my entire life. Having children has also allowed me to experience the deepest form of human existence — the giving and receiving of unconditional love — which is the same type of love God has for all people. It is through loving unconditionally that we become truly alive in the fullest sense.

I've often read news stories about the financial cost of raising children. Yes, it is substantial. But from my experience, I have only one reaction to that. What a bargain, what an absolute bargain!

— Martin G. Mlynczak
Yorktown

Mural story evoked memories

Your article on the murals in St. Elizabeth Church (Catholic Virginian, Jan. 10) was very interesting. My wife, Frances, and I were married in this church Aug. 4, 1964.

My wife grew up in this area, so this was our choice. When we go back to this area, we still attend Mass there. Our wedding

pictures have most of the murals in them. We look forward to coming back after they have finished.

— Tom Watters
South Hill

Grateful Vatican II stimulated renaissance

As we discuss synodality and Catholic identity, I am writing to share some beautiful fruits of Vatican II.

The Eastern Catholic Churches are returning to their heritages, as they were instructed in Vatican II. Sunday, Jan. 23, it was glorious to be in a Byzantine parish, singing Divine Liturgy in English and Slavonic, according to traditional Carpathian chant.

Easterners are recovering and spreading the arts of chant and iconography. They are reading the Church fathers and mothers important both universally and for particular cultures. Seeing the Eastern Churches recover their patrimony — and being part of it — is to experience an energetic renaissance of worship, love, joy and culture.

We Roman Catholics are now slowly returning to our heritage. I am pleasantly surprised that in some Masses, we chant beautifully in Latin. I see more renovations of naves and sanctuaries with modest beauty so fitting for the Divine Mystery.

While the Byzantine charism of worship is to continuously sing with the myriads of angels, the Latin charism is silence ... and our Latin contemplative silence is returning to Sunday Mass. We are reading the Church fathers and mothers with the excitement of finding lost treasure. I am noticing more rosaries and chapel veils, and more people are assuming our Latin custom of kneeling for holy Communion.

Our Catholic religious cultures were almost lost to the tyranny of modern mundane culture; I am grateful to Vatican II for its role in stimulating the renaissance I see, feel and experience.

— Anthony Rago Jr.
Newport News

Why one should engage in fraternal correction



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Q. Is it not our duty to point out when a friend is committing a sin? Otherwise, if we don't try to save the soul of a sinner, then we, too, can be found guilty. But even beyond that, I don't want to see someone risk not being with God throughout eternity because of my failure to point out his error.

My friends and I were discussing this over dinner the other night, and their view was that it is none of our business, and if a person claims to be a Christian, they should already know that what they're doing is wrong. (Virginia Beach)

A. I am on your side of this argument, and I would take issue with your dinner friends. I would quote to them Matthew's Gospel, which in the New American Bible reads: "If your brother sins (against you), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother" (18:15).

Though the phrase "against you" might be taken to limit the sin in question to a personal offense, it is important to note that the common interpretation of Catholic theologians extends the meaning to whatever serious offense comes to a

person's notice — and also that the phrase "against you" does not appear in some of the earlier scriptural codices.

Note also that St. Paul comments on the duty of fraternal correction in Galatians, where he says that "if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that one in a gentle spirit" (6:1).

I remember, though, reading what St. Anthony Mary Claret said were the circumstances that warranted fraternal correction; not only, he said, must it have been a grave offense, but there must be a reasonable hope that the person will accept the correction.

Q. In a recent homily, our priest brought up various forms of evil that exist in the world. Among them, he mentioned witchcraft.

My father was troubled by this and told the rest of our family after Mass that "real witchcraft," like that practiced by the Wiccans, is not inherently evil since they don't believe in Satan. So I'm wondering: What is the true nature of witchcraft, and are Wiccans and similar groups just misunderstood and not harmful? (Virginia)

A. Among the definitions of witchcraft offered by Merriam-Webster is the following: "rituals and

practices that incorporate belief in magic and that are associated especially with neo-pagan traditions and religions (such as Wicca)."

Commonly, witchcraft involves a pact imploring evil spirits for their assistance. Several passages in the Scriptures warn against such practices. In the Old Testament, the Book of Deuteronomy says: "Let there not be found among you anyone who ... practices divination, or is a soothsayer ... or who casts spells, consults ghosts and spirits, or seeks oracles from the dead" (18:10-11).

And in the New Testament, the Book of Revelation warns: "But as for ... sorcerers ... and deceivers of every sort, their lot is in the burning pool of fire and sulfur" (21:8).

The Church speaks to this in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to 'unveil' the future. ... All practices of magic or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others ... are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion" (Nos. 2116-2117).

It is true, as you say, that Wiccans are continually denying any connection with Satan or devil worship, but it still violates Catholic belief to invoke the aid of various deities and to practice ceremonial magic.

In 2009, while visiting Angola,

Pope Benedict XVI spoke critically of the practice of witchcraft. Many Africans, the pope said, "are living in fear of spirits, of malign and threatening powers. In their bewilderment, they end up even condemning street children and the elderly as alleged sorcerers."

Q. We Catholics honor many female saints for their outstanding lives of service and virginity. Why do we never mention St. Joseph's virginity or the virginity of some of our wonderful male saints? (City and state withheld)

A. The main reason is that women religious generally refer to their vow of chastity as virginity, while male religious call it celibacy.

An exception does occur in the liturgical prayers marking the Dec. 27 feast of St. John, apostle and evangelist. There, the antiphons for the feast refer to John as a "virgin." One of them reads: "To the virgin John, Christ, dying on the cross, entrusted his virgin mother."

I thought it interesting that your question singled out St. Joseph for special mention as a virgin. As I've mentioned in an earlier column, there are some biblical commentators who believe that Joseph may have been a widower who married the Virgin Mary later in life, after already having a family with his first wife.

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

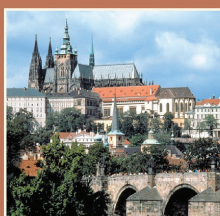
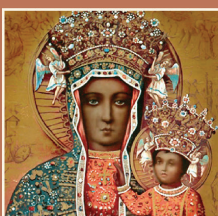


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How you'll benefit from morning, evening prayer



IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

For much of my life, I had equated routine with boredom. In my mind, routine was a series of thoughtless repetitive acts that lacked imagination and creativity. However, disruptions to life, such as the pandemic and natural disasters, have given me a different perspective.

In Virginia, a few inches of snow can wreak havoc regarding regular schedules amid event cancellations and school and workplace closings. Although children delight in a day away from school, many parents must weigh the importance of childcare against a day without pay.

Mindful that treacherous roads and icy parking lots can lead to untold suffering for those who fall victim to accidents, pastors are required to balance safety concerns with the spiritual needs of parishioners, even canceling worship services.

In contrast to life's many disruptions, routine acts as an anchor, grounding us in the familiar and dependable. It liberates us from the chaos of constant uncertainty, which requires ongoing deliberation about alternate possibilities.

The more I thought about it, the more I saw the merits of routine. Being able to rely on schedules and set timetables frees us to

concentrate on how we do things rather than wondering whether or not we should do them.

Considering the many ways that life can be disrupted, routine offers constancy and provides certitude amid life events that are beyond our control. However, as people of faith, the one constant in our life is God, which we can appreciate only when we place our trust in divine providence.

We may not always feel the presence of God when our life has been turned upside down, but it's during those times that we need to rely on the strength of God's grace more than ever. Therefore, prayer must become part of our regular routine.

Gandhi called prayer "the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening," which gives credence to the importance of beginning and concluding each day with prayer. Establishing a regular prayer routine is important because it frees us from having to wrestle with the temptation to skip it when we're tired or when God seems distant.

When offered thoughtfully, beginning the day with prayer provides a framework for the rest of our day. Then, when life's unexpected disruptions come our way, we will be able to stand firm because our faith life will have a strong foundation.

At day's end, when we examine our conscience and recount our triumphs and failures, evening prayer washes away the dust from the day, which allows a clear-eyed



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vision to take hold while filling our hearts with hope. Ending the day with God carries us from day to day as we grow in the wisdom and knowledge of God and of ourselves.

One way that my husband and I have found helpful in anchoring our day is by praying the Liturgy of the Hours in the morning and in the evening. Though long associated with priests, monks and nuns, the privilege was extended to the laity following the Second Vatican Council in the conciliar document on the sacred liturgy, "Sacrosanctum Concilium."

While it's true that the Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life, the Liturgy of the Hours serves as a liturgical path that prepares us to ascend the summit. And while not everyone can attend daily Mass, we can join the universal Church as it opens and closes each day with prayer.

In praying the psalms, which comprise much of the Liturgy of the Hours, we are reminded that

evil has coexisted with good since the beginning of time. It is the result of original sin, which was the catastrophic disruption of the harmony that God had desired for the world.

But it's not the end of the story. As Christians, we have a

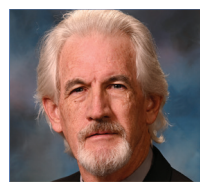
role to play in helping to turn the world toward God, and prayer is the most powerful tool by which we can do this.

This doesn't mean that our prayer will end life's struggles and suffering, but it will bless our efforts as we move through them. Then, secure in the peace that only God can give, we can end our day knowing that in the morning, our prayer will open the door to a new day, as we await all that it will bring.

In cultivating a prayer routine that includes beginning and ending our day with prayer, we are carried from day to day, knowing that we are secure in God's love. Who could ask for anything more? While some things in life are beyond our control, turning to God is not one of them.

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

Open your minds, hearts and listen to the Spirit



BELIEVE AS
YOU PRAY
DEACON CHRISTOPHER COLVILLE

As faithful followers of Jesus Christ we believe that Christ rose from the dead and that there is life after death in our resurrection. We proclaim this belief in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds.

The first heresy in the Church, dating to the time of the Twelve Apostles, was the heresy Gnostic Docetism.

It professed that Christ was not fully human (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #465). As a result, he could not truly suffer and die, and since there was no death, there was no resurrection.

Paul vigorously addresses this in today's reading from First Corinthians. If there is no resurrection, then we are pitiful people, we believe in vain, and even if we have faith in Christ, when we die, we vanish.

As it is, we do believe that Jesus was fully human and fully divine. We believe he died and rose from the dead. We are blessed be-

cause of that belief. Jesus tells Thomas in his second appearance in the upper room: "You believe because you have seen, blessed are those have not seen and yet have believed" (Jn 21:29).

Our beliefs influence our values, which affect our demeanor, our actions and our voices. These values, earthly or heavenly, determine in whom or what we place our trust, and direct our actions. Our other Scripture texts speak to us about the consequences of our values and in whom or what we place our trust.

Jesus warns us about the outcome of the values of this world.

If we are filled with pride about what people say of us, filled and satisfied with things of this world, there isn't room for things of heaven. If we fill our lives with worldly possessions with no room for God, we will find ourselves empty of God's presence in the life to come.

In Jeremiah, we hear those who put their trust in things of this world are cursed and will find their lives barren. Psalm 1 says those who trust the way of the world will vanish.

However, Psalm 1 also says if we rely on heavenly virtues, our works never fade, they will prosper, and if we are just, God watches

over us. Jeremiah tells us if we trust in the Lord and open our lives to the Lord's presence, we will want for nothing, we will feel no stress, even in bad times.

Jesus also tells us that if we seek the things of heaven, we will "rejoice and leap for joy" and our "reward will be great in heaven."

St. Pope St. Paul VI said, "If you want peace, work for justice." If we accept the values of the world, the way things are, how can we hunger or work for the peace and expect the peace which God offers us in the Kingdom?

Will we work for justice if we are satisfied with the injustices and inequities of the world? Being a just person means we work for and practice justice. Sometimes it means we listen to others to understand these injustices and inequities.

In this year of synodality, we are called in a special way to be people of the resurrection. We are called to listen to the Spirit that speaks through the hearts of us all. Can we listen with open minds and hearts, be people who trust the Spirit to direct us in the way of God, to seek things of heaven?

Can we be people of the resurrection, people who work toward the Kingdom here on earth?

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

Sixth Sunday Ordinary Time
Jer 17:5-8; 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20;
Lk 6:17, 20-26

Vatican hopeful financial mistakes are remedied

Projecting a 2022 budget deficit of \$37.1 million

CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Presenting a budget projection that foresees a deficit of \$37.1 million in 2022, the prefect of the Vatican Secretariat for the Economy said he believes the Vatican is on the path to honesty and transparency in financial matters.

“We are well aware that we have made major mistakes in financial management, which have undermined the credibility of the Holy See. We seek to learn from them, and we believe we have remedied them so that they do not happen again,” the prefect, Jesuit Father Juan Antonio Guerrero Alves, told Vatican News.

The secretariat Jan. 28 released the Vatican’s 2022 “Mission Budget,” reflecting a new approach to reporting the income and expenses of the offices of the Roman Curia and related institutions.

The “Mission Budget” includes not just the Vatican Secretariat of State, apostolic nunciatures around the globe and the dicasteries, councils and commissions of the Roman Curia, Father Guerrero said. It also includes entities that “are either the property of the Holy See or depend on and are under the financial responsibility of the Holy See,” including the Bambino Gesù pediatric hospital in Rome, the four major basilicas of Rome and the shrines of Loreto, Pompei and Padua. The Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza, the hospi-

tal in San Giovanni Rotondo founded by St. Padre Pio, will be included in next year’s budget, he said.

The combined budget of the 60 entities that were part of the previous Holy See budget would have been close to 300 million euros (\$334 million) for 2022, but with the addition of the 30 new entities into the “mission budget,” the combined budget for 2022 is close to 800 million euros, he said.

The new combination also includes foundations and other entities that generate income for the activity of the Holy See and the Church around the world, so the projected deficit is about 12 million euros less than it would have been,

according to the report.

The ongoing pandemic is having a negative impact on Vatican finances and that is expected to continue, the budget shows.

While cost containment is still the goal, Father Guerrero told Vatican News, “this year, trying to be optimistic, we have budgeted 13 million euros more ordinary income than last year, (but) we will see how the pandemic behaves.”

The Jesuit also told Vatican News that he is preparing a detailed report on the global Peter’s Pence collection and will send it to bishops’ conferences around the world.

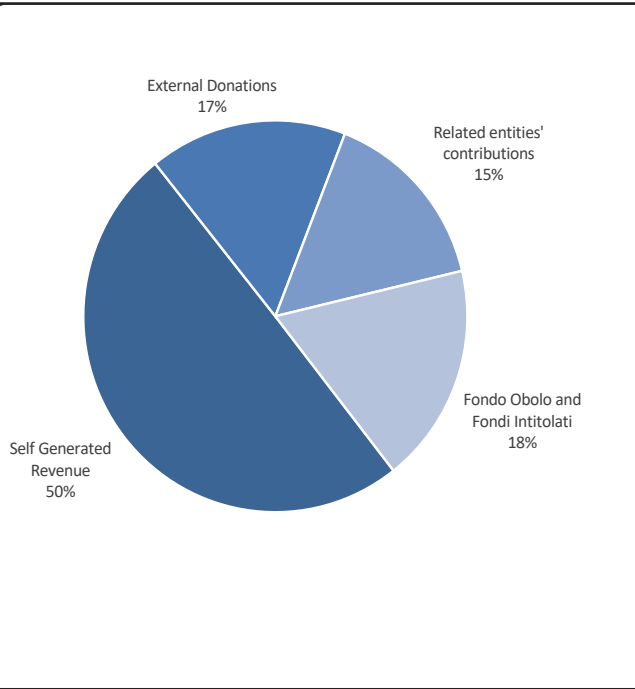
While the figures will not be finalized until late February, he

said, “roughly speaking, I can say that in 2021, there has again been a decrease compared to the previous year, which I would venture to quantify at no less than 15%.”

“If in 2020 the total collection of the Peter’s Pence was 44 million euros, in 2021 I do not think it will amount to more than 37 million,” he said. “The decrease in 2021 is in addition to the 23% decrease between 2015 and 2019 and the 18% decrease in 2020, the first year of the pandemic.”

Peter’s Pence is a papal fund used for charity, but also to support the running of the Roman Curia and Vatican embassies around the

See Budget, Page 13



AFTER TWO YEARS HEAVILY IMPACTED BY THE PANDEMIC, ASSUMPTION FOR 2022 IS A **PROGRESSIVE RECOVERY** OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES BUT **NOT YET FOR DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS.**

2022 approved Budget includes TOTAL INCOME OF €260,3M

Income - M€	2022 Budget	2021 Budget	vs B2021
Self Generated Revenues	129,6	124,1	5,5
Real Estate Management	81,8	75,0	6,8
Financial income	19,8	22,5	(2,7)
Commercial	18,4	17,1	1,3
Services	9,6	9,5	0,1
External Donations	43,4	52,0	(8,6)
Dedicated Donation	23,4	31,6	(8,2)
Dioceses Donation	20,0	20,4	(0,4)
Services	40,0	37,0	3,0
Governorate SCV	15,0	15,0	-
IOR	25,0	22,0	3,0
Fondo Obolo and Fondi Intitolati	47,3	47,3	-
TOTAL	260,3	260,4	(0,1)

WHAT WE’VE HEARD

‘Dashing’ sacramental preparation: The threat of nasty weather did not prevent Immaculate Conception Parish, Hampton, from holding its Parent-Child Workshop for Reconciliation/First Eucharist scheduled on Saturday, Jan. 22. What became a virtual event was aided by a high school youth group member — identified only as “ICC-Dash” — who, over the two previous days, delivered the workshop packets to the 11 families in Hampton, Newport News and Yorktown who were registered for the Zoom event.

Granted: Three entities in the Diocese of Richmond have received \$1,000 for ecological and “Laudato Si” projects as part of the Victory Noll Sisters’ “small grants” program for which they put up half of the \$97,000 that was awarded nationwide. Catholic Climate Covenant announced the recipients on Jan. 20. The Environmental Club at Catholic High School, Virginia Beach, will use its grant to “rewild” an area of school property to restore more sustainable biodiversity. St. Joseph School, Petersburg, is creating a restoration of native plants, trees and flowers that will allow for a healthy population of bumble bees and other native insects to be pollinators for natural habitats. The Roanoke Area Interfaith Stewards of the Earth (RAISE) will promote a local art print with a poster and social media campaign to raise awareness of Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si’.”

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.

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Deacon Williams

Continued from Page 1

he said, adding, “He always came across as a faith-filled, Christian man. Whatever he took on, he was convicted to it. He was always committed to it.”

Deacon Nelson, who served in prison ministry with Deacon Williams, said his friend, although tall, was not intimidating.

“He had a voice that was unmistakable. He just had a gift to connect. He was very welcoming,” he said.

Deacon Nelson noted that Deacon Williams’ participation on numerous boards and committees, e.g., Hope in the Cities, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, Racial Reconciliation and All Saints Catholic School, to name a few, were one of the ways he evangelized.

“Charles was led by the Holy Spirit to do God’s will by participating in various organizations,” he said.

A counselor by profession, Deacon Nelson said he is still “numb” from the loss of his friend.

“I’m used to dealing with people who have suffered a loss,” he said. “People are grieving. We’re all grieving the loss of him.”

Healing wounds

Already steeped in ministries at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart and beyond, Deacon Williams’ outreach expanded when Bishop Barry C. Knestout appointed him to head the diocesan Office for Black Catholics on Dec. 3, 2018.

In a Dec. 6, 2018, interview with The Catholic Virginian, Deacon Williams recalled that the bishop had asked to meet with Deacon Nelson and him to discuss the Office for Black Catholics after the office’s previous director, Pam Harris, had left to take a job in another diocese, and Comboni Missionary Sister Inma Cuesta-Ventura, director of the diocese’s Office of Hispanic Ministry, was given the responsibility of overseeing the Office for Black Catholics.

Deacon Williams said he was hoping the bishop would hear what he had to say about the office — that it remain as it had been since it was established in 1980 — separate and with its own director

and not part of another office.

“I understood that was the trend in other dioceses around the country, that they rolled all the ethnic offices (into one),” the deacon said. “But my spirit told me that was not the right thing to do for the Office for Black Catholics in the Diocese of Richmond.”

Deacon Williams said that he did not seek the directorship, nor did he ask for it.

“In my mind, it’s got to be from God. God spoke through the bishop; I did not see this coming. All I know is I felt heard,” he said regarding the meeting with Bishop Knestout and the subsequent invitation to head the office.

Deacon Nelson recalled that he and Deacon Williams were heard.

“I truly believe the Holy Spirit was present in that meeting,” he said. “Charles expressed how he felt and continued to advocate for the Office for Black Catholics. The Holy Spirit was at work, and he was called to take that position (as head of the office).”

Bishop Knestout expressed gratitude for Deacon Williams’ “service, commitment and work.”

“Deacon Charles was kind, gentle and someone who was very giving with his time. He did express in a very good and full way so many of the fruits of the Spirit, through his service as a permanent deacon, but also in his work as director for the Office for Black Catholics,” the bishop told The Catholic Virginian Feb. 1.

He noted the deacon had immersed himself in multiple ministries in the diocese.

“At times as a chaplain, or in his role advocating for prison ministry and racial healing, all of which allowed him to encounter many individuals — especially those who were hurting — to open their hearts to the Spirit and love of Christ,” Bishop Knestout said. “His tremendous love and service to our local Church reflects the life of discipleship within our Church.”

In a letter to social ministry leaders in the diocese, Rachael Lastrup, director of the Office of Social Ministries and Respect Life, noted the Slave Trail Walks that Deacon Williams led.

“I journeyed with Deacon Charles on three Slave Trail Walks,



Deacon Charles Williams Jr., left, led a “Prayer Service for Racial Healing” on Thursday, June 11, 2020, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. He was joined by Bishop Barry C. Knestout, who offered a pastoral reflection, and Deacons Frank Nelson of Holy Rosary, Richmond, and Mike Brown of Christ the King, Norfolk. (Photo/Deborah Cox)

and each time I felt not only the transformative power of learning that history, but I felt how spiritual each of those walks were for him personally. They were a way for him to heal wounds and to open our eyes and our hearts to a past we cannot ignore.”

She continued, “Deacon Charles was passionate about the fight for racial justice, truth-telling and reconciliation, but he was also a man deeply rooted in his faith. He loved the Bible, prayer and being on the altar more than anything.”

Respected by deacons

According to Deacon John Kren, one of the communities upon which Deacon Williams had an impact was the permanent deacons.

“He was very well respected in the deacon community and the parish communities. His stature matched how he was involved. He was very compassionate,” said Deacon Kren, director of the diocese’s Office for the Permanent Diaconate. “Charles mentored the guys coming up.”

He recalled that Deacon Williams spoke at the deacons’ convocation in 2018 on “Spirituality and Race Relations.”

“He addressed a hard topic that was very well received,” Deacon Kren said. “He knew Black history in our diocese.”

Gerry Mancuso, registrar and coordinator for the permanent diaconate, described Deacon Williams as a “bigger than life guy — a big man with a big smile who was very invested in his ministry.”

She noted he was well respected by his brother deacons.

“Deacon Charles was a real gentle soul with a deep spirituality. He was a quiet guy, but when he spoke, people listened,” she said, adding, “This is a real loss for the diocese.”

Helping others to see

Although he considered St. Paul his parish, Deacon Williams served at the Cathedral of the Sacred from the time of his ordination — first with Msgr. Patrick Golden, who was rector until 2019,

and then with Father Anthony Marques.

Msgr. Golden noted that, without knowing the deacon was dying, he had mentioned him by name in a recent homily.

“The Gospel was Jesus quoting Isaiah about opening the eyes so that the blind may see. I said Deacon Charles did so for me, helping me to see what it was like to be a Black man growing up in a once segregated city of Richmond,” the priest said. “He really opened my eyes to it, and I remember his great anguish after witnessing what took place in Charlottesville, opening wounds of the past. He was a wonderful man, and I will certainly miss him.”

Father Marques called him a “gentle giant.”

“He was always generous with his time and always willing to assist us in many ways,” the priest said.

Describing what will be Deacon Williams’ legacy and why he could reach so many people was biblical, according to Deacon Nelson.

“‘We walk by faith, not by sight’ (2 Cor 5:7).” He exemplified that. Be in prayer and trust in the Lord no matter what challenges come your way,” he said.

More about Deacon Williams

Deacon Williams was predeceased by his parents, Charles Sr. and Maggie, and his brother, Tony. His brother, David, survives him. In 1977, Deacon Williams married Gloria Iverson, and of that union was born a son, Charles III (Chuck), whose family includes Lauren and Charles IV (Moose).

Deacon Williams is also survived by his wife, Marie, and her children, Geneva and Olivia (Anna) Manion.

He was educated at Van De Vyver and Benedictine Catholic Schools, Howard University and St. Leo University. He was a Cursillista since 2002.

Deacon Williams worked for Dominion Power in the Data Center for nearly 30 years. Upon retirement, he lived and worked at Richmond Hill, then Blessed Sacrament-Huguenot Catholic School, and Boaz & Ruth, followed by a fulfilling ministry for Bileys Funeral Homes.

As part of his ministry in the Diocese of Richmond’s Office for Black Catholics, Deacon Charles Williams Jr. regularly led participants on the Slave Trail Walk as he did here on Saturday, Aug. 31, 2019. (Photo/Brian T. Olszewski)



50 years later, Bloody Sunday questions unanswered

Archbishop: 'Shadow of secrecy hangs over troubled past'

MICHAEL KELLY
Catholic News Service

DUBLIN — The president of the Irish bishops' conference used the 50th anniversary of the unlawful killing of 14 unarmed Catholics by the British army in Northern Ireland to criticize the fact that no one has ever been prosecuted.

"Very painfully, the Bloody Sunday families were denied for too long the truth about what happened to their loved ones. And sadly they are not alone. A legacy of heartbreak, and with it, a dark shadow of secrecy, still hangs over much of our troubled past," said Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, Northern Ireland, president of the bishops' conference.

Speaking at Mass in St. Eugene's Cathedral in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, the archbishop said: "Many families from right across our communities still endure the anguish of not knowing why, or how their loved ones were killed or injured or punished or targeted or disappeared or defamed or locked up, or interned or otherwise banished. Their unanswered questions linger on, as a constant nagging reminder to the next generation of unfinished business, of a grief that is unsatisfied with silence, a pain that does not go away but lies beneath, an unhealed wound that is passed on to the next generation. It is difficult for them to move on."

On Bloody Sunday — Jan. 30, 1972 — the Parachute Regiment, an elite branch of the British army, shot dead 13 people; another died later from his injuries. Those killed were participating in a civil rights protest calling for fairness for Catholics in the allocation of public housing, employment and education.

The army immediately claimed that the people killed were terrorists, a claim always disputed by clergy members who participated in the

"We have begun to explore and build a shared vision for our future on this island. But if we are to unite hearts and minds and nourish a genuine hope for lasting peace and reconciliation in Ireland, then we have to work together on healing the legacy of our shared past."

— Archbishop Eamon Martin

demonstration and journalists who witnessed the event.

It took until 2010 for then-British Prime Minister David Cameron to admit that the killings were "unjustified and unjustifiable." However, attempts to prosecute former soldiers responsible have so far proven fruitless, and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced plans not to allow such prosecutions.

The families are currently challenging the British government's resistance to prosecuting the soldiers in the courts.

The archbishop described as "hurtful" a proposal "to expect them (families) to simply 'draw a line' under the past" — a phrase that has been used by Johnson.

"The horror inflicted on Derry on that day has thankfully been challenged and exposed," Archbishop Martin said. "We are grateful for the

dignity, determination and example of the families, friends and neighbors of those whose lives were so cruelly taken ... just a short walk from this cathedral.

"The shocked silence which fell on Derry when the shooting stopped around 4:40 p.m. that afternoon was compounded by the deliberate silence of governments and politicians who willfully ignored the truth.

"Immediately, the priests who had been present, tending to the wounded and dying, and many other eyewitnesses, called it as it was: willful murder; shooting indiscriminately; no provocation," he said.

Referring to his own experience growing up in Londonderry, Archbishop Martin told the congregation: "Even though I was only 10 years old at the time, I had a sense of the awful calumny that followed Bloody Sunday. ... The pain of loss suffered by the Bloody Sunday families continued to be sharpened for many more years by blind eyes, deaf ears and the deliberate concealment of the truth."

On the wider issue of dealing with the legacy 1968-1998 civil conflict in Northern Ireland, which saw around 3,500 people killed and many more injured, the archbishop said: "Building meaningful reconciliation is complicated and delicate. As a society, we have to find ways to open ourselves to the hidden truths about our past, so that proper healing can happen.

"We have begun to explore and build a shared vision for our future on this island. But if we are to unite hearts and minds and nourish a genuine hope for lasting peace and reconciliation in Ireland, then we have to work together on healing the legacy of our shared past, because peace can only flourish in the light of knowledge, truth and justice," he said.

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Bishop blesses samples of seeds, soil

GANADO, Texas (CNS) — On a windy, cold January morning, Bishop Brendan J. Cahill of Victoria blessed samples of seed and soil for the rural Texas diocese.

The blessing took place during a special Mass on the residential property of Bart and Karen Hajovsky, owners of BH Genetics, a homegrown seed corn and grain sorghum business that now distributes from coast to coast.

“Oh, it’s a privilege to have him (Bishop Cahill) come and do this for the rural area, because everybody seems to forget about the rural area,” Mrs. Hajovsky said. “It’s very special.”

During his homily, the bishop referred to the first reading at the Jan. 15 Mass from the First Book of Samuel, which recounts the anointing of Saul, who was simply on a mission to track down his father’s lost donkeys.

“Y’all know what it’s like to track down a lost animal,” he said. “And then, what we hear in the story, is that God was working through all that. That he (Saul) was chosen and anointed to be the king of Israel. On one level, it reminds us that God works in mysterious ways.”

What is shown, Bishop Cahill said, is that “God will sustain us each day and guide our lives. What a beautiful thought as we bless seed, because it is a hopeful sign. The seed is planted and the soil prepared. Ultimately, we know that God is in control and provides the bounty.”

Bishop Cahill, president of the national Catholic Rural Life board of directors, also said that, because nature teaches us about God in

many ways, it is “fitting and appropriate” to celebrate the rural life Masses.

The Diocese of Victoria, which includes a local Catholic Rural Life chapter, also celebrates a Harvest Mass in the fall and the feast of St. Isidore, patron of farmers.

Father Stephen Vacek, director of the local chapter, Father Greg Korenek, pastor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Ganado, and Father Michael Rother, pastor of St. Philip the Apostle Parish in El Campo, Texas, concelebrated the Mass and blessing. Deacons Kevin Petrash and Anthony Hensley of the Ganado parish also served at the Mass.

Sherry Kainer, a member of Catholic Rural Life from the Victoria Diocese, helps coordinate the Masses and celebrations and always gives those who attend a rundown of all the agricultural vocations that exist in the diocese.

Covering 9,600 square miles, the diocese in southern Texas is bounded on one side by coastline along the Gulf of Mexico. The specific geographic area where it is located is sometimes called the Golden Crescent or the Crescent Valley.

According to Kainer, within the diocese’s borders are row crops, hay fields, pecans, olives, producers of wine and cheese, cattle ranchers, shrimpers, fish farms and more.

“How blessed we can be to take care and provide for the world in which we live. And from us, and from our farms, there are people being fed literally everywhere,” Bishop Cahill said.

Xavier University received bomb threats

WASHINGTON (CNS) — On Feb. 1, Xavier University of Louisiana was among a group of several historically Black colleges and universities in the United States that received bomb threats.

The threats to the university and at least 12 other historically Black colleges and universities came a day after at least six other similar schools received these same threats.

A tweet issued by the university Feb. 1 said: “Xavier University of Louisiana received a bomb threat early this morning and is cooperating with investigating law enforcement. The campus has been cleared and classes will continue as scheduled starting at noon.”

A statement from Patrice Bell, the university’s vice president and chief of staff, said that when the school received the threat “an immediate evacuation of the area and a shelter in place for our residential students were issued” until the university received clearance to from campus, local, state and federal agencies.

She also noted the university would “continue to increase surveillance and mitigation efforts to safeguard its community.”

Xavier University of Louisiana, the nation’s only historically Black Catholic university, held

its classes virtually that morning.

This was the second bomb threat the university received in less than a month. On Jan. 4, the university also was targeted along with other historically Black colleges and universities.

The recent wave of threats falling just before or at the start of Black History Month, observed every February, was not lost on school leaders and others.

A Feb. 2 statement by the general council of the Adrian Dominican Sisters said they were “horrified by the series of bomb threats that have closed down historically Black colleges and universities during the past month” including those that occurred on “the first day of Black History Month.”

“Although no bombs have been found, these terrifying and disruptive threats of violence against innocent students, faculty and staff are an assault against the foundational freedoms of our democracy — and a threat to us all,” the sisters added.

They said that as women of faith, they “stand in solidarity with our Black brothers and sisters at these iconic educational institutions and call for a thorough investigation and prosecution of these despicable hate crimes.”

complaining about things that do not go like clockwork, to rigidity and inflexibility, to the illusion of our own superiority.”

Instead, when one embraces Christ, he or she will also “embrace others with trust and humility.”

“Then conflicts will not escalate, disagreements will not divide, and the temptation to domineer and to offend the dignity of others will be overcome,” he said.

Nuncio

Continued from Page 1

Civilians in some situations may be mistaken for combatants and attacked, Guterres said. At other times, he added, combatants decide to use explosive weapons in crowded areas, causing long-lasting suffering for ordinary people who must deal with life-long disabilities and severe psychological trauma.

Such effects, Archbishop Caccia said in his address, call into question “whether the use of explosives is licit in such settings at all.”

Further, he continued, urban warfare can harm civilian infrastructure such as hospitals, sanitation systems and place of worship while also ravaging the local environment.

“This damage leads to outbreaks of preventable disease, hinders the provision of humanitarian assistance, robs surviving civilians of their dignity and hope, and increases the number of people forced to leave home in search of a more secure future,” he said.

Those who remain, he added, often face remnants of explosives that contaminate urban settings, making it more difficult for people to return and for reconstruction to begin.

Archbishop Caccia said the Holy See welcomes and supports U.N. efforts to develop a political declaration that commits states to avoiding the use of explosive weapons with widespread effects in populated areas.

Noting that states have the primary responsibility to protect civilians from the effects of explosives, the archbishop quoted the pope in saying individuals also are bound to observe the limitations found in international humanitarian law that protect defenseless civilians and civil structures.

“It is our sincere hope that today’s open debate advances measures to protect civilians in armed conflict and end the culture of impunity that has sown death and suffering among urban populations,” Archbishop Caccia said in concluding his comments.

“For their sake, we pray the words expressed here today are translated into concrete action.”

Budget

Continued from Page 10

world. The collection for the fund occurs each year around June 29, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul.

Father Guerrero also confirmed to Vatican News that a buyer has been found for the property on Sloane Avenue in London’s posh Chelsea district that is at the heart of a Vatican trial for 10 people, including Cardinal Angelo Becciu, accused of financial malfeasance.

The Financial Times had reported in November that the Vatican was in the final stages of a deal to sell the property for the equivalent of more than \$270 million, which would mean it would lose as much as \$135 million on the property.

Father Guerrero did not provide exact figures but acknowledged there was a loss.

“The contract of sale has been signed, we have received 10% of the deposit and it (the sale) will be concluded in June,” he said. “The loss from the alleged swindle, which has been much talked about and is now being judged by the Vatican courts, was already taken into account in the balance sheet. The building has been sold above the valuation we had in the balance sheet and the appraisal made by the specialized institutions.”

Follow Wooden on Twitter: @Cindy_Wooden

Religious

Continued from Page 3

or plunging into new projects.”

“If consecrated men and women lack words that bless God and other people, if they lack joy, if their enthusiasm fails, if their fraternal life is only a chore, it is not the fault of someone or something else,” the pope said. “It is because our arms no longer embrace Jesus. When that happens, our hearts fall prey to bitterness, to

OPPORTUNITIES

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond is seeking an associate director for the Office of Christian Formation to support Hispanic parish leaders. The associate director contributes to the development and implementation of Hispanic leader formation and training in all deaneries. The associate director promotes and contributes to the LEARN portal supporting Pathways: Delivered catechist formation in Spanish and adult faith formation and RCIA formation programs. The associate director contributes to the development and implementation of Christian formation training and formation programs, ensuring that Hispanic leaders have access to quality formation, resources and diocesan support.

Master's degree or willingness to work toward a master's degree in theology or pastoral ministry is desired, and three or more years related parish experience preferable. Knowledge of the Hispanic community, cultures and customs and fluency in Spanish and English is required (verbal and in written format). Competence in workshop/event planning and implementation to include strong presentation and facilitation skills. Teamwork and collaboration skills are required. An active, practicing Catholic in good standing is required. This is a full-time position, working Monday through Friday. Travel is required and occasional evening and weekend hours are expected.

Interested candidates should send a cover letter, résumé and completed diocesan application to Kelly Shumate, HR coordinator, at jobs@richmonddiocese.org.

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond is seeking an associate director, Office of Social Ministries and Respect Life. The associate director provides a wide range of coordination support relating to social ministries, Respect Life, Pro-Life initiatives and prison ministry.

The associate director works in unison with the office director to set and effectively communicate a comprehensive vision for social ministries and Respect Life across the diocese. Provides training for parish staffs and ministry leaders and fosters collaboration through the vicariates and deaneries.

Master's degree in theology, pastoral ministry or a related field is preferred. Minimum of three years of professional experience in ministry is required, preferably in an area of Catholic Social Teaching in a parish setting. Knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching tenets and ability to develop and implement programs to support various communities is required. Must demonstrate sensitivity to the service population's cultural and socioeconomic characteristics, deci-

sion-making, problem-solving skills, the ability to work in a fast-paced, changing environment and meet deadlines. Interpersonal skills in communication, collaboration, group process, and the ability to maintain confidentiality are required. Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with an understanding of Catholic Church teaching and Church structure.

Regular office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Monday through Friday). Occasional evening and/or weekend work is required in the Pastoral Center or off-site at an event as needed. Interested candidates should send a cover letter, résumé and completed diocesan application (available on the diocesan website) to Kelly Shumate, HR coordinator, at jobs@richmonddiocese.org.

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond seeks a human resources officer to oversee the offices of Human Resources, Safe Environment, Facilities Management and Copy Services. The human resources officer is responsible for providing leadership in developing and executing human resources strategy in support of the overall mission of the Church, to include organizational and performance management, leadership development, staff orientation/training, recruitment, payroll/HRIS, compensation and benefits, employee relations, employment law, and policies and procedures/personnel administration. The human resources officer serves as chief HR consultant for the Pastoral Center, parishes, schools and other agencies in matters pertaining to human resources.

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond has retained Higher Talent Executive Search to manage the recruitment process. Interested candidates can find a detailed prospectus on the position and learn how to apply at <https://bit.ly/3njODUY>. Candidates will complete comprehensive reference and background checks.

SHORTTAKES

"Ashes to Alleluia" During this silent Lenten retreat, Barbara Hughes, author and Catholic Virginian columnist, will lead participants into the desert on a pilgrimage of the heart. In biblical times, the desert was a place where God spoke to listening hearts, fed his people and destroyed false idols, and it can do the same for us. The retreat will be held at St. Clare of Assisi Retreat Center, Hampton, March 4-6, 7 p.m. Friday, until Sunday noon. Cost of the weekend is \$40; donations to the retreat center are accepted. To register or for information, call 757-797-6629 or email philippians2foundation@gmail.com

IN MEMORIAM

Edith E. Collins



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. John the Beloved, McLean, Friday, Jan. 28, for Edith E. Collins. Ms. Collins, 97, passed away on Thursday, Jan. 20.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, in 1943, she married William O. Collins, a civil engineer who served in the U.S. Navy in the Pacific theater. After the war, they lived on Long Island before moving to McLean in 1958 when William joined the Federal Aviation Administration.

While raising her six sons, Ms. Collins taught with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine at her parish. She later worked for many years as a food server with the Marriott Corporation at their Arlington Hot Shoppes location and later the Key Bridge Marriott Hotel. She volunteered at the Arlington Hospital (Virginia Hospital Center) for nearly 30 years in the hospital auxiliary, assisting families of emergency room patients.

She is survived by five sons: William Jr., McLean; Father Thomas, Hot Springs; Gerard, Annandale; Christopher, Radford; and Kevin, Midlothian; and six grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband and by a son, Father Joseph.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for February 13, 2022

Luke 6:17, 20-26

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: Be careful. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

CAME DOWN	STOOD	GREAT
CROWD	DISCIPLES	SIDON
HIS EYES	BLESSED	POOR
KINGDOM OF GOD	SHALL BE	SATISFIED
EXCLUDE	EVIL	SON OF MAN
REJOICE	HEAVEN	WEEP
SPEAK	FALSE	PROPHETS

WOE and BLESSING

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

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Look for the crossword puzzle in the next issue of The Catholic Virginian.

Ángelus del Papa: “La Palabra es el faro que guía el camino sinodal iniciado en la Iglesia”

A la hora del rezo del Ángelus y con motivo de la celebración del Domingo de la Palabra de Dios, el Santo Padre alentó a los sacerdotes y a los fieles, a predicar el Evangelio tocando el alma y la vida de la gente evitando el riesgo de que nuestras enseñanzas “permanezcan genéricas y abstractas”. El Pontífice también exhortó a todos a leer cada día un pasaje de la Palabra, que es “el faro que guía el camino sinodal iniciado en la Iglesia”.

SOFÍA LOBOS
Ciudad del Vaticano

El 23 de enero, y tras haber presidido la Misa con ocasión de la celebración del Domingo de la Palabra de Dios; el Papa Francisco rezó la oración mariana del Ángelus a la hora del mediodía romano, asomado desde la ventana del Palacio Apostólico del Vaticano.

Ante la presencia de los fieles y peregrinos reunidos en la Plaza de San Pedro, el Pontífice reflexionó sobre la Liturgia del día que nos presenta el momento en el que Jesús inaugura su predicación captando la atención popular (cfr Lc 4,14-21).

“Se dirige a Nazaret, donde creció, y participa en la oración en la sinagoga. Se levanta a leer y, en el volumen del profeta Isaías, encuentra el pasaje sobre el Mesías, que proclama un mensaje de consolación y liberación para los pobres y los oprimidos (cfr Is 61,1-2)”, explicó Francisco, subrayando que, tal como dice el Evangelio de Lucas, terminada la lectura, “todos los ojos estaban fijos en él”.

Jesús predica ungido por el Espíritu

En su alocución, el Santo Padre destacó que la primera palabra de la predicación de Jesús contada en el Evangelio de Lucas es “hoy”, un término “que atraviesa toda época y permanece siempre válido”:

“La profecía de Isaías se remontaba a siglos antes, pero Jesús, por la fuerza del Espíritu (v. 14), la hace actual y, sobre todo, la lleva a cumplimiento”, puntualizó.

El segundo punto subrayado por el Obispo de Roma es la admiración con la que los paisanos de Jesús reciben sus palabras:

“Incluso si, nublados por los prejuicios, no le creen -continuó Francisco- se dan cuenta de que su enseñanza es diferente de la de otros maestros: intuyen que en Jesús hay más: la unción del Espíritu Santo.

Homilias que no “duerman el alma”

En este sentido, el Pontífice puso en guardia sobre el riesgo de hacer que nuestras predicaciones y nuestras enseñanzas “permanezcan genéricas y abstractas”, sin tocar el alma y la vida de la gente:

“También muchas homilias – lo digo con respeto pero con dolor – son abstractas, y en vez de despertar el alma la duermen. Cuando los fieles empiezan a mirar el reloj – “¿cuándo terminará esto?” – duermen el alma. La predicación corre este riesgo: sin la unción del Espíritu empobrece la Palabra de Dios, cae en el moralismo o en conceptos abstractos; presenta el Evangelio con desapego, como si estuviera fuera del tiempo, lejos de la realidad. Y este no es el camino.”

Pero... ¿Por qué ocurre esto? Para el Papa la respuesta es sencilla:

«Porque les falta la fuerza de este hoy, ese que Jesús “llena de sentido” con el poder del Espíritu. Se escuchan conferencias impecables, discursos bien contruidos, pero que no mueven el corazón, y así todo queda como antes. La predicación corre este riesgo: sin la unción del Espíritu empobrece la Palabra de Dios, cae en el moralismo y en conceptos

abstractos; presenta el Evangelio con desapego, como si estuviera fuera del tiempo, lejos de la realidad».

Por esto -añade Francisco- quien predica es el primero que debe experimentar el “hoy de Jesús”, para así poderlo comunicar en el hoy de los otros.

Papa: “Gracias a todos los predicadores del Evangelio”

Asimismo, en el marco del Domingo de la Palabra de Dios, el Santo Padre agradeció a todos los predicadores y los anunciadores del Evangelio:

“Recemos por ellos, para que vivan el hoy de Jesús, la dulce fuerza de su Espíritu que vuelve viva la Escritura. La Palabra de Dios, de hecho, es viva y eficaz (cfr Hb 4,12), nos cambia, entra en nuestros asuntos, ilumina nuestra vida cotidiana, consuela y pone orden. Recordemos: la Palabra transforma una jornada cualquiera en el hoy en el que Dios nos habla”

En este contexto, Francisco invitó a los fieles a tomar el Evangelio en la mano y leer o releer con calma, cada día un pequeño pasaje:

“Con el tiempo descubriremos que esas palabras están hechas a propósito para nosotros, para nuestra vida. Nos ayudarán a acoger cada día con una mirada mejor, más serena, porque, cuando el Evangelio entra en el hoy, lo llena de Dios”



El Papa Francisco encabeza una reunión con representantes de las conferencias episcopales de todo el mundo en el Vaticano el 9 de octubre de 2021. La reunión se produjo cuando el Vaticano lanzó el proceso que conducirá a la asamblea del Sínodo mundial de los Obispos en 2023. (foto del SNC/Paul Haring)

Finalmente, el Papa propuso leer cada día el Evangelio de Lucas, el “Evangelio de la misericordia”, que en este año litúrgico es proclamado durante los domingos: “Familiaricémonos con el Evangelio, ¡nos traerá la novedad y la alegría de Dios!”, añadió.

El faro que guía el recorrido sinodal

El Sucesor de Pedro, concluyó haciendo hincapié en que la Palabra de Dios es también “el faro que guía el recorrido sinodal” iniciado en toda la Iglesia.

“Mientras nos comprometemos a escuchar-nos unos a otros, con atención y discernimiento, escuchemos juntos la Palabra de Dios y el Espíritu Santo. La Virgen nos conceda la constancia para nutrirnos cada día con el Evangelio”, aseveró.

Cuaresma, Tiempo de Reflexión y Esperanza

POR DIÁCONO RAMÓN RIVERA ROBLES

La Cuaresma es el tiempo litúrgico de conversión, que marca la Iglesia para prepararnos a la gran fiesta de la Pascua. Es tiempo para arrepentirnos de nuestros pecados y de cambiar algo de nosotros para ser mejores y poder vivir más cerca de Cristo.

La Cuaresma dura 40 días; comienza el Miércoles de Ceniza y termina antes de la Misa de la Cena del Señor del Jueves Santo. A lo largo de este tiempo, sobre todo en la liturgia del domingo, hacemos un esfuerzo por recuperar el ritmo y estilo de verdaderos creyentes que debemos vivir como hijos de Dios.

El color litúrgico de este tiempo es el morado que significa luto y penitencia. Es un tiempo de reflexión, de penitencia, de conversión espiritual; tiempo de preparación al misterio pascual.

En la Cuaresma, Cristo nos invita a cambiar de vida. La Iglesia nos invita a vivir la Cuaresma como un camino hacia Jesucristo, escuchando la Palabra de Dios, orando, compartiendo en familia, con el prójimo y haciendo obras buenas. Nos invita a vivir una serie de actitudes cristianas que nos ayudan a parecernos más a Jesucristo, ya que, por acción de nuestro pecado, nos alejamos más de Dios.

La Iglesia en este tiempo de Cuaresma nos invita a un tiempo especial, a detenernos y hacer una introspección donde, por medio de la oración, de ayuno y abstinencia, caminaremos junto a nuestro Salvador, el camino de la pasión, muerte y resurrección.

Muchas veces tenemos la impresión de que la Cuaresma, es un tiempo triste, y no es así, La Cuaresma es una oportunidad de poner la vida en orden y orden en la vida. Es llenarnos de la certeza de que

hubo uno que pago el precio, por todos nuestros pecados y nos espera con los brazos abiertos. Es tiempo de Reflexión y de Esperanza, donde el Amor de Dios inunda nuestros corazones, para continuar el camino al encuentro del Señor.

Es sentirnos, Hijo Prodigio, que vuelve al Padre, arrepentido, pero seguro de que hay un Padre que nos perdona y nos ama, sin importar, nuestro pasado y nuestra historia, pues Él la conoce. Solo él quiere que confiemos en su Misericordia, pues Él es lento a la ira y rico en clemencia. Ese Padre, que nos Ama, sabe que una vez en sus brazos, nos sentiremos amados y jamás volveremos atrás.

La conversión consta precisamente de una lucha diaria, pues prometemos luchar con el pecado, después de haber reconocido nuestras faltas y hacer un acto de contrición. Nos arrepentimos, porque no queremos ofender un Dios tan bueno, que nos ama desde siempre. Pero para esta experiencia, hay que tener un encuentro personal con Jesucristo, al que seguiremos en este tiempo de Cuaresma, tal vez sin saber porque, pues Él no quiere sacrificios, sino tu corazón, pues un corazón contrito y humillado Él no lo desprecia. Dice la Palabra que es tiempo del Señor y le dijo a Zaqueo, esta noche me hospedo en tu casa, Zaqueo acepto y luego le dijo hoy la bendición ha llegado a tu casa.

Hermana y Hermano hoy la bendición ha llegado a tu casa.



Diácono Ramón Rivera Robles

Christmas Day wedding special for cancer patient

Jo Ann Zuñiga
Catholic News Service

HOUSTON — Even as the public has grown weary of the pandemic, Catholic chaplains at hospitals continue to work hard ministering to patients with COVID-19 and those battling other illnesses.

Hospitals themselves are struggling to meet the needs of patients amid staff shortages.

“Some hospitals have whole units shut down because their staff is ill. The ones still working tell us that they feel forgotten now that the public has tired of dealing with COVID-19,” said lay chaplain Nannette Coons.

In December at Houston Methodist Hospital, despite challenges of pandemic restrictions, Coons was among several people who were able to do something special for a family battling a pancreatic cancer diagnosis.

After many tries, permission for a special ceremony was granted.

Tomas Gonzalez, in his hospital gown, and wife Maria Angeles, dressed in white and carrying a bouquet of red and white roses, gazed at Father Philip Wilhite, their pastor from Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Conroe, Texas, as he knelt before them in the hospital room on Christmas Day.

The priest dipped his thumb in holy chrism and anointed the forehead of 50-year-old Gonzalez for the anointing of the sick. The couple's 14-year-old daughter, Nataly, and a family friend, Francisca Cabello, witnessed the ceremony as Father Wilhite helped to convalidate the couple's marriage as a sacrament.

“I played a very small part in it. Tomas and Angeles have been together for 15 years and wanted to become closer to God through



Father Philip Wilhite, pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Conroe, Texas, kneels before Tomas Gonzalez and Maria Angeles at Houston Methodist Hospital Dec. 25, 2021, to give Gonzalez an anointing of healing before convalidating their marriage. (CNS photo/courtesy Catholic Chaplain Corps via Texas Catholic Herald)

the sacraments, but were never married by the Church,” Father Wilhite told the Texas Catholic Herald, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

“They wanted to give the Christ Child their gift of a sacramental marriage and make that covenant with God,” the priest added.

Shortly before the wedding, Tomas also received the sacrament of reconciliation and received holy Communion given to him by

Father Desmond Daniels, a hospital chaplain and member of the archdiocese's Catholic Chaplain Corps.

“We put ourselves in God's hands. If God needs him, he will take him. If he wills him to stay, he will stay with us. I have peace in my heart now,” Angeles said.

Coons and another lay chaplain, Zoe Krizak, both of whom are also corps members, diligently worked to get the hospital's permission for the ceremony in the intensive care unit despite restrictions imposed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

They double-checked that the family had obtained a marriage license and other necessary paperwork as offices began closing for the holidays. They also began checking with priests' hectic schedules, especially during the busy Christmas season. And they prayed for a miracle.

“The wedding was so beautiful to witness,” Krizak said. “Despite the circumstances, there was a lot of joy. The couple was so happy to be getting married.”

Coons credited Krizak for her “relentless persistence” in maneuvering through hospital policies to obtain permission for the wedding by talking with nurses, social worker and hospital administrators.

“People kept saying ‘no’ because of restrictions, which we understood. But she would try again, going to the next person, to the next level, and kept knocking on doors until we finally had a ‘yes,’” Coons said.

Gonzalez was discharged from the hospital and went home for the new year to be with family. He recently returned to the hospital after he and his daughter contracted COVID-19, but is now home again. Yet the family said they will share the journey ahead together no matter how stressful.

Nun who earned gold records for ‘Our Father’ dies

ADELAIDE, Australia (CNS) — Mercy Sister Janet Mead, who earned gold records for her 1974 hit version of the Our Father, died Jan. 26 in her native Adelaide. She was 84 and had been battling cancer.

In 1974, “The Lord's Prayer” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_cxIT-JaV4, set to an uptempo rock beat, scaled up the charts, peaking at No. 4 in the United States and No. 3 in Australia, earning her gold records for the single.

Sister Mead was an unlikely pop star. The only other nun in U.S. history to crack the top 10 in the United States was Soeur Sourire, better known as The Singing Nun, for her lively folk ode to St. Dominic, 1963's French-language “Dominique.” Sister Mead also was the first Australian to have a gold record in the United States.

The single was distributed to

31 countries, according to ABC, Australia's government-subsidized broadcaster, selling, by various accounts, 1.5 million, 2 million or 3 million copies worldwide.

Sister Mead was even nominated for a Grammy, but lost out to Elvis Presley. She declined an offer to tour the United States and donated all her royalties to charity.

But for those who weren't monitoring Top 40 radio in 1974, they might have heard her arrangement played during Masses at Catholic churches and schools.

Sister Mead pioneered the concept of the “rock Mass” in South Australia, and the Mass was celebrated regularly in St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Adelaide.

Yet despite this fleeting encounter with pop stardom, Sister Mead became even better known in Australia for her work helping the homeless and teaching at St.

Aloysius College in Adelaide.

Sister Mead was named the South Australian of the year in 2004, not for “The Lord's Prayer” but for decades of caring for the homeless. The same year, she won the Yamaha Golden Gospel Award in recognition of her services to Australian Christian music.

St. Aloysius College issued a statement of grief Jan. 31 over Sister Mead's death.

“Janet was an old scholar, past staff member and dear friend and supporter of St. Aloysius College. Our staff and students join with the Romero Community and the Sisters of Mercy in their grief, and give thanks for a life that gave so much to many vulnerable members of our community here in SA,” the statement said.

South Australia Premier Steven Marshall posted a tribute on Facebook, saying, “She touched millions of people worldwide with her inspired version of the Lord's

Prayer.”

Sister Liz Morris, a Religious Sister of St. Joseph, who is vicar for religious in the Diocese of Adelaide, said while many would remember the cathedral youth Masses, “we also know of Janet's outstanding outreach and advocacy for the voiceless.”

She worked with homeless people through the Adelaide Day Center, which she helped establish in 1985. Until last year, Sister Mead spent countless hours and enormous energy on the Romero Company theater performances that raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for overseas projects.

Sister Mead was an ardent supporter of Aboriginal rights in Australia. She also was actively involved in anti-war protests and support for refugees. In 1999, she raised money for stevedores who were fired in the midst of a waterfront dispute.

The Beatitudes.

Every Friday, at the
catholicvirginian.org.