



# The Catholic Virginian

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## What parishes, diocese learned from synodal process

### Strengths, challenges highlighted in small group conversations

JANNA REYNOLDS  
The Catholic Virginian

In March 2022, the Diocese of Richmond concluded the local synodal process outlined by Pope Francis when he opened the World Synod of Bishops on Oct. 10, 2021. The Holy Father expressed that the purpose of the synod is for all Catholics to listen to one another and reflect upon how, as disciples, Catholics journey together to be in communion with the Lord.

The local process was overseen by the Diocesan Evangelization Commission, composed of laypeople who serve throughout the diocese. Father Jonathan Goertz, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes, Henrico, and Andrew Waring, director of the Office for Evangelization, led the effort.

According to Father Goertz and Waring, the Vatican supplied dioceses with documents about how to carry out the synodal process. From those documents, the Evangelization Commission created local guidelines.

“We used resources that the USCCB (Unit-

ed States Conference of Catholic Bishops) and the leadership roundtable put out to help guide us,” Waring explained, “but really utilized it to fit what we thought would work best for us as a diocese.”

While some dioceses used individual questionnaires or online surveys to generate responses, the commission invited parishes in the Diocese of Richmond to participate in prayerful, small group conversations that explored themes of communion, discussion and dialogue, and participation and mission.

“It was suggested, and Bishop Knestout highlighted this from the beginning, that in an important way, the journey is the destination. The fact that folks are gathering and having conversations about the life of the Church, maybe that’s the point altogether,” Father Goertz said.

“We tried in our diocese to focus on the encounter,” he continued, “which is what we think Pope Francis was emphasizing in this – the people actually getting together and listening

to one another. That was such a critical part of what the principle of synodality meant.”

#### Flexibility leads to strong participation

The commission received 123 responses from 119 parishes and four consultative bodies, which includes groups supported by Catholic Charities and the Office of Safe Environment.

“The fact that we had such a strong participation with so many parishes, I mean, we were delighted,” Father Goertz said.

Waring said he thought that the flexibility to adapt the synodal discussions to fit the needs of individual parishes – such as incorporating it into a parish anniversary or other pastoral planning time – helped facilitate a high response rate.

“Bishop (Knestout) put it out there as ‘We want everybody to do this,’ and we put it out as ‘Here is a way to do this,’” Waring said. “I think the other thing is that many of our smaller par-

*See Synod, Page 11*

## Catholic groups oppose Title IX-related proposals

JULIE ASHER  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Several Catholic and other faith-based associations and groups, including dioceses, have joined in supporting an amicus brief filed in a court case on how the Biden administration’s proposal to broaden the interpretation of Title IX provisions could affect nonprofit organizations, including private schools.

“Although Title IX has received the most attention for its impact on athletics, especially regarding women at the college level, it applies to a variety of K-12 educational programs and has been adapted by most other federal agencies to govern workplace policies,” the National Catholic Educational Association said in an Aug. 23 statement.

“If schools are recipients of federal financial assistance, the obligations of institutions that receive this assistance are addressed in several civil rights laws and employment regulations,” the NCEA said.

“New interpretations of these laws and regulations have raised questions and concerns about the applicability of such to Catholic schools that received equitable services, not funds,” it said.

The NCEA has joined the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Council of American Private Education, Association of Independent Schools, Christian Schools International, National Association of Episcopal Schools and Na-

*See Title IX, Page 16*

## School year begins with Mass



Teaching assistant Kelly Tallent prays with her kindergarten students during Mass at St. Mary Star of the Sea School, Hampton, on Wednesday, Aug. 24. The Mass, celebrated by Bishop Barry C. Knestout, marked the opening of the school’s centennial celebration. See story, Page 5. (Photo/Jennifer Neville)

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## Accept the mercy, forgiveness God offers you



**CHRIST OUR HOPE**  
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

**O**n Sunday, Aug. 28, the day after the consistory during which he created 20 cardinals, Pope Francis traveled to L'Aquila to celebrate Mass for those commemorating "the Celestine Forgiveness." Some have described this annual event, which dates to 1294, as a "celebration of forgiveness."

Following the death of Pope Nicholas IV in 1292, the Church had been without a pope for 27 months due to an impasse in the College of Cardinals. Pietro Angeleri was an 85-year-old Benedictine monk living in a mountainside hermitage just outside of Sulmona, Italy. He sent a message to the cardinals telling them to elect someone. They viewed that as a message from the Holy Spirit and elected the monk who took the name Celestine V.

He was so reluctant to be pope that the cardinals went to the hermitage and brought Celestine back to Perugia, where they had been meeting, to consecrate him. A month later, he issued what is known as the "bull of forgiveness" in which he granted a plenary indulgence on Aug. 28-29 to all who make a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Santa Maria di Collemaggio in L'Aquila, and go to confession, attend Mass, receive Communion and pray for the intentions of the pope.

In part, the bull read, "... annually we absolve from guilt and punishment, which they deserve for all their sins, committed since baptism, to all those who truly repentant and confessed, enter said church from the eve of the vigil of the feast of St. Juan (John the Baptist) until the eve immediately following the feast."

Within five months of his election, Celestine resigned the papacy with the hope of returning to the hermitage. However, his successor, Pope

Boniface VIII, had him imprisoned, where he died 17 months later.

Although I have not participated in this pilgrimage, I have visited the hermitage, and I have an affinity for that area as my maternal grandfather came from Pacentro, a town in the vicinity of Sulmona, on the same mountain where the hermitage, while no longer occupied, stands. One can look from the mountains over the Sulmona Valley and imagine what it might have been like for pilgrims over the centuries who have made their way from the hermitage to L'Aquila in order to receive this absolution.

Pope Francis' visit highlighted themes of his pontificate: mercy and forgiveness. When he spoke about mercy, he noted that the path to it is through personal suffering. Having been devastated by an earthquake in 2009, the residents of L'Aquila could relate when the pope said, "(God) is mercy, and it is only with his mercy that he can speak to our misery."

We know that sin is a form of misery and a cause of it. We also know that forgiveness is integral to God's mercy, his willingness to forgive whatever we do. Pope Francis emphasized that point: "Mercy is the experience of feeling welcomed, put back on our feet, strengthened, healed, encouraged. To be forgiven is to experience here and now that which comes closest to being resurrected. Forgiveness is the passage from death to life, from the experience of anguish and guilt to that of freedom and joy."

Those words warrant reflection which will, through the sacraments of Eucharist and reconciliation, lead each of us to accept what God freely offers and through which he invites us to be with him. As we accept that invitation, let us make the words of Pope Francis a reality in our homes, parishes and diocese:

"May this Church always be a place in which people can be reconciled and experience that grace that puts us back on our feet and gives us another chance. Our God is the God of second

chances. ... It is God who always gives you another chance. May it be a Church of forgiveness, not once a year, but always, every day. For in this way peace is constructed, through forgiveness that is received and given."

### CLERGY ASSIGNMENT

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, bishop of Richmond, has announced the following clergy appointments effective Thursday, Aug. 18, 2022:

#### OFFICIAL

**Father Oswaldo Saul Anleu Sandoval**, a priest of the Diocese of San Marcos, Guatemala, parochial vicar at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newport News.

**Father Augustin Lukenge**, from administrator to pastor of St. Joseph, Clifton Forge; Sacred Heart, Covington; and Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Hot Springs.

**Father Zaverio Banasula**, from administrator to pastor of Good Shepherd, Lebanon; St. Mary, Coeburn; and St. Therese, St. Paul.

Bishop Knestout has also announced the appointment of four priests as deans, effective Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022:

**Father John Asare**, pastor of St. Mary, Blacksburg; Deanery 13

**Father Anthony Morris**, pastor of St. Mary, Chesapeake; Church of the Holy Angels, Portsmouth; Church of the Resurrection, Portsmouth; and St. Paul, Portsmouth; Deanery 3

**Father Francis Musolooza**, pastor of St. John the Evangelist, Waynesboro; Deanery 11

**Father Christopher Hess**, pastor of St. Anne, Bristol; St. Bernard, Gate City; and St. Patrick, Dungannon; Deanery 14

## New cardinals reflect Church as 'many parts, one body'

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Becoming a member of the broad, unique body of the College of Cardinals is both a great honor and an invitation to help promote a renewal of the Catholic Church's mission of evangelization, some new cardinals said.

With 20 newly created cardinals representing 16 countries, and with the entire college of 226 members representing more than 90 countries, some also said they see their elevation as a way to help their home dioceses better comprehend the universality of the Catholic Church.

Several hours before the ceremony for the creation of new cardinals at the Vatican Aug. 27, some of those named by Pope Francis spoke to Catholic News Service about how they see their new role as a cardinal.

U.S. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego said it gives him a chance to "build up unity within the universal Church" and to point to the global nature of the Church, "that we are not simply parochial, local churches, but we are part of a communion" that is worldwide.

When asked why he thought Pope Francis wanted the bishop of San Diego to become a cardinal, he said, on the one hand, "we are a border diocese. Fundamentally, our identity is a diocese of immigrants and on the border between Latin America and the United States, and those are issues that are greatly dear to the pope."

*"This emphasis on reaching out to people at the margins is not something that people just came up with after the Second Vatican Council. It is in the call of Christ, it's in the continuing work of the Church..."*

— Cardinal Robert W. McElroy

On the other hand, he said, it may also be because the diocese has long been working to "plant some of the seeds of the pastoral renewal that Pope Francis has brought into the life of the Church."

For example, Cardinal McElroy said, the diocese has already held synods on marriage and family life, and on young adults; now, it is carrying out a three-year process on synodality.

"There is a great emphasis on inclusion and on understanding the work of the Church as a field hospital," that everyone "is wounded in various ways, everyone needs healing." This image does not divide people into different groups, he said; instead, "it's a journey in which we help one another and help one another to heal with God's grace."

The cardinal said it would be wrong to believe a pastoral approach of inclusion and a position of doctrinal rigor were in opposition to

each other.

"Inclusion is part of Catholic doctrine" and the Gospel, he said. "This emphasis on reaching out to people at the margins is not something that people just came up with after the Second Vatican Council. It is in the call of Christ, it's in the continuing work of the Church and the message of the Church."

The youngest new cardinal, Italian Cardinal Giorgio Marengo, apostolic prefect of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, told CNS that even though he plans on learning from the more experienced members, he would like to share his perspective of serving a tiny Catholic minority. Mongolia has a Catholic population of 1,359, according to the latest Vatican figures.

There is a "strength and genuinity of the faith" in the men and women who are Catholic in parts of the world where the majority are Buddhist or follow another religious tradition, he said.

"It means that you are always asked to be able to answer, to give reasons for your faith. If you are in a country where being a Catholic is normal, maybe you are not so challenged," he said.

"Christians in Asia and, in our case, Mongolia, usually develop a very deep sense of being able to explain, to give reason to their own choice, and I believe in today's world this is needed."

# For Father Mooney, priesthood has been ‘a grand adventure’

In retirement, he is looking forward to reconnecting with family

JANNA REYNOLDS  
The Catholic Virginian

When Father Richard Mooney reached his 40th priesthood anniversary in 2019, he called his vocation “a grand adventure.” Now, after 43 years as a diocesan priest, he is on to the next part of his journey: retirement.

“(It) will probably be as much an adventure as anything else I’ve ever done,” he said with a laugh.

Father Mooney said the focus of his ministry has always been on the people to whom he ministered and whom he encountered in various roles.

“I look back and think of the number of people I have kept in touch with, who have gone on to live very fruitful, Christian lives, and I think that’s probably what this is all about,” he said. “We have to look back and look at ‘people things,’ not at ‘building things’ or ‘money things’ or any of that. I think we look back, and we see the people whose lives we’ve affected.”

That bond is reciprocated as he remembers the people who affected his own life.

Laypeople were key in helping Father Mooney overcome a major challenge in his life: alcoholism – “the family curse.” Now sober for 15 years, the priest said God helped in his struggle, but “it was more laypeople in my life who were concerned about me and loved me enough to challenge me and be there when I needed them.”

The priest noted that in the course of his ministry, he has observed the local Church “become a little bit too cautious.”

He mentioned the aging population and changing demographics, which he acknowledged can be “difficult” to accept; however, he said, “we all saw it coming.”

## Diverse experiences

The clergy shortage is another issue of which people have long been aware, according to the priest.

“I was talking about this stuff before I was ordained 43 years ago,” he said. “We’ve been having this conversation for 40-plus years, and I just think we’ve become a bit too ‘putting fingers in holes in the dike,’ and I think there’s a lot more energy out there than I think we are sometimes willing to tap into.”

Father Mooney also said that “the diocesan priesthood... has been more and more restricted to parishes” over the last 40 years.

“In an earlier age of Church, if a priest wanted to take a break from parish life and do something different, in many dioceses, he could teach in a school, administer an office, be a hospital chaplain, and so on and so forth. These were options within a diocesan framework. But in the last 40 years, basically all of that has been taken off the table, and what the diocesan priest has for variety is different kinds of parishes,” Father Mooney explained.

He reflected on his diverse experience as a priest, which included service as a pastor, parochial vicar, campus minister and state prison chaplain.

“I have been lucky in that I had different campus ministries and the prison ministries that I did. So, between the different kinds of parishes – from big, huge, suburban things to tiny, little, rural places – and the different kinds of campuses and the



Father Richard Mooney

prison work, I’ve had an unusually varied career for a diocesan priest, and I like that,” he said. “I think it has exposed me to all kinds of situations and people that I most likely would never have come in contact with otherwise.”

Father Mooney said that “people and their stories” made him happiest as a pastor.

“The world comes to you when you’re a Catholic priest. Maybe not the whole world, but a big chunk of the world comes to you,” he said. “I think I’ll just miss the surprises that walk through the door – people and their stories, and what they need, and what they have done, and what it has done to them, and so on and so forth. It just walks right into your life. I love that. So, I think I’ll miss that.”

## Another adventure

Father Mooney officially retired on July 1, 2022. His final assignment was as assistant pastor of Good Shepherd, South Hill; St. Catherine, Clarksville; and St. Paschal Baylon, South Boston; where he served for

three and half years.

Unfortunately, he did not get to enjoy the day, as he was in the hospital with a serious illness at that time.

“I was not fully conscious for a lot of it, but I had the doctors tell me it was close. So, I spent about three weeks in the hospital and then another three weeks recuperating at home, still on antibiotics,” he recalled, “and it’s during that period of time that my retirement date came and went.”

However, on Sunday, Aug. 28, Father Mooney finally marked his milestone at Church of the Good Shepherd, South Hill, as the parish celebrated its 100th anniversary.

“They made me a little cake, and I said a few words there,” he said. “That’s how we celebrated. I was glad to be there and glad to be able to celebrate with them. I’m feeling much better.”

While he has already begun helping at some parishes on weekends, the priest looks forward to focusing on his family and some personal interests in his retirement.

“I want to get reconnected. I have 11 nieces and nephews and 18 great-nieces and -nephews, and some of them I’ve actually not met or only met briefly. So, I want to get back into getting to know my family,” he said, adding that he is “looking forward to road trips” when visiting more distantly located people.

Father Mooney described himself as an “amateur potter” and said he does “a fair amount of drawing,” so he plans to explore his artwork more deeply in retirement.

And the priest has not ruled out new adventures, either.

“Well, I’m living right on the edge of the VCU campus,” he added, “so who knows, I may go take a class or something.”

## Vatican: Remarks on Dugina were not political

JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis’ comments on the death of Darya Dugina, a 29-year-old commentator with a nationalist Russian TV channel, were meant to defend life and were not a political affirmation, the Vatican said.

“It must be reiterated that the Holy Father’s words on this tragic issue should be read as a voice raised in defense of human life and the values attached to it, and not as a stance on political positions,” the Vatican said in a statement published Aug. 30.

“As for the large-scale war in Ukraine initiated by the Russian Federation, Pope Francis’ interventions are clear and unequivocal in condemning it as morally unjust, unacceptable, barbaric, senseless, repugnant and sacrilegious,” the Vatican added.

The Vatican said the pope’s numerous statements calling for an end to the war in Ukraine “are mostly aimed at inviting pastors and the faithful to prayer, and all people of good will to solidarity and efforts to rebuild peace.”

Nevertheless, the Vatican said that although Pope Francis’ words are meant to promote peace, “public discussions have arisen about the political significance attached to such interventions.”

At the end of his general audience talk in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican Aug. 24, Pope Francis repeated his calls for peace and spoke of how so many people were affected by war.

As an example, the pope spoke of “that poor girl flown into the air because of a bomb under her car seat in Moscow. The innocent pay for war. The innocent.”

While the pope did not identify the person by name, Vatican News confirmed the pope was referring to the Aug. 20 killing of Dugina. She served as press secretary for her father, Alexander Dugin — an anti-communist, ultranationalist philosopher calling for Russia to reclaim its former territories.

The pope’s comments on Dugina’s death drew criticism from Ukrainian officials, including Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Dmytro Kuleba, who summoned Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, apostolic nuncio to Ukraine, to express his disappointment.

In an Aug. 25 briefing, Kuleba told journalists that summoning a nuncio to the ministry was unprecedented.

“I will say frankly that the Ukrainian heart is torn by the pope’s words. It was unfair,” Kuleba added.

## Interim personnel added to communications office

The Diocese of Richmond’s Office of Communications has filled two interim positions.

Janna Reynolds has been named interim assistant editor of The Catholic Virginian, effective Monday, Aug. 8. Hired as digital media specialist in September 2018, she will oversee the production of the biweekly publication until a permanent editor is named to succeed Brian T. Olszewski, who is retiring Friday, Sept. 30.

Reynolds holds a bachelor’s degree in English with a minor in business from Gannon University and a master’s degree in media arts and technology, with a concentration in media management, from Duquesne University.

Emily Jansen, a recent graduate of Mount St. Mary’s University, Emmitsburg, Md., has been hired as interim digital media specialist, effective Monday, Aug. 22. A member of St. Joseph Parish, Richmond, she majored in conflict, peace and social justice and literary studies.

# Knights raise \$16,500 to purchase 140 wheelchairs

VA Medical Center among beneficiaries of Salem council's effort

JOSEPH STANIUNAS  
Special to The Catholic Virginian

Dozens of veterans and other people in Virginia who find it difficult or impossible to rise up and walk are getting some help from the Knights of Columbus.

Council 10015 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, has donated 140 wheelchairs to the local Veterans Administration Medical Center and other groups in the region. The state council also raised money for an additional 140 wheelchairs to be distributed across the state, mainly through Paralyzed Veterans of America. Each campaign raised \$16,500 in about two months last fall.

"People didn't think we could do it," said Grand Knight and retired Marine David Wyble, who led the Salem council's effort. "I was even a little skeptical, but the Holy Spirit got behind us on this, and by the grace of God, we did."

Wyble knows firsthand how necessary a good wheelchair can be. A few years ago, he developed heart disease and was using a wheelchair until a heart transplant got him back on his feet. He decided it was time he joined the Knights of Columbus, a decision that has brought new meaning to his life and prompted a project that will improve the lives of other disabled veterans.

Each chair costs \$150, about one-third of what a medical supply company might charge thanks to the American Wheelchair Mission, a non-profit organization that arranges bulk shipments from overseas. It donated 60 chairs to the Knights of Columbus campaigns.

Run by Christopher Lewis, the son of Jerry Lewis, AWM said it has provided 800,000 wheelchairs to people in 150 countries over the last 20 years. The K of C is one of its partners.

State Deputy and Navy retiree Pat Rowland said the Virginia council had been working on starting a wheelchair drive since 2020, one that



Father Kevin Segerblom, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, blesses two of the 90 wheelchairs that Knights of Columbus Council 10015 donated to the VA Medical Center, Monday, Aug. 15. The Knights raised \$16,500 to purchase 140 wheelchairs. The remaining chairs were distributed by councils in Blacksburg, Fincastle and Christiansburg, as well as the Hope Tree family services center in Salem. (Photo/Joseph Staniunas)

was delayed by the pandemic. When they learned of the Salem council's plans, they decided to coordinate their efforts.

A project like this "holds a special place for a lot of us," he said before the presentation of 90 chairs to the Salem VA hospital Monday, Aug. 15.

"Many of us are retired military, and being able to help out our brothers and sisters in the armed forces is something we like to do," Roland said.

The Salem council raised the money by asking for donations at church, holding a casino night and soliciting contributions from local businesses. The biggest individual donation was \$500; most donors gave enough to buy one chair. Knights of Columbus councils in Blacksburg, Fincastle and Christiansburg received chairs to distribute, as did the Hope Tree family services center in Salem.

The sturdy, durable wheelchairs in regular and large sizes will be useful to veterans who have

to move around the sprawling campus of the Salem hospital, according to Executive Director Rebecca Stackhouse.

"Being able to replace and supplement the current stock of wheelchairs that we have is very important to our veterans," she said. "The Knights of Columbus stepping up, engaging in this fundraiser and this large project to get us these 90 wheelchairs is just truly outstanding."

In a prayer before blessing the chairs at the presentation last month, Father Kevin Segerblom, pastor of St. Andrew, Roanoke, said, "We have gratitude in our hearts today, Father, for the many veterans who have served our country so well, sacrificing themselves for the protection of our people and our land and our values. May these wheelchairs give the veterans who receive them greater freedom of movement to do the things you call them to do and receive the care they deserve."

## Rev. Jim Antal

Climate Activist & Author

"An Interfaith Climate Revival"

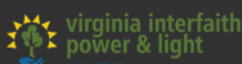
Rev. Dr. Jim Antal serves as Special Advisor on Climate Justice to the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Hundreds of congregations are reading his 2018 book, *Climate Church, Climate World*.

Come join us at one of 3 locations to discuss how people of faith can add their voice to the crucial conversation about climate justice!



In collaboration with



Tuesday, September 13, 2022

6-9 PM in three locations:

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church  
2150 Cunningham Dr., Hampton, VA 23666

Third Street Bethel AME Church  
614 3rd St., Richmond, VA 23219

Williams Memorial Baptist Church  
2150 Carroll Ave., NW, Roanoke, VA 24017

This event is free and open to people of all faiths; pre-registration required at [VAIPL.org](http://VAIPL.org).



## FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK

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# Centennial a 'year of gratitude' at Hampton school

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

It was the Roaring '20s when St. Mary Star of the Sea School, now entering its 100th year, opened its doors in Hampton. Ever since, the school, the first opened by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation and staffed outside of Tennessee, has remained steadfast in educating children spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

When the school opened in 1923, it was housed in Bright View, which was once a hospital for wounded Civil War soldiers and later a hotel. Its enrollment was nearly 100 students. Over the years, expansions were constructed to accommodate a growing student body, which peaked at 910 in 1960. It now has 180 students from Pre-K-3 to eighth grade.

Dominican Sister Mary Cecilia Goodrum, principal, said the jubilee theme from Psalm 116:12, "How can I Make a return to the Lord for all the good he has done for me?" highlights the school's thankfulness for its century-long history.

"Hopefully this year will be a year of gratitude and to recognize what he's done these past 100 years and really ask his blessing on the next St. Mary Star of the Sea, whatever that might be," she said.

Teachers will explain what a jubilee is and will talk to the students about gratitude. The school day always starts with a prayer over the intercom, but this year, students will also all pray together in the gym on Monday mornings.

## 'Everybody supports everybody'

Presiding at Mass on Wednesday, Aug. 24, Bishop Barry C. Knestout told the students in his homily that Jesus cares about them, is always with them, knows and understands their struggles and will give them the grace to overcome them.

Sister Mary Cecilia said the strengths of the school are its Catholic identity, small size and the beauty of the campus along Mill Creek.

"Everyone knows one another here," and students "are known by name," she said.

Melissa Mowery, mother of two St. Mary graduates and two current students, said having just one class per grade allows the children to build "very, very solid, strong friendships" and learn conflict resolution and how to get along with classmates who aren't their friends because the students are with each other "for years and years."

Amber Butler, who has children in Pre-K-4 and second grade, is impressed with the togetherness of the student body. She explained that when she went to the end-of-the-year awards ceremony last year, all of the children cheered for each other, regardless of whether they won any awards.

"It was really lovely to watch that, just everybody supporting everybody," Butler said, adding that the students were "genuinely excited for their friends."

Madison Cruz, a college junior who attended St. Mary from Pre-K-4 to eighth grade, said the small class sizes gave the teachers the ability to give her extra help when needed.

She added that St. Mary was "definitely instrumental in developing my character," noting that the time she spent at the school helped form a "strong moral and ethical foundation."

"I think that's very helpful when you need to make decisions during not-so black-and-white situations," she explained. "I also learned compassion and empathy through the school's commitment to service as disciples of Christ because through service, we are able to show God's love to all."

She commended St. Mary for teaching her the

reasons behind her faith.

"It's important that you get all the answers yourself to your questions that you have, and through St. Mary's, I was able to find these answers as well as loving Christ," she said. "My faith has helped me through my toughest times, and there's no other way I'd want it to be, and I'm really

"Truth and beauty and goodness – they naturally affect the soul," she continued. When the students are outside, "there's a peace and a calm" about them, and their interactions are "healthy and wholesome."

St. Mary strives to shape the whole child, and faith is woven throughout the curriculum.



Above: Following the Mass marking the start of St. Mary Star of the Sea School's 100th anniversary celebration on Wednesday, Aug. 24, Bishop Barry C. Knestout leads a eucharistic procession through the Hampton school's campus. Left: the school's 1958 Hampton Junior League basketball champions. The priest on the left is the future Bishop Walter F. Sullivan, 11th bishop of the Diocese of Richmond. (Photos provided)

grateful for St. Mary's for showing me that."

## Serving children of military families

St. Mary Star of the Sea School, near the now-inactive Fort Monroe, often had a large student body of military-connected children and was a haven as their parents were deployed in World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

"St Mary's was their home," Sister Mary Cecilia said. "There was a consistency and a stability when the world was in chaos."

Today, about one-third of the students are military-connected children, and the school is a designated Purple Star School, meaning procedures, staff training and student and family activities are in place to ease the stressors like frequent moves and deployed parents.

The school's waterfront property gives students the unique opportunity to bask in the beauty of God's creation, Sister Mary Cecilia said, explaining that it is common for osprey and eagles to fly over the playground, and families sometimes see dolphins playing in the surf when children are dropped off at school. Such beauty "reflects the love of God" and is "transcendental," she said.

For example, Sarah Carbullido said her four children, who are in pre-K-4 to third grade, have learned that God is "all loving, come as you are, no judgment; he loves you no matter what," and she is pleased that the faith is taught at a level the children can understand.

Students take the core subjects, including religion, plus music, art, library, physical education and technology. The school has a waterfront classroom for marine science and STEM lessons, and marine science club activities.

"It's their body, their soul, their mind, their heart – all of those areas are going to be impacted here at St. Mary's for their positive development," said second grade teacher Dominican Sister Imelda Garrison.

"Catholic education speaks to the child's deepest needs," she said, noting that educators often forget a child's spiritual needs, that "even the youngest child can have such a depth," and one can "underestimate" how much "even the smallest children can take in spiritually and how much they hunger for it even though they can't articulate that."

# Why your life is not just about you

## GUEST COMMENTARY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER  
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

I remember when people thought overpopulation would destroy us and the planet. Paul Ehrlich's 1968 book "The Population Bomb" popularized this idea, leading to urgent calls for "zero population growth." Dr. Warren Hern even warned in 1993 that the human species was a global "cancer": "We have become a malignant ecopathologic process," wrote Hern, who happened to be a practitioner of late-term abortions.

Now I've lived long enough to read serious articles warning: "We need to consider ways to reverse or at least slow rapid depopulation."

That is the subtitle of "The Unexpected Future," published Aug. 20 in the online magazine Quillette. Citing United Nations data and other sources, researchers Joel Kotkin and Wendell Cox say we "need to worry about the potential ill-effects of depopulation, including a declining workforce, torpid economic growth, and brewing generational conflict between a generally prosperous older generation and their more hard-pressed successors."

All developed nations, including the United States, are well below replacement level. Even populous countries like India and China show declining fertility, with East Asian countries like

Japan facing especially rapid declines.

As to causes, the authors say young adults see a future of "greater economic insecurity, poorer living conditions, and fewer opportunities" than their parents. Ironically, if their attitude leads to fewer young people working to support a rapidly aging population, it will help bring about that very outcome for any children they do have.

Concern about climate change has also led some young adults to forgo parenthood or even marriage — expecting a child to place strain on the environment, or at least to face a toxic one.

The authors say the result is a "post-familial" society, where a growing percentage of households consist of only one person.

They cite the likely adverse effects of this on economics, politics and social solidarity, but also hint at something deeper. "This is as much a civilizational or spiritual crisis as an economic one, and it requires a shift in values, including perhaps religious ones."

Devout Christians, Jews and Muslims have more children than their secular neighbors, as discussed in the book, "Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?" by Eric Kaufmann, professor at Birkbeck, University of London. This is not only about a particular religion's teaching on birth control.

In a May 31 article in the online journal Public Discourse, author and attorney Alexandra Davis emphasizes the spiritual side of the problem. She writes that "the consequences of the dwindling

birth rate are far greater than questions related to population figures."

Young adults often forgo family life to enhance their individual autonomy and their hopes of success and comfort. What they may miss out on, says Davis, are two things "central to human nature": connection and meaning.

Parenthood teaches us to give ourselves to helpless others who depend on us — and to realize how much we depend on others, especially near the beginning and end of our lives.

And in ordering our lives around our own individual pleasure, we give up opportunities for a more meaningful life — one that survives and thrives through the suffering and disappointments that life can bring. Life in a family brings pleasures of its own, but it also brings an enrichment of the person that will never come from thinking of and relying on ourselves alone.

People of faith know this. My life is not just about me. In loving God and others, I become more fully human.

For practical and more profound reasons, then, how unhealthy is it that, to many public officials and others in our society, the phrase "reproductive health" means efforts to sterilize us and eliminate our nascent children?

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

### Appreciates article on common culture collapse

Congratulations for publishing Bill Donohue's article, "Why our common culture has collapsed," (Catholic Virginian, Aug. 8). He hit the problem right on. Allow me to give you some personal examples of this discussion.

My 16-year-old grandson was operating a farm tractor along our winding mountain road when a woman from New York City was operating her car right behind him, honking repetitively. When they both came to the local gas station, she went to my grandson using very bad language saying, "You damn farmers, keep off the highways."

He was quite upset, so some local folks gave him a hug saying, "We love you farmers. Don't pay any attention to the likes of her."

A couple from northern Virginia moved into our area and asked when the garbage pickup was. She was told, "We don't have a pickup; you bring the garbage to our local refuse station because we save taxes that way."

One day, a farmer was spreading manure when a new adjacent homeowner came out with his gun, cussing at the farmer and threatening him for creating odors. The sheriff came and

reminded the newcomer that farmers have a right to farm and suggested that if he didn't like it to move back where he came from.

We operate a sheep farm and textile mill, and we give guided tours of our operation so as to educate the public. What a great reaction we get.

— Francis Chester  
Augusta Springs

### We get the government we deserve

I write as a 78-year-old cradle Catholic and retired surgeon regarding the Aug. 22 story about our Church welcoming immigrants. I always have been proud to defend my Church in our great country where religion is so often under assault as "secular humanism."

I am also, given the campaign platforms of the two major parties, a reliable Republican voter.

Elections have consequences. I believe, contrary to the general perception of conservative policy, that had Republicans campaigned on "a path to citizenship" for genuine refugees who were oppressed by the drug cartels, it would have made a difference. Addicts, often young and irreligious in our otherwise prosperous society, are the main support of these destructive cartels.

Unfortunately, we get the government we deserve. It's hard to be "a smidgin" moral.

— Martin Thiel  
Williamsburg

### Jesus' miraculous methods are 'essence of God'

Barbara Hughes' Aug. 22 column observes that not our "talent or gift," but God's guiding light and might allow the seemingly unqualified "to do the seemingly impossible." But her skepticism that Jonah spent three days in the belly of "a great fish" (not specifically a whale with a "gag reflex") throws doubt on God's Mysteries.

To question the storyline as "improvised" based on common/scientific knowledge implies that God is less able than humans to "do the seemingly impossible."

It's like theorizing that those fed with two loaves and five fishes brought their own lunch to spread a great picnic, thus doubting the miracles of Jesus. Yes, he really raised Lazarus. Yes, he troubled the waters and touched the sick to cure leprosy, blindness and a host of ailments. Yes, he did die and rose again, and yes, he is in our midst.

Hughes comments, "We have more than a prophet; we have Jesus." OT proph-

ets, not to mention St. John in that pesky Book of Revelation, sometimes let their human frailty show. But seeming inconsistencies that cannot be explained by civilized advances (such as monogamy) are best taken on faith, awaiting a day when we will be in the crowd at the feet of our teacher.

When the author claims the Jonah myth "is not the point," it isn't the only point.

The call that Jesus makes is paramount, and it's a blessing to recognize his call (which "is never just about us"), including volunteerism in the Church and community. But he must disagree that his miraculous methods are worthy only to be scoffed at, or as attention-grabbing fables.

Aren't they the essence of our God?

— Pernie Forehand  
Vinton

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# Film introduces Mother Teresa to an entire generation

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With St. Teresa of Kolkata's death 25 years ago, there is an entire generation of young men and women who did not see much about her life and legacy, serving "the poorest of the poor."

That meant it was time to put her back in the spotlight, said a panel of those who were promoting a new documentary about the life of this saint, known popularly as Mother Teresa, who founded the Missionaries of Charity.

At her beatification in 2003, St. John Paul II called her a "courageous woman whom I have always felt beside me."

Mother Teresa was "an icon of the good Samaritan" who went "everywhere to serve Christ in the poorest of the poor. Not even conflict and war could stand in her way," the late pope said.

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly said at a news conference hosted at Vatican Radio Aug. 31 that the Knights made this film "to reach a new generation with the witness and example of Mother Teresa" and to inspire them.

Produced by the Knights of Columbus, "Mother Teresa: No Greater Love," had its Vatican premiere Aug. 31, ahead of its release to more than 900 theaters Oct. 3 and 4.

"Thank you for all the efforts made to capture the life of this saint, whose life and testimony have borne much fruit," wrote Pope Francis, who canonized her at the Vatican in 2016.

"Thank you for promoting this type of initiative that helps, in a creative manner, to make accessible the zeal for evangeli-



Pope Francis greets a Missionaries of Charity nun during his general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican Aug. 31, 2022. A film called "Mother Teresa: No Greater Love," on the life of the founder of the Missionaries of Charity, premiered at the Vatican Aug. 31. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

zation, especially for the young generations promoting the desire to follow the Lord who loved us first," the pope said in an Aug. 25 letter written to Kelly, replying to news of the Vatican premiere.

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gaxhe Bojaxhiu to Albanian parents in Skopje, now capital of North Macedonia, on Aug. 26, 1910. On Sept. 5, 1997, she died of cardiac arrest at the motherhouse

of the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, India.

The documentary, by Emmy award-winning filmmaker, David Naglieri, features archival footage and interviews with dozens of commentators who knew Mother Teresa personally. It was filmed on five continents, providing interviews with many Missionaries of Charity and offering on-the-ground images of their work following in Mother Teresa's footsteps, serving in what Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley of Boston called "the most hellish places" on Earth to "bring the light and the love and the mercy of God."

The cardinal was overcome with emotion at the news conference, recalling attending a talk Mother Teresa gave in the 1960s before her work was widely known and when he was still a young brother preparing for ordination as a priest of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin.

He said, "this was one of the most inspiring talks I ever heard in my life." He and the small number of people who had come to hear her speak, he said, "we were all weeping after a while, we were aware that we were in the presence of holiness."

The documentary shows the work Mother Teresa inspired and, "when she was feeding the hungry or holding the hands of someone as they lay dying, she was treating them as she would the most important person in her life, Jesus Christ himself," Kelly said in a media release.

"She was teaching us to have a heart that sees, and if we can learn to see as she did, the world would be a radically different and, I would say, better place," he said.

Bishop Barry C. Knestout will celebrate

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# Bishop cautions Filipinos to beware of how Marcos rules

SIMONE ORENDAIN  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A Philippine bishop expressed hope for the renewal of a community-centered Church under his country's new leader, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who has not shaken off his family's notorious legacy.

"I am sure that most of us, if not all, are already aware of the well-funded, well-orchestrated and systematic whitewashing of the Marcos history," Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos told a virtual forum of more than 100 Philippine- and U.S.-based peace workers.

"And regrettably, we might have to humbly admit that we, particularly as Church, may have acted too late in response," said Bishop Alminaza.

The bishop said, however, "we just have to start creating the circles of forces ... that are very much aware of what is happening."

He told the Aug. 23 forum that the synod on synodality preparation in the Philippines is a "very powerful moment," as the bishops look more closely at their decision-making and leadership response and how they should be responding to the country's difficulties by listening to those in the peripheries. He said he is looking to a return to "basic ecclesial communities," in which Church communities of families come together on issues of spirituality and social justice, whether for better formation or to tackle various challenges.

Marcos, a former senator and congressman, took office in June. He is the son of a Philippine dictator who amassed billions through questionable means and whose leadership from the late-'60s to the mid-'80s helped steer the island nation toward its politically and economically unstable status.

Bishop Alminaza recently made headlines for speaking out against a new movie about the Marcos family in the last 72 hours before they fled the

*"We need to be vigilant in our work as Church people so the truth will prevail and will finally help us transform the Philippines as the Pearl of the Orient Seas once again."*

— METHODIST BISHOP SOLITO TOQUERO

Philippines to seek asylum in the United States; the movie portrayed the family in a good light.

The forum, hosted by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, the U.S. chapter of the International Coalition of Human Rights in the Philippines and other Christian organizations, was held in preparation for the 50th anniversary of martial law in the Philippines, Sept. 21.

Bishop Alminaza, a human rights advocate, grew up in sugar cane country in Negros Occidental province, where there was a famine under the first Marcos. His slide presentation showed a systematic government takeover of the country's sugar industry.

Investigators found the Marcos administration's new sugar commission operated all buying and selling of sugar and set a price for planters and millers, who lost an estimated \$1 billion in profits, went deep into debt, left close to 200,000 people jobless and shredded Negros Island's economy. The government sold sugar at low prices to Marcos associates, who then sold it back for significantly higher prices.

Following a bloodless uprising in the Philippines that deposed Marcos in 1986, further investigations found that the sugar commission

was just one of multiple fronts to carry out graft across a country rich in resources such as coconuts, bananas, rice and other farmed products.

Students, workers, ordinary citizens and a significant number of clergy and religious rose up in protest, but they faced incarceration and other human rights violations under martial law.

More than 9,000 Filipinos filed a lawsuit against Marcos citing detention, extrajudicial killings, disappearances and torture during those 14 years of martial law. A Hawaii court in 1995 awarded \$2 billion in compensation to the victims, but in 2017, the Philippine Court of Appeals overruled the claimants' demand for payment from the government.

Retired Methodist Bishop Solito Toquero told forum participants about what the country was like under the first Marcos regime.

Bishop Toquero spoke of search and seizure orders against his close associates and various clergy, including Catholic priests, who were detained and tortured. He recalled the use of liturgy, music and Scripture passages to protest what was happening, and that various groups mobilized student and farmer protests.

The bishop pointed to centuries-old "feudalism, fascism and neocolonial imperialism" that brought the Philippines to its current state. He said the country would have a difficult road ahead under the new president, but added he still had hope.

"By changing the leader without changing the structure, we have now these political dynasties in our own time," said Bishop Toquero. "We continue to minister to people, we continue to use the Bible in our churches, but there is still repression in the various regimes that followed. We need to be vigilant in our work as Church people so the truth will prevail and will finally help us transform the Philippines as the Pearl of the Orient Seas once again."



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# Call upon Holy Spirit to resist temptation



**IN LIGHT OF FAITH**  
BARBARA HUGHES

I was navigating a website on the internet when my computer suddenly locked. Within seconds, a voice alarm informed me that my personal information had been accessed and that any attempt to close the site would result in my losing all the information that was stored on the device. To eliminate the threat, all I had to do was call the number on the screen and they would resolve the problem. In response, I did what I usually do when I'm not sure what's happening: I "SOSed" my husband, who immediately came to my rescue.

A call to the Geek Squad, whose service we subscribe to, immediately confirmed that the message was a scam, and in no time, they had cleaned my computer of the threat. All this was done remotely, which meant we never had a face-to-face encounter with the person who fixed the problem. From the sound of children in the background, it appeared that the technician had been working from his home.

As I thought about the incident a few days later, it occurred to me that like rogue phishing expeditions on the internet, bad actors abound in real life. They appear in multiple ways, but mostly they are disguised as something good, enticing the senses through self-gratification

that is short-lived.

Wouldn't it be nice if there were an alarm that accompanied temptations, warning us of impending dangers that come our way during the course of our life? The fact is: we have such a safety device built in and it's called a conscience. But like any annoying alarm, our first instinct may be to silence it, especially when it tells us something we'd rather not hear.

One of my favorite passages is from Ezekiel, who prophesizing in the name of the Lord said, "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (Ez 36:26). Scripture assures us that when the alarm of our conscience alerts us to impending danger, we have the equivalent of the Geek Squad at our disposal, and it's called prayer.

Like the technician, God is unseen, yet he directs us remotely by softening our heart to his Word and teachings. This makes turning to Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church or the advice of someone who is more knowledgeable makes sense, for just as we look to experts in technology to assist us when our computer is threatened, so we have the Holy Spirit and experts in moral theology who can rescue us from evil.

In teaching his disciples to pray, Jesus included in the Our Father a plea to be delivered from evil.



Having experienced temptations himself, he knew that we needed supernatural help.

With help so close at hand, there's no reason to remain hostage to Satan's phishing expeditions. We are not computers; we are flesh and blood human beings, and to be human is to have a heart that can be informed either by the Holy Spirit or by Satan. The choice is ours.

When we succumb to temptation, we open ourselves to all types of deceptions because one lie leads to another and another and another until the heart of flesh that God gave us returns to stone. When that happens, it becomes all but impossible for the light of Christ to penetrate. Then we become like computers that are locked and unable to function until we surrender our will to the mercy of God and allow him to guide us.

Like computer technicians who work remotely from home, the Holy Spirit continues to guide and enlighten us in ways we may not see

or even understand. All we have to do is ask for help.

The fortunate part is that we already have a lifelong subscription that we received at baptism. All we have to do is call upon God and ask for wisdom, trusting that he knows far better than us what is in our best interest. Jesus reassured us that not a hair on our head goes unnoticed by the Father who loves us and wants nothing more than for us to be happy with him for all eternity. He promised that he will wipe "every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain" (Rv 21:4).

There will be no more phishing expeditions to have to deal with, a plan worth subscribing to in this life so that we may be happy for all eternity.

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

## Follow God's example in being merciful to others



**BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY**  
DEACON CHRISTOPHER COLVILLE

A major theme in the readings for this weekend is God's mercy. The ideas of being lost and the individual are connected to it. The Gospel uses the word "lost" in reference to the sheep, the coin and the son. In this context, it represents separation.

When we sin, we are separated from God; we are lost. Only when we realize that we are lost, that we have sinned, do we become aware of God's mercy. Sometimes that awareness happens through the actions of others, and sometimes it happens in other ways.

In the reading from Exodus, the Israelites experience God's mercy through the intervention of Moses. God relents of their punishment, and the Israelites experience God's mercy. In the reading from Timothy, Paul explains how he was the greatest of sinners and acknowledges that he is what he is only through the grace and

mercy of God. He experienced the realization of his sin through his encounter with Jesus on his way to Damascus.

The son in the third parable of the Gospel realizes his sin and returns to the father and experiences his mercy. The father's love and forgiveness have always been there, waiting for his son to return. He tells the older son that his brother "was lost and has been found." Only when we find ourselves, and realize our separation from God, can we return to God and experience God's mercy.

If we look at the Gospel from another perspective, it is about completeness for individuals and their connection to the community. In the first two parables, Jesus uses the numbers 10 and

100 to represent completeness. The one sheep and one coin represent more than their value in monetary terms.

For the shepherd, missing one sheep made him feel incomplete because his flock wasn't complete. The woman is incomplete without the 10th coin. It was customary for a married woman to wear a headpiece with 10 coins woven into it signifying she was married. Since Jesus doesn't call the woman a widow, his audience knew the significance of the 10 coins.

Her cause for rejoicing is the completeness of her headpiece, restoring her status as a married woman in the eyes of her friends and the community.

Having one son gone means the father is incomplete; part of him is missing. The son's return restores the father to completeness in his mind and with the community. The fatted calf in that parable indicates the entire community was invited to rejoice with the father. When one repents and is found, the whole family of God rejoices and celebrates.

Psalm 51 tells us that God will not spurn a contrite and humbled heart. If we look at the shepherd, the woman and the father as representing God, we see the great lengths God goes to for those who are lost. As members of God's family, we are called to share God's mercy in our life, to help individuals find themselves, to be complete.

God's mercy is unconditional and should be offered as such. We are called to do this without regard to their status in life, where they are from, what they have done, what they haven't done, what they believe or don't believe. We are called to reach out to people where they are in life, not where we think they should be.

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

### Twenty-Fourth Sunday Cycle C

**Ex 32 7-11, 13-14;**

**Ps 51: 3-4, 12-13, 17, 19;**

**1 Tm 1 12-17; Lk 15:1-32**

# Why pregnancy centers are under attack

## Resource person says their purpose is misunderstood

**BARB UMBERGER**

Catholic News Service

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Angela Franey, executive director of Abria Pregnancy Resources, said recent vandalism at the organization's St. Paul location and dozens of similar attacks on pregnancy centers around the country reflect recent anger and misunderstanding around the issue of abortion.

She also believes the damage stems from a misunderstanding of the mission of Abria and other like centers.

Abria's staff love and help women, she said, and provide a variety of information so they know they have options.

"We never tell them what to do," she said, but instead, offer them information to help make a fully informed decision. "And we respect their ability to do that," she told The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Attacks on pro-life pregnancy centers, like Abria, as well as churches have taken place across the country since early May, when a draft opinion of the

U.S. Supreme Court decision in the Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization case was leaked.

The court's June 24 decision in the Dobbs case ultimately overturned Roe v. Wade, which had legalized abortion nationwide. The new ruling allows states to decide their own laws regarding abortion.

To date, there have been about 40 such attacks on centers and churches, and Jane's Revenge has claimed responsibility for many of them. Described as "a militant, extremist, pro-abortion rights group," it was formed shortly after the leak of the draft opinion.

Since the Supreme Court's decision, there also have been calls nationwide to crack down legislatively on pregnancy care centers that some believe deceive women.

When Abria was targeted by vandals Aug. 1, it was the first time the center had been attacked. That morning when Franey entered the back door of the center about 7:30 a.m., she found a softball-sized rock in the hallway that appeared to have been thrown through glass in both front doors.

Looking at the front of the building, she saw in red spray paint

the words: "If abortions aren't safe, neither are you."

No one has claimed responsibility for the actions, Franey said, which were reported to and were being investigated by the police.

Abria remained closed Aug. 1 as staff cleaned up. But the center opened as usual Aug. 2.

"It's safe now, and no one was hurt," Franey said. "Our goal is to make things safe and secure again, to pick up the pieces, to meet the challenge face to face and continue to overcome these things with good, because that's what we do."

Abria, which also has a location in Minneapolis, offers lab-quality tests, ultrasounds performed by trained medical personnel, medical consultation, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections.

Non-medical services include pregnancy and parenting education, personal support services, life coaching, material assistance, referrals to community resources and more. All at no charge.

If women choose life, Abria helps make it possible, Franey said, with baby supplies, education and referrals to community resour-

es. If people knew Abria's mission, Franey does not believe individuals would turn as much to violence.

Abria receives some funding from the Catholic Services Appeal Foundation in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis and none from the government. About 90% of its funding comes from individual donors, Franey said.

More recently, vandals attacked a western Massachusetts pregnancy center that provides women facing a crisis pregnancy with free diapers, wipes, baby clothes, strollers and car seats.

Early Aug. 18, vandals spray-painted "Jane's Revenge" on benches located outside of Bethlehem House in Easthampton, near Springfield, along with the same message left at the St. Paul center: "If abortion isn't safe, neither are you."

Bethlehem House, which receives support from the annual Catholic Appeal of the Diocese of Springfield, also offers free pregnancy resources, including referrals for employment, health care and educational services. Families receive assistance until the baby is 18 months old. In addition, Bethlehem House offers post-abortion counseling.

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD

With the new pastoral year underway, let's catch up on what we've heard over the summer.

**Service to God and country:** Deacon Gregg Whisler, ordained last fall, is deployed with the Virginia Army National Guard and serving in Eastern Europe. When home, he serves at St. Edward the Confessor, North Chesterfield.

**Gratitude for generosity:** Archbishop Bernard Bober of the Archdiocese of Kosice in Slovakia thanked Bishop Barry C. Knestout and the people of the Diocese of Richmond for the \$43,645.81 they sent to his archdiocese in June. That was part of \$218,229.06 collected for the Church in Eastern Central Europe.

In a letter to Bishop Knestout, the archbishop wrote: "Please, know that the funds you have given us will directly impact the lives of Ukrainian refugees — mostly mothers with their children that we care for in the Archdiocese of Kosice."

Speaking of collections, the Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be taken up Sept. 24-25. The faithful of the diocese contributed \$128,197.84 to last year's appeal. Nationally, it raised more than \$28 million, which was distributed to 271 U.S. religious communities. Among local beneficiaries were the Comboni Missionary Sisters, Mary Mother of the Church Abbey, Monastery of Poor Clares and Our Lady of the Angels Monastery.

**What a difference a year makes:** More than 12 months ago, the Nightingale Ministry at St. Nicholas, Virginia Beach, began with seven women. Today, it has 17 members which come from several parishes. According to coordinator Susan Saunders, thanks to the group, she has taken "hundreds of homemade cards to assisted living facilities such as Marian Manor and Our Lady of Perpetual Help," and sends cards every month to "the homebound, ill or forgotten."

**Honored:** On Friday, Aug. 26, Benedictine College Prep presented Bishop Knestout with a bust of Servant of God Frank Parater, a 1917 Benedictine alumnus and seminarian of the Diocese of Richmond who passed away while in the seminary. It is an artistic rendering and model that was used to create a full-size statue of him for the Hall of Valor at Benedictine. The bust will be placed in the Museum of Catholic History at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.

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# Synod process focuses on listening, changing attitudes

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The input and feedback coming from those taking part in the synodal journey underway around the world have inspired feelings of gratitude, hope and deeper faith for the many people involved with the process, said a panel of officials and organizers for the Synod of Bishops.

Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops, said organizers are seeing “a Church that is alive, in need of authenticity, healing and that increasingly yearns to be a community that celebrates and proclaims the joy of the Gospel, learning to walk and discern together.”

He and others spoke to reporters at a Vatican news conference Aug. 26, updating the results of the concluded first phase of the synodal process.

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg, relator general of the synod, said that reading the syntheses from the episcopal conferences and other major organizations representing the Church “has produced in me, as a disciple of Christ and as a bishop, a great spiritual consolation that opens up to a great hope. This hope must now be transformed into missionary dynamism.”

The Synod of Bishops’ office has received the summaries from more than 100 of the world’s 114 bishops’ conferences, “and they are

still arriving. This incredible figure tells us that yes, the Church is in synod!” he said.

The world’s bishops’ conferences were asked to send in reports by mid-August synthesizing the experiences, questions, discussions and insights that emerged from their parishes and dioceses.

The “second” or “continental phase” of the process has begun, in which the Synod of Bishops’ office will group together the bishops’ conferences’ reports by continent, then draft a document that highlights the priorities and core issues that emerge on a broader, more “continental” scale.

Each continental document will go back to the bishops’ conferences in that area so they can be sent to the local, parish and diocesan levels for a period of reflection, listening, dialogue and discernment that responds to and enriches the document from the synod office. Those responses will be returned to the Synod of Bishops’ office and will form the foundation for building the working document for the general assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023.

Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart, one of two undersecretaries of the Synod of Bishops, said she has seen the local Churches really want the synodal journey to continue.

“There was an impressive mobilization around the world to Pope Francis’ call,” she said through an interpreter. The mobilization in-

cluded the many nations that are experiencing enormous hardship and difficulties, like Ukraine and Congo, to name a few, she said.

Challenges remain for the continental phase, she said, because there still needs to be better formation on how to work as a team and how to listen as well as a “change in mentality,” she said.

There needs to be a “mindset” that sees everyone having equal dignity, and, therefore, needing to be included and listened to, she said. That would mean there needs to be much more input from young people, women, those who experience great suffering and hardship, and victims of abuse, she added. They must also “be part of the process.”

In the question-and-answer portion of the conference, Cardinal Hollerich spoke about the purpose of the synod in listening to everyone and the importance of respecting Church doctrine. The question specifically pointed to the cardinal’s past remarks calling for a change in the Church’s teaching on homosexuality.

“I fully believe in the tradition of the Church, and what is important, I think, in this (synodal) process is not a change of doctrine, but to listen to everybody, to listen also to the suffering of people, I think of parents, for instance, and for people concerned,” he said.

The aim is not to have a change in doctrine, he said, “but a change of attitude: that we are a Church where everybody can feel at home.”

“I am not in favor of changing any doctrine, I am in favor (of) a Church where really everybody can feel welcome, and this welcome does not mean that there cannot be discussions” and different positions, he said.

“If we close the door on people, we push some people into despair, and that is something that we do not want,” he said.



## Synod

Continued from Page 1

ishes felt like it was a great opportunity to really have their voices heard.”

After the response window closed at the end of March, the commission summarized the parish submissions into one report that would be sent to the USCCB.

“That was very intimidating,” Father Goertz said, “but it was encouraging as we read through the different parish summaries that there were definitely some prominent themes that kept coming to the surface that we would be able to reflect on in that final summary.”

Reaching people in the margins – inactive Catholics or those who have left the Church altogether – was a common challenge for parishes.

“This isn’t to me that necessarily surprising, I don’t think for anyone who worked on the document either, but a big push was to get the people on the margins to participate, and it felt like we did not get those people to participate. And I don’t think very many people did as we worked with other dioceses,” Waring said.

### Struggles with catechesis, evangelization

While he felt the responses were “very authentic,” the responses should be looked at from the perspective of those who did participate, meaning many responses were from active Catholics who were sharing their thoughts on why people have left the Church rather than fallen-away Catholics speaking for themselves.

Some parishes also reported that they had difficulty reaching Hispanic parishioners.

Waring said that some parishes with large Hispanic populations “tried in a number of different ways to have even Spanish-speaking consultation sessions, and they just weren’t attended as well as they had hoped or as they planned for.”

He noted that the lack of numbers from that group was “a little surprising” because demographics indicate that the Church’s Hispanic population is increasing, so there was “hope to have that voice heard” in local discussions.

Other trends that stood out to Waring were that “almost every parish said that they were welcoming” and that “it was so clear that parishes are struggling with catechesis and evangelization.” He explained that adults often don’t understand the faith well enough to share it with others.

The other “big one” that Waring said he “kind of anticipated” based on statistical data is that young people “between the ages of really 13 and 25” are leaving the Church.

“People are aware of that in the pews, and they’re very worried about it – on a personal level because it’s their (family), or on a bigger Church level.”

### Process helpful to parishes, diocese

Father Goertz identified “divisiveness” seen “in both the content and the process” from some parishes as a challenge and said that “often it was along sort of conservative/liberal, traditional/progressive labels.” He added that there was also mention of “disappointment in the divisiveness that is often reflected from Church leaders at different levels... on teachings

or matters of practice or discipline.”

He made it clear that the hope for this process is that parishes will take their discussions to heart.

“We still are encouraging parishes: ‘Use your own local synodal report as continued food for reflection in the months and years ahead. Don’t let this be just an exercise that you wrote a report, you gave it to the diocese, now we’re going to abandon it. Let’s keep using this and keep reflecting on it,’” Father Goertz said, noting that based on the responses, some parishes are already implementing changes and have mentioned a desire to continue having those types of conversations.

Waring said the process was helpful at the diocesan level as well.

“When you work for the diocese, you see things at a lot of different parishes, but you’re also not hearing from the people in the pews all the time; you’re hearing from staff members or priests,” he said. “So this, I think and I hope, gave the Pastoral Center and directors of different offices the opportunity to hear directly from people and to hear, ‘Okay, this is what people are saying. This has to be an emphasis for our office moving forward...’ And I think that’s helpful because we can respond and say, ‘OK, you asked for this’ or ‘We heard that people need this, and we’re going to support you in this.’”

*Editor’s note: The entire synthesis from the Diocesan Evangelization Commission can be found online in English and Spanish at [www.richmonddiocese.org](http://www.richmonddiocese.org).*

## Pope tells cardinals ‘avoid worldliness’

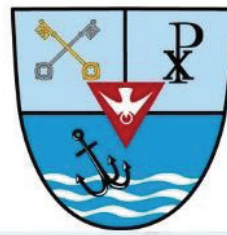
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Jesus’ call to spread the Gospel should fill all Christians, especially those within the Church hierarchy, with a sense of wonder and gratitude, Pope Francis said. Celebrating Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica Aug. 30 with the College of Cardinals, the pope said this sense of wonder “sets us free from the temptation of thinking that we can ‘manage things.’ Today the Church is big, it is solid, and we occupy eminent positions in its hierarchy. They call us ‘eminence,’” he told the cardinals and the estimated 4,500 people present. “There is some truth in this, but there is also much deception, whereby the father of lies seeks to make Christ’s followers first worldly, then innocuous. This calling is under the temptation of worldliness and, step-by-step, it takes away your strength, it takes away your hope,

it takes you away from seeing the gaze of Jesus, who calls us by name and sends us. This is the cancer, the woodworm of spiritual worldliness,” the pope added, departing from his prepared remarks.

The votive Mass, offered “for the Church,” was celebrated after the pope met with cardinals from around the world Aug. 29-30 to reflect on the apostolic constitution “Praedicate evangelium” (Preach the Gospel) on the reform of the Roman Curia.

“The work in language groups and exchanges in the hall provided an opportunity for free discussion on many aspects related to the document and the life of the Church,” the Vatican said in a statement published Aug. 30.

The final session of the pope’s meeting with the cardinals, the statement said, was dedicated to the Jubilee Year in 2025.



Saint Pius X  
Catholic Church  
Norfolk, Virginia

## LUNCH & LEARN SERIES

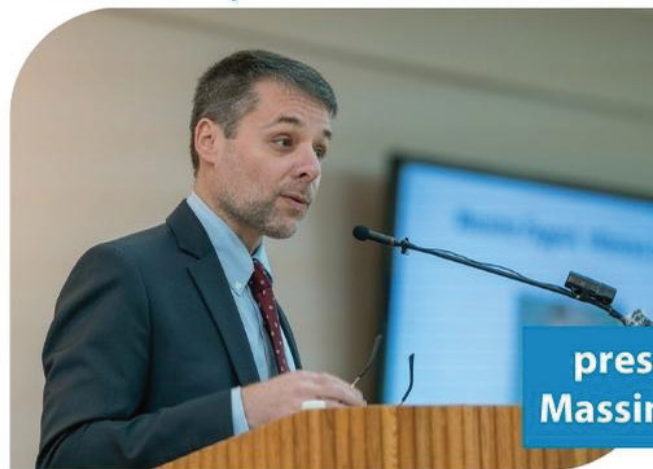
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Dr. Massimo Faggioli is full professor in the department of theology and religious studies at Villanova University (Philadelphia). He received his PhD in Religious History from the University of Turin in 2002 with a thesis on the history of the appointment of bishops after the Council of Trent. His books and articles have been widely published in eight languages. Massimo Faggioli is a young, bright, articulate, theologian of the new generation of Catholic intellectuals who is making a very significant contribution to theology, ecclesiology and church history in the contemporary Church.

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## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for September 11, 2022

Luke 15: 1-32

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: The lesson of finding what is lost. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

COLLECTORS	PHARISEES	WELCOMES
EATS	PARABLE	ONE HUNDRED
LOSING ONE	SHOULDERS	FRIENDS
REJOICE	FOUND	IN HEAVEN
ONE SINNER	REPENTS	WOMAN
TEN	COINS	LAMP
SWEEP	HOUSE	CAREFULLY

### FOUND

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

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## Correction

Due to outdated information posted by Central Virginia Cursillo, the editor’s note in the Aug. 22 issue of The Catholic Virginian contained incorrect information. Please contact Kaitlin Cox at [kdichristina@gmail.com](mailto:kdichristina@gmail.com) or 804-516-4704, or Joanna Haliday at [joanna.haliday@yahoo.com](mailto:joanna.haliday@yahoo.com) for information about Cursillo weekends in 2023.

# Union membership increases at Catholic institutions

## Popular in health care, education

MARK PATTISON  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The number of Catholic institutions where at least some of its employees have union representation has grown to more than 600, according to the annual “Gaudium et Spes Labor Report” issued Aug. 24 by the Catholic Labor Network.

The number could be even greater, as most unionized Catholic workplaces have self-reported to the Catholic Labor Network, according to its executive director, Clayton Sinyai.

Most of these workplaces are concentrated in the health care and education fields, according to the report.

“There are more than 600 Catholic institutions in the United States modeling Catholic Social Teaching through collaborative, mutually rewarding relations of collective bargaining with their direct and indirect (contract) employees,” Sinyai said in the report’s preface.

The report takes its name from “Gaudium et Spes,” the Second Vatican Council’s Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World. Approved in 1965, “Gaudium et Spes” is Latin for “Joy and Hope.”

### Health care

One passage in “Gaudium et Spes” proclaims: “Among the basic rights of the human person is to be numbered the right of freely founding unions for working people. These should be able truly to represent them and to contribute to the organizing of economic life in the right way. Included is the right of freely taking part in the activity of these unions without risk of reprisal.”

“More than half the employees who enjoy union representation are employed in Catholic hospitals and nursing homes. The Catholic Health Association reports that there are more than 600 Catholic hospitals and nearly 1,600 nursing homes,” the report said.

“The hospitals alone employ more than 500,000 full-time employees and another 200,000 part-time workers. Tens of thousands of nurses, certified nursing assistants, technical staff, and other employees.”

It added: “There are nearly 300 Catholic hospitals and health care institutions in the United States whose employees enjoy the benefits of union representation.”

While consolidation within the hospital industry has resulted, in some instances, of Catholic hospital groups buying non-Catholic hospitals, that does not necessarily make them Catholic hospitals automatically, Sinyai told CNS.

Sinyai, in an Aug. 30 phone interview with Catholic News Service, said the hospital has to be listed as a Catholic hospital in the directory of the Catholic Health Association to be included in the report. A hospital is

deemed “Catholic” if it pledges to follow the 72 points in the U.S. bishops’ Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services.

### Education

In education, there are more unionized faculty at the elementary and high school level than in higher education. Sinyai, though, pointed to greater interest in organizing by adjunct professors at Catholic colleges and universities. One of the most recent of these organizing drives resulted in representation by adjunct faculty at Santa Clara University in California.

The report noted that four Catholic colleges are righting efforts of their adjunct professors to organize: St. Xavier University in Chicago, Manhattan College in New York City, Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, and Seattle University in Seattle.

At the college level, “tenured faculty on the other hand, are considered management employees; although they can and sometimes do form unions, the (National) Labor (Relations) Board will not protect them from retaliation if they do so,” the report said.

Educators in Catholic grade schools and high schools face similar challenges. “Because they are directly operated by the Church and charged with teaching religious doctrine to Catholic youth, the courts have exempted these schools from the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Act, citing the First Amendment’s absolute protections of religious freedom,” the report noted.

“This exemption does NOT mean that teachers lack the right to form unions and bargain collectively, just that the National Labor Relations Board will not protect them from those that might violate their rights,” it added.

“The NLRB’s absence does not absolve the pastor, school board or principal from the bishops’ injunction that ‘all the moral principles that govern the just operation of any economic endeavor apply to the Church and its agencies and institutions; indeed the Church should be exemplary,’” the report said, quoting the U.S. bishops’ 1986 pastoral letter, “Economic Justice for All.”

The report estimates 300 K-12 Catholic schools across the United States have union representation, “established mutually rewarding collective bargaining relationships with individual Catholic schools or entire diocesan school systems.”

Among the remaining unionized workforces found in the report, a large share belong to Catholic Charities or Catholic Social Services affiliates and Catholic cemetery workers, while other institutions’ food service workers or custodial staff have union representation.

## Bristol buddies



On Monday, Aug. 22, the opening day of school at St. Anne, Bristol, eighth graders walk with their kindergarten buddies to the first school Mass. In the back, eighth grader Georgia Kate Massengill walks with Adeline Sigmund. In the front, kindergartner Lily Brookshire is accompanied by Lily Hughes. (Photo/Nicole Hughes)

## Pope tells Catholic lawmakers to combat inequality, injustice

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The world needs lawmakers who are capable, inspired by love and dedicated to serving the most vulnerable, Pope Francis told Catholic and Christian legislators.

“I encourage your ongoing efforts, on the national and international levels, to work for the adoption of policies and laws that seek to address, in a spirit of solidarity, the many situations of inequality and injustice threatening the social fabric and the inherent dignity of all people,” the pope said during an audience at the Vatican Aug. 25.

“If we are to heal our world, so sorely tried by rivalries and forms of violence that result from a desire to dominate rather than to serve, we need not only responsible citizens, but also capable leaders, inspired by a fraternal love directed especially toward those in the most precarious conditions of life,” he said.

Pope Francis was speaking to members and representatives of the International Catholic Legislators Network, who were in Rome for an annual conference.

The pope told those in atten-

dance that so many people today “cry out for justice, particularly the most vulnerable who often have no voice and who look to civic and political leaders to protect, through effective public policy and legislation, their dignity as children of God and the inviolability of their fundamental human rights.”

Among those who are most vulnerable, he said, are “the poor, migrants and refugees, victims of human trafficking, the sick and elderly and so many other individuals who risk being exploited or discarded by today’s ‘throwaway’ culture.”

The challenge facing lawmakers is “working to safeguard and enhance within the public sphere those right relationships that allow each person to be treated with the respect, and indeed the love, that is due to him or her,” he said. Jesus offers the best reminder, “Do to others as you would have them do to you,” he added.

But, for there to be a just society, “the bond of fraternity” is needed, that is, the “sense of shared responsibility and concern for the integral development and well-being of each member of our human family,” the pope said.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**St. Joseph Church, Hampton,** seeks a part-time music coordinator (25 hours/week). Responsible for the preparation, development, scheduling and presentation of all music for the parish. Job responsibilities include coordinate/play music for all weekend and holy day liturgies. Coordinate/play music for funerals, weddings, reconciliation services. Direct choir rehearsals. Participate in the planning of parish liturgies. Attend quarterly liturgy committee meetings. Coordinate, train and develop musicians, cantors/song leaders. Prepare an annual music budget. Participate in diocesan/regional gatherings pertinent to liturgy/music. Applicants should possess a bachelor's degree in music or equivalent education and experience. Prefer a practicing Catholic in good standing, familiar with Catholic liturgy. Salary commensurate with experience. Send cover letter, résumé and application to Paul DeFluri, manager, Peninsula Cluster Parishes, Phone: 757-851-8800, FAX: 757-851-1875 or email: pdefluri@gmail.com.

**Office Manager** St. Elizabeth Church, a small, dynamic and diverse parish in the heart of Richmond, located in the Highland Park area, is seeking a part-time (10-15 hours/week) office manager. The office manager must work well with others, have computer skills including knowledge of Microsoft applications, and will be in charge of keeping track of parish records, sacramental records, VIRTUS information, ordering supplies and keeping the office environment maintained. The parish office hours are Tuesday through Friday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Please contact Father Jim Arsenault at jarsenault@richmond.diocese.org to apply.

**St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen,** is seeking a coordinator of elementary faith formation for a dynamic, multi-cultural parish of 3000+ households. The coordinator is responsible for the implementation of children's catechesis and faith formation in the parish, which includes early childhood (0-3 years old), pre-school (3-4), elementary (k-5) and Vacation Bible School. The position also implements family faith events, safe environment compliance, volunteer recruiting and trainings, and preparation programs for the sacraments of first reconciliation and first Holy Communion. Professional and personal faith development are supported and encouraged by the pastor. Communication and collaboration with other staff and ministries is expected. The position requires 35 flexible hours per week, including evenings and some weekends. The coordinator will maintain agreed upon office hours during the week in relation to hours worked in the evenings and on the weekends. This position requires a bachelor's de-

gree/equivalency. Position desires a candidate with at least three years' ministry experience as a catechist and/or teaching in early education, elementary settings. To apply, please submit résumé and cover letter stating why you are interested in the position to Sarah Brockwell, director of faith formation, at sbrockwell@saintmikes.org. To see the full job description, please visit: <https://bit.ly/StMikeElementaryFaithFormation>.

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, Hampton,** seeks a full-time office manager, non-exempt position, responsible for providing approximately 35 hours per week of office administrative support to the parish. Office hours are 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. M-Thur and 9 a.m. - noon on Friday, as the position is full-time, other hours are required. Employed by the pastor and supervised by the manager of the Peninsula Cluster Parishes. Applicant should possess demonstrated experience in administrative/office skills and a strong working knowledge of MS Office applications. Familiarity with the ParishSoft is a plus. The qualified candidate must be highly organized, able to multi-task, possess strong written and verbal communication skills, be able to maintain confidentiality, take direction, work independently and always interact professionally and respectfully with all individuals. The position may require occasional lifting. Applicants should possess a high school diploma and have experience working in an office setting. Full job description can be found at [stjosephcatholic.org](http://stjosephcatholic.org) or [rb.gy/aie3e7](http://rb.gy/aie3e7).

To apply for this position, please send a cover letter, résumé and diocesan application to: Paul DeFluri, manager, Peninsula Cluster Parishes. Phone: 757-851-8800; FAX: 757-851-1875; email [pdefluri@peninsulacluster.org](mailto:pdefluri@peninsulacluster.org).

**The Church of St. Therese, Gloucester,** is seeking a faithful and passionate Catholic who loves Jesus and his Church for full-time employment as the coordinator of youth ministry. The successful candidate will be one who strives to lead a life of personal holiness and has a shepherd's heart to search out and lead teens closer to Christ. He/she must have the energy to build a youth program from scratch. Applicants should have at least a bachelor's degree in a related field and a minimum of three years' experience in youth ministry. The position is responsible for overseeing the middle school and high school programs with vision, including sacramental preparation for confirmation, with special attention given to empowering lay leadership among adults and teens. Salary and benefits consistent with diocesan guidelines, qualifications and experience. Send cover letter, resume and Richmond Diocesan application to the pastor, Father Gregory Kandt, at [fr.gregory@stthersglo.org](mailto:fr.gregory@stthersglo.org). For more information, call Father Gregory at 804-693-9043.

**The Catholic Diocese of Richmond** is seeking a coordinator of campus ministry to serve the Catholic campus ministries at Norfolk State University and Hampton University. Norfolk State University is a public, historically black university with an enrollment of over 5,000 students. Hampton University is a private, historically black, research university with enrollment of almost 5,000 students. The coordinator of campus ministry is responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of a campus ministry program for the students of both Norfolk State University and Hampton University. These responsibilities include developing student leaders,

pastorally responding to student needs, and overseeing student programs and activities. Additionally, the coordinator oversees financial accounts and serves as the liaison between the local Catholic parishes.

**Qualifications:** Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required with a master's degree preferred (in a relevant field). 3-5 years of prior experience in pastoral work, preferably campus ministry. This is a 30 hour/week, non-exempt, hourly position. Pay is commensurate with experience and diocesan pay scale. Interested applicants apply at <https://bit.ly/3txeIDq>.

## SHORTTAKES

**St. Mary's Catholic School, Richmond,** invites middle school students and parents to kick off their high school search at the annual High School Information Fair, Thursday, Sept. 15, 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m., in the Upper Commons of St. Mary Church. Representatives from more than 20 high schools will be on hand to discuss upcoming open house events and how to apply. The event is free to attend and open to anyone; however, the favor of an online RSVP is requested for attendee communication and planning purposes. Please visit <https://saintmary.org/event/high-school-information-night/> for more details or RSVP here: <https://bit.ly/HSinfo091522>.

**St. Pius X Church and School, Norfolk,** is hosting a golf tournament at Kingsmill Resort, Williamsburg, Friday, Sept. 30. The event will open at 7:30 a.m. with check-in and 9 a.m. shotgun start. Format is captain's choice scramble. Registration is \$125/per player or \$500/team of four. Entry fee includes green fees, golf cart, range balls, a buffet lunch and prizes. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact Vy Barto, development director, for more information: [development@piusxparish.org](mailto:development@piusxparish.org) or 757-381-7124.

**Discuss Dante's "Inferno" and theological "treasures" online** in lively discussion groups sponsored by the adult formation program at Charlottesville's Holy Comforter Church. This fall's groups include Dante's "Divine Comedy" – a rollicking adventure, starting with the "Inferno," with profound theology behind it – and "Trinity and Incarnation from the Origins," which will study Christianity's two central mysteries as described by Church doctors and fathers like Origen, St. Augustine, St. Hildegard of Bingen and St. Bonaventure. All groups meet once a week or less and move at a slow, easy pace with expert guidance. A per-session fee applies, but the first meeting is a free sample, and a sliding scale is available. Groups begin in mid-September and schedule

is determined by group needs, so please contact organizer John Bugbee ([bugbee@thetreasures.org](mailto:bugbee@thetreasures.org)) or visit <https://thetreasures.org>, ASAP.

**The Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus, Father Habets Assembly (#1505),** is hosting a charitable golf tournament to benefit the USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia, which directly supports our local service men and women. The tournament, which is open to the public, will take place on Friday, Oct. 7, at the Sewell's Point Golf Club. There will be a noon shotgun start. The registration includes door prizes, picnic dinner, drinks, goody bag and lots of great golf. Come out to support our military men and women. For more information about the tournament including sponsorships, registration and donations, visit the tournament website at <https://birdease.com/2022USOWarriorClassic>.

**The Norfolk Catholic High School classes of 1971 and 1972** are planning a joint reunion on Saturday, Oct. 8, at The DoubleTree Inn, 1500 N Military Hwy., Norfolk. The contact for Class of 1972 is Carol Mishler ([camishler@aol.com](mailto:camishler@aol.com)). The contact for Class of 1971 is John Bladin ([nchs7150@gmail.com](mailto:nchs7150@gmail.com) or [reelyjb@gmail.com](mailto:reelyjb@gmail.com)). If you purchased tickets earlier for the Class of 1971 reunion attempt last year and have not gotten a refund, you are still registered. If you wish to attend under either year, please contact your class contact to RSVP and receive more details.

**End of Life Planning.** The Diocese of Richmond, through the Office for Evangelization, invites you to join us for a half-day seminar on planning for the end of life. This practical seminar will look at funeral planning, spiritual preparation, wills and trusts, legacy giving, and advance medical directives. It's an opportunity to hear about what you can do to help get your affairs in order and to plan. The seminar will be offered in-person on Wednesday, Nov. 16, at the Pastoral Center in Richmond from 9 a.m. – noon. We will offer a virtual option for those unable to attend in person. Learn more and register at [evangelizerichmond.org/events/end-of-life-planning](http://evangelizerichmond.org/events/end-of-life-planning).

# La alianza entre ancianos y niños salvará a la familia humana

**A**l reanudar su catequesis, en el ámbito de la audiencia general de esta mañana celebrada en el Aula Pablo VI, el Papa Francisco continuó su serie sobre la vejez. En esta ocasión destacó que el testimonio que los ancianos pueden dar a los niños y a los jóvenes “es creíble” porque mira “al horizonte de nuestro destino” es decir, la vida eterna. Por esta razón es dañino ver hoy la separación entre las edades de la vida, como si compitieran entre ellas

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

“La alianza de mayores con los más pequeños salvará a la familia humana” si desenvolvemos a los niños, que deben “aprender a nacer”, “el tierno testimonio de los ancianos que poseen la sabiduría de la muerte”. Un testimonio que “para los niños es creíble”, más que para los jóvenes y los adultos, porque la vejez encierra el horizonte de nuestro destino. Por eso “es doloroso y perjudicial ver las edades de la vida concebidas como mundos separados, en competencia entre sí”.

Este es el núcleo de la catequesis del Papa Francisco durante la audiencia general de esta mañana, celebrada en el Aula Pablo VI de la Ciudad del Vaticano ante varios miles de fieles y peregrinos procedentes de diversos países. Se trató de la 17ª catequesis dedicada a la vejez.

## El Primero y el Último

El Santo Padre comentó un pasaje del Antiguo Testamento, tomado del Libro de Daniel, que describe un sueño del profeta, “una visión de Dios tan misteriosa como esplendorosa”. Una visión referida a Jesús resucitado, “que se le aparece al vidente como Mesías”, le pone la mano en el hombro y lo tranquiliza: “¡No temas! Yo soy el Primero y el Último, y el Viviente. Estaba muerto, pero ahora vivo para siempre”.

El Obispo de Roma comentó al respecto que, de este modo, desaparece “la última barrera de miedo y angustia” que siempre ha suscitado la manifestación de Dios: “El Viviente nos tranquiliza. También él murió, pero ahora ocupa el lugar que le está destinado: el del Primero y el Último”.

## Relación entre la teofanía y el ciclo de la vida

Al resumir en nuestro idioma su catequesis el Pontífice dijo a los queridos hermanos y hermanas presentes que “los diversos símbolos nos hacen ver la relación entre la teofanía, o sea la manifestación de la divinidad y el ciclo de la vida”.

*“Dios es Señor del tiempo y de la historia. Por un lado, se nos presenta la imagen de un Dios anciano, particularmente cuando se habla de sus cabellos que eran como la lana pura; y, por otro lado, vemos su fuerza y su belleza, representadas en el fuego”*

## Ante el misterio de la eternidad de Dios

Francisco afirmó que “estamos delante del misterio de la eternidad de Dios: conviven lo antiguo y lo nuevo. Por eso – añadió – el testimonio de los ancianos es un don auténtico, una verdadera bendición para los niños”. De ahí su afirmación de que “la alianza de los mayores con los más pequeños salvará la familia humana”.

*“Las etapas de la vida no son mundos separados que compiten entre sí, sino más bien son una alianza que une pasado, presente y futuro, dándole a la humanidad fuerza y belleza”*



(CNS photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

## Saludos del Papa

*“Saludo cordialmente a los peregrinos de lengua española. Pidamos la intercesión de la Bienaventurada Virgen María, Asunta a los cielos, para que podamos siempre contemplar el misterio de la vida y de la muerte con ojos de eternidad. Que Dios los bendiga. Muchas gracias”*

## Buscar a Jesús en los ancianos y en los pobres

Al dar su bienvenida a los queridos peregrinos de lengua portuguesa, el Obispo de Roma les deseó que este período de verano, que para muchos es tiempo de vacaciones, sea para todos ellos “una oportunidad de acercarse aún más a Jesucristo”. Puesto que Él “posa su mano sobre nuestros hombros, nos fortifica y nos anima a buscarlo en los ancianos y en los pobres”. Y les deseó que la Virgen de la Asunción nos proteja en este camino de fe.

## “Nuestro destino se abre sobre la vida más bella que no tiene fecha de caducidad”

El Papa saludó a los peregrinos de lengua inglesa invocando sobre todos ellos y sus familias “la alegría y la paz de nuestro Señor Jesucristo”. A los franceses, en cambio, el Santo Padre les dijo que la muerte “es ciertamente un pasaje difícil de la vida. Pero podemos aprender de nuestros mayores, que tienen firme el horizonte de nuestro destino, que se abre sobre la vida más bella que ya no tiene fecha de caducidad”.

## Destino a la vida que la muerte no puede aniquilar

Al saludar de corazón a los peregrinos de lengua alemana el Santo Padre los invitó a tratar de fortalecer, en nuestra vida cotidiana, esa alianza entre ancianos y niños que salva a la familia humana. Mientras a los peregrinos de lengua árabe también les recordó esa alianza, “por lo que la vejez debe dar testimonio a los niños de su bendición, que “consiste en su iniciación”, tan bella como difícil, “en el misterio de un destino a la vida que nadie puede aniquilar, ni siquiera la muerte”.

A los fieles los polacos el Papa les recordó que, durante estos días, miles de peregrinos se dirigen al santuario de Jasna Góra, para rezar “por la paz y la reconciliación en el mundo”. Y destacó que entre ellos hay muchos ucranianos que han encontrado en su país un hogar hospitalario. De ahí su invitación:

## “Confiamos el destino de Europa y del mundo a la Virgen Negra”

Tras dar su bienvenida a los peregrinos de lengua italiana, el Papa saludó a los universitarios de diferentes países y religiones que participan

en las jornadas de encuentro promovidas por la “Obra Giorgio La Pira”. A estos queridos amigos Francisco los animó a seguir caminos de diálogo y de confrontación para construir un mundo de paz”.

También saludó con especial afecto a las Hermanas de la Inmaculada Concepción, que celebran su Capítulo general, sobre las que invocó “copiosos dones del Espíritu Santo” y las invitó “a cooperar generosamente en la evangelización, especialmente de las jóvenes generaciones y de las personas más frágiles”.

## Poner siempre a Cristo y al Evangelio en primer lugar

Por último, como es costumbre, el Obispo de Roma se dirigió a los ancianos, enfermos, jóvenes y recién casados, a quienes les dijo:

*“La solemnidad de la Asunción, que celebramos hace unos días, nos ha invitado a vivir con empeño el camino de este mundo, orientado constantemente hacia los bienes eternos. Que María ayude a todos a poner siempre a Cristo y al Evangelio en primer lugar”*

## Francisco predica y practica la alianza entre generaciones

El Papa recibe con cariño a los más pequeños que le “interrumpen” en las Audiencias Generales y otros encuentros: los abraza, bendice y les regala una sonrisa. Presentamos una recopilación de estos momentos enterredores.

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

“Dejen que los niños vengan a mí”. Las palabras de Jesús en el Evangelio de Mateo (Mt 19,14) se hacen carne viva en el ejemplo del Papa Francisco, quien, entre otras oportunidades, este 17 de agosto recibió una “visita sorpresa” antes de concluir la Audiencia General. Un niño rubio de corta edad subió los escalones del escenario en el Aula Pablo VI. Se acercó hacia el Pontífice, quien lo acogió con dulzura y le regaló un rosario. El pequeño permaneció tranquilo junto al Sucesor de Pedro hasta el final del acto.

Fue un momento especialmente significativo, pues se dio luego de que el Pontífice impartiera su 17ª catequesis del ciclo dedicado a la vejez. En su reflexión, el Obispo de Roma volvió a referirse a la importancia del diálogo entre generaciones y enfatizó que la alianza entre niños y ancianos salvará a la familia humana.

# Deaf principal shows 'the possible' with faith in God

GINA CHRISTIAN  
Catholic News Service

PHILADELPHIA — When she was in fifth grade, Jayda Pugliese realized that “something wasn’t right.”

As a student at St. Mary Interparochial School in Philadelphia, she struggled to keep up in class. Her world was falling silent, due to a progressive disease that attacked her auditory nerves.

Adept at lip-reading, Pugliese managed to pass regular hearing exams until her condition reached a crisis point, and her grades began to plummet.

Now, 25 years later, Pugliese is the principal of St. Mary Interparochial, and an internationally recognized educational leader whose work blends sustainability and spirituality.

“I’ve come full circle,” she said. “I let go and let God.”

Pugliese said she “felt extremely supported” at St. Mary Interparochial after her condition was fully diagnosed.

“They were so inclusive, and so mindful,” she said. “I had speech therapy the entire time, and they set up ASL (American Sign Language) lessons.”

She also participated in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Deaf Apostolate, directed by Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Kathleen Schipani, whom Pugliese described as a “guiding light.”

And she found a heavenly mentor in Philadelphia-born St. Katharine Drexel, whose canonization cause was confirmed by two healings of those with hearing loss.

Pugliese credits the saint’s intercession with helping to slow her own degenerative condition, enabling her to complete her education.

“She became my patroness,” said Pugliese. “For a long while, my nerve damage stopped, and I always say it’s due to St. Katharine Drexel. I needed it to stop for me to get through school.”

At the same time, Pugliese — who relies on hearing aids — describes herself as “a deaf per-

son in a speaking world,” and “an active advocate for deaf individuals.”

While at the former St. Maria Goretti (now Neumann-Goretti) High School in Philadelphia, she launched an ASL program, threw herself into youth organizations and “hit the ground running” with her academics, building on momentum she’d acquired in seventh and eighth grade.

At Holy Family University in Philadelphia, Pugliese earned her bachelor’s degree in special education and elementary education and her master’s in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and literacy.

Her teaching skills — honed in Philadelphia public and charter schools — quickly earned her professional recognition. In 2016, she received the Milken Educator Award (often likened to the Oscars of teaching) in Pennsylvania.

The timing was providential, since Pugliese had been temporarily forced to halt her doctoral studies at Holy Family University for financial reasons.

“I remember sitting in church crying,” said Pugliese, a member of St. Paul Parish in South Philadelphia. “I said to God, ‘I don’t know what your plan is for me, but I’m going to put it in your hands.’”

With the award funding a sizable portion of her degree, Pugliese — who was subsequently named the 2018 National Science Teachers Association Sylvia Shugrue Awardee and a 2019 finalist for Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year — now expects to receive her doctorate next year.

Earlier this summer, she completed one-week collaboration at the Kansas-based Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes as one of the organization’s 2022 fellows.

Pugliese has traveled across the world to give presentations and training on educational best practices, accessible instruction and STEAM-based technology integration for classrooms.

And in the process, she also spreads the Gospel message.

“One of the biggest things I’m known for is merging the sustainable development goals created by the United Nations with the corporal works of mercy,” said Pugliese.

St. Mary’s classrooms are the laboratory for this synthesis, she said.

Thanks to two grants from the Pennsylvania-based Ambassador’s Fund for Catholic Education, the school is creating a fleet of STREAM (science,

technology, religion, engineering, arts and mathematics) carts for classroom use, while piloting a business education course that instills “servant learning, service leadership and empathy,” Pugliese said.

Those qualities govern her own life, she said, noting that her level of hearing “is absolutely at its worst right now.”

“I could possibly go completely deaf in five to seven years,” said Pugliese. “I will trust in God and let him decide what will happen.”

Regardless of the prognosis, she plans to remain in the field of education.

“Maybe I can pave the way for more individuals who are disabled, and who want to go into leadership,” said Pugliese. “I want to show it’s possible.”



Jayda Pugliese

## Title IX

Continued from Page 1

tional Council of Islamic Schools, as well as various dioceses, international associations and nonprofit organizations in a letter of support for a friend-of-the-court brief filed by the National Association of Independent Schools.

In two recent court decisions, judges decided that federal tax-exempt status constitutes federal financial assistance, which in turn affects how Title IX is applied to schools and other tax-exempt nonprofits. The association’s brief calls for reconsideration of those

decisions.

Title IX is the most used name for the federal civil rights law in the United States that was enacted as part of the Education Amendments of 1972. It prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or any other education program that receives funding from the federal government.

The Department of Education under the Biden administration has issued a proposed rule change to Title IX to combat sexual discrimination in schools by boosting victim protections and modifying language to include sexual orientation and gender identity for

LGBTQI+ students.

One of the recent court rulings came in a lawsuit brought by Concordia Preparatory School, a coeducational parochial secondary school serving grades 6-12 in Towson, Maryland.

The U.S. District Court in Maryland rejected the school’s arguments that it was not subject to Title IX and agreed with the plaintiffs that the school’s tax-exempt status represented federal financial assistance sufficient to subject the school to Title IX.

On Aug. 4, Concordia Preparatory School filed a motion to reconsider the District Court’s ruling

or alternatively appeal to the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which is based in Richmond. The circuit includes Maryland.

“Historically, most independent schools have not been subject to Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 because they do not accept federal funds,” said McGuireWoods, an international law firm with headquarters in Richmond. Among its many clients are nonprofit entities.

“Many independent schools carefully evaluate whether to accept certain funds so they can control whether they are subject to Title IX,” it said.

## School

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### ‘Best years of their life’

Many alumni and parents agreed that emphasis on faith is important.

Judith Campbell, who attended the school from third through eighth grade in the 1970s, said her best memory is going to adoration monthly, and to this day, that is “probably one of my favorite things to do with regard to my faith.” Her second favorite memory of the school is watching religious movies as a student body each month during the school day.

She said the religious foundation “helps the rest of your life fall into place the way it should be. It’s ordered in a positive, holy way.”

Vicki Sofianek, fifth grade and middle school science teacher, said the school has “a huge alumni population” that “stays a part of the St. Mary’s community for decades.” She said she often hears alumni say “things like ‘it was the best years of their life’ or ‘one of the best years’” or “‘I couldn’t have done without this.’”

Likewise, Sister Mary Cecilia, who has been principal since summer 2021, said, “When I came to St. Mary’s, one of the most unusual experiences from here was at least once a week, someone

would come to the school and would ask if they could just ‘see the old place’ because they went to school here for a time and they loved it here, and they usually say something like ‘we were just in the area, and we wanted to stop by.’”

Sister Mary Cecilia, who has worked in schools across the country, said she has “never had that experience at any other elementary school” in which she has served. “So there’s something extraordinarily different about St. Mary’s, and there’s a reason that God has had it continue for a hundred years. And I’m so grateful to all of our sisters who’ve served here since 1923.”