



# The Catholic Virginian

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## New OSM director trusts God to ‘open a path’ for service

### Tina Wandersee felt called to put gifts before the Church

JANNA REYNOLDS  
The Catholic Virginian

The Diocese of Richmond’s new director of the Office of Social Ministries has “a knack for getting things done.”

“I’m not one of those who can pull something out of the air,” said Tina Wandersee, “but if somebody says, ‘This is what I want done,’ then I know it involves people, resources and order, and as long as I have those three things, the job will get done.”

Wandersee officially began her position on Sept. 5, 2022. She comes to the diocese after 12 years as the director of social ministry at Our Lady of Mount Carmel (OLMC), Newport News. There, she oversaw various outreach initiatives to support those in need and found success in bringing people together.

“I think that’s one of my greatest joys, to be able to bring the people

of God together under a common goal and be able to facilitate their participation in helping those poor and vulnerable,” she said. “That’s just a natural charism of mine, to give them the tools necessary and needed to do it.”

Wandersee explained that a natural progression of her prayer life and faith, expressed in her extensive volunteer work at OLMC, had led her to lead the parish’s social ministry. Volunteering was a result of becoming “in tune to a prayer life” over about three years as a full-time caregiver of her youngest child, during which she “was led back out into relationships with other people.”

Now, prayer has again led her to a new way of serving the Church.

#### Going where God leads

“I can say definitively that I am leaving a job that I absolutely loved and had no intention of leaving,”



Tina Wandersee

Wandersee said, adding that she has exchanged her seven-minute commute to OLMC for an 80-minute drive to the Pastoral Center in Richmond.

“I just have to say that it’s because I felt called to put my gifts and talents before the Church,” she said. “... This is where the Lord has

led me, and I think he’s led me here not only to be of assistance to the diocese in any way that I can, but also for my own personal growth, my own relationship with him... These are the gifts and talents that the Lord has given me. They’re his, and they’re his to use wherever he so chooses or needs.”

Of the gifts and talents that the Lord has given Wandersee, she noted her “meticulous” organization skills, strong attention to detail and the ability to put ideas into action.

“For me, the work of the Church, and I think Pope Francis speaks to this, needs to be well organized and beautifully executed. So that is very much who I am,” she said.

#### Relationships are key

As she has begun immersing herself in the Office of Social Minis-

See Wandersee, Page 11

## Better formation, understanding needed for confession

### Vatican seminar examines why sacrament is avoided

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY – Every year, for more than three decades, the Vatican tribunal dealing with matters of conscience has offered a course to help priests in their “ministry of mercy” as confessors.

The huge number of participants, from 500 to 800 ordained and soon-to-be ordained men, who attend the course sponsored by the Apostolic Penitentiary each year attests to the need for adequate formation concerning the sacrament of reconciliation, particularly when confession, as well as “the sense of sin,” is in crisis, Pope Francis told participants in 2019.

It is a crisis on both sides of the confessional screen.

Priests need better formation so that those seeking God’s forgiveness truly experience “a real encounter with salvation in which the Lord’s embrace can be perceived in all its strength, capable of changing, converting, healing and forgiving,” the pope had said.

The laity need to understand better the importance and joy of confession, according to the Apostolic Penitentiary, which offered a special seminar for laypeople in Rome and online Oct. 13-14.

Of the more than half-dozen talks covering the usual biblical, theological and spiritual aspects of the sacrament, the most practical presentation was given by Msgr. Krzysztof Nykiel, regent of the Apostolic Penitentiary. He gave a rundown of the most common “good” reasons people give for not going to confession, each followed by a faith-based response.

Highlights from the list are summarized here:

1. “... I speak directly to God.” Speaking with God is “excellent,” he said, and it should be done throughout the day with prayer to know God’s will. While “it is not impossible to obtain forgiveness” from God this way, “we would never be sure.”

Only God can forgive sins, he said. Before the birth of Christ and a life lived without him, humanity could only “hope” to have their sins

forgiven. “With Christ, this mercy has descended onto Earth and is accessible” to everyone, and only through confession with a priest can one be certain of receiving that forgiveness.

2. “... I don’t like talking about my personal life” with another person. A priest is not just any other person, but is one upon whom God has conferred his power to forgive on Earth, Msgr. Nykiel said.

Verbalizing and owning up to one’s sins can be difficult or frightening, he said, but “we feel truly loved when everything about us is loved, not just the good or nice things we display” or when the lies and partial truths are believed. When people present their true selves completely to God, they let themselves be loved completely by God.

3. “... The priest may be a worse sinner than me.” It is true that priests are not God, and it is “certainly easier and more uplifting to confess to a holy priest, like St. John Vianney and St. Padre Pio,” he said.

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The Catholic Virginian

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## Seek justice with spirit of mercy, forgiveness



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

As a priest and auxiliary bishop in Washington, I had many occasions to attend the annual celebration of the Red Mass, which in most years takes place on the first Sunday before the first Monday in October — the latter being the day on which the Supreme Court begins its annual term. While the Red Mass dates to the 13th century when it was celebrated in France, it wasn't celebrated in the United States until 1928 in New York City, and not in Washington until 1939. Annual attendees have included Supreme Court justices, members of Congress, cabinet secretaries and others involved in the legal profession.

Celebration of the Red Mass in the Diocese of Richmond has occurred since 1988. I am honored to have celebrated four of them, including one on Saturday, Oct. 8, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Because of the attention Supreme Court decisions rendered during its last term, and because the decisions they will make in cases before them might have an even greater impact upon us, it is important that we pray for all levels of our judiciary.

Many of us at one time or another have personally encountered the judicial system, either through jury duty or in being called as a witness. If we haven't had those experiences, we have reads books and seen movies and TV shows in which the judicial system is a central theme. We know that due process in the legal system is how we often settle disputes, including those that arise in the political realm.

We can be grateful for the legal institutions we have to address and resolve conflict, and to do it in a way that will bear fruit, and which will avoid personal animus. However, given the passion with which people embrace their beliefs and advocate for them, it is important to our country and world that our nation's judicial system — even if the process is sometimes contentious — brings about reconciliation among two or more sides.

In our celebration of the Red Mass, we asked God to grant those in the legal profession, especially those entrusted with the administration of justice, the grace of the Holy Spirit. With that grace comes the Spirit's gifts, e.g., wisdom, understanding, counsel and fortitude, as well as the virtues of prudence, justice and temperance.

Discernment and judgement go hand in hand. At his recent weekly general audiences

in Rome, Pope Francis has reflected on the elements and practice of spiritual discernment as a part of the synodal process. To discern and then judge well, we must begin with prayer, we must be openly attentive in listening to God and to those whom we encounter. Aware of the mercies we receive from God, we are better able to approach others with mercy, with a willingness to hear and discern the truth, and act with justice. It is then that we are most effective and that our works can be deemed just.

However, there is a caveat. Six years ago, in an interview with Vatican reporter Oonaugh Stransky that resulted in a book titled "The Name of God is Mercy," Pope Francis said, "Justice on its own is not enough. With mercy and forgiveness, God goes beyond justice, he subsumes it and exceeds it in a higher event in which we experience love, which is at the root of true justice."

Charity transcends and perfects the virtue of justice. As followers of Christ, mercy and forgiveness must be included in our understanding of and exemplification of justice. As we pray for those who interpret our laws, let us pray that when we ourselves seek justice, we also do so with a spirit of mercy and forgiveness.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Maryjane Fuller



A funeral Mass was celebrated for Maryjane Fuller at Church of the Epiphany, North Chesterfield, 3 p.m., Friday, Oct. 28,

2022. Mrs. Fuller, 60, died on Tuesday, Oct. 18.

Mrs. Fuller joined the Diocese of Richmond in 2005 as assistant director of human resources and was instrumental in building the diocesan Office of Safe Environment. Over her 15 years with the Diocese of Richmond, she also served as director of the diocesan Office of Safe Environment and the Office of Human Resources.

She is survived by her husband, Brian Pait Fuller; daughters, Virginia Podboy, Abigail Robertson and Rebecca Murguia; grandchildren, Oliver Robertson, Faye Robertson and Aiden Podboy; mother, Maryjane G. Whiton; siblings, Deborah Bates, Dianne Whiton-Vera and Robert F. Whiton Jr.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her father, Robert F. Whiton Sr.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Mary Elyn McNichols



A funeral Mass was celebrated for Mary Elyn McNichols at Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, 12:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 24, 2022.

Mrs. McNichols, 81, died on Saturday, Oct. 15.

Mrs. McNichols was principal and co-founder of Coordinated Services Management (CMS) along with her husband, Robert McNichols. CMS has served the elderly of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond for over 30 years through the development and management of six residential adult care centers located in Roanoke, Charlottesville, Richmond and Virginia Beach.

A longtime member of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, Mrs. McNichols will be remembered for her generosity toward the needs of the parish and the local Church.

She is survived by her husband, Robert; children, Larry Lauth, Laura Elyn Lauth Schneck and Wade McNichols; grandchildren, Simon, Oscar, Sawyer, Nathan, Alton, Grace and Madeline; siblings, Susan Gregory Jakob, Ralph Gregory, Nancy Gregory Wildt and John Gregory; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her daughter, Amy Elizabeth Lauth, and parents.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Marie Van Wyk



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Marie Van Wyk, wife of Deacon James Van Wyk, at Our Lady of Lourdes, Richmond, 11 a.m., Monday, Oct. 24, 2022. Mrs. Van Wyk, 74, died on Saturday, Oct. 15.

Mrs. Van Wyk was an active member of Our Lady of Lourdes

Parish, having been involved with altar serving and other forms of liturgy.

She is survived by her husband, Deacon James Van Wyk; daughter, Heather Dickinson; grandchild, Jeff Cheely; siblings, Melvin and Rose; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Marie Nemetz



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Marie Nemetz, mother of Deacon David Nemetz, at St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, 11 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2022. Mrs. Nemetz, 92, died on Friday, Oct. 14.

A charter member of St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, Mrs. Nemetz was involved with

the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and hospitality ministries. Her faith life was deeply enriched through Cursillo.

She is survived by five children, Anne Craven, Mary Lewis, Peter Nemetz, Deacon David Nemetz and Patricia Brittingham; 19 grandchildren; and 19 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by four children, Paul, Michael, Kathy and Jeanne.

# Extensive church renovations offer welcoming environment

## New altar, sound system part of \$3.2 million project at Holy Family, Va Beach

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

The late President Harry Truman once said, “It’s amazing what you can accomplish if you don’t care who gets the credit.”

Paul Battaglia, former finance council chair at Church of the Holy Family (CHF), Virginia Beach, said those words “hit the nail on the head” when speaking about the parish’s \$3.2 million renovation to its sanctuary, chapel and sacristy.

“It took the will of all the members of the parish beginning with the original plank members of 40 years ago to the new members who wanted the worship space that would be welcoming to everyone for the next 40 years,” Battaglia said. “The building represents more than just a shelter. It shows the beauty and the warmth of our Catholic faith inviting everyone to feel and talk to our God.”

The parish, which has approximately 1,400 registered households, raised \$2.2 million, the original estimate for the renovations, but increased cost of materials and their delivery meant CHF had to take out a \$1 million note to pay over the next 15 years. The parish raised the majority of its funds through the “Moving Forward in Faith” capital campaign, which will continue until June 30, 2024, but it also received \$758,000 from the Living Our Mission capital and endowment campaign that the diocese conducted from 2014-2016. In addition, CHF raised \$16,000 in a golf tournament.

In 2018, the parish determined it needed to install better lighting and sound systems, and upgrade its HVAC system. However, the diocesan Building and Renovation Committee said funds from Living Our Mission could only be used if the parish made some changes in its worship space



Deacon Joe Nguyen, left, and Deacon Robert May, right, look on as Bishop Barry C. Knestout consecrates the new altar at Church of the Holy Family, Virginia Beach, Thursday, Oct. 20, 2022. More than 400 people attended the Mass. (Photo/Laurie Powers)

as well. For example, the altar needed to be more prominent, pews with kneelers had to replace the chairs, and a crucifix had to be placed in the sanctuary, said Battaglia, who was finance council chair during the renovation.

### How it changed

Renovations to the church, built in 1981, began in November 2021 and were completed this September.

The original worship space was built in the style of an arena with seating sloping toward a small altar. The floor was made of concrete with an exposed aggregate finish, making it bumpy and slippery and therefore difficult to navigate, especially for persons with physical disabilities. The new floor has been leveled, and the aisles are surfaced with terrazzo while the pews have luxury vinyl tile under them.

The worship space can accommodate 520 people in the congregation plus 40 in the choir.

The new marble altar sitting two steps above the level of pews is the focal point. The altar is wheelchair accessible so persons with disabilities can serve as lectors or sing with the choir. The ambo, presider’s and deacons’ chairs and altar servers’ bench are also made of marble, and a wooden corpus of a crucified Christ was placed on the existing cross above the tabernacle, which came from the Little Sisters of the Poor after the religious order’s departure from the diocese.

Repairs to the foundation in the main worship space were made because the steel beams had rusted. The ceiling was lowered and replaced with drywall, which, along with a new sound system, has better sound resonance. The new sound system extends from the worship space to the narthex and the exterior of the building to facilitate liturgies that begin outside. The system includes Bluetooth, which hearing aid users can use to enhance the sound coming through the church’s system while excluding extraneous noise.

Several stained glass pieces were added to create a window portraying the sun above the worship space. Pieces of the previous stained glass panels were used in the window of the reconciliation room, which was reconfigured to improve sound isolation, to have a physical separation between confessor and penitent, and to offer face-to-face and traditional confessions.

The new lighting system includes more luminous and ecologically-friendly LED lights in the main worship space and chapel. Lights can be dimmed to conform to different times and different liturgies. Multiple lighting circuits

See *Renovation*, Page 13

# More than 200 attend second annual ‘Heralds of Faith’

## Catechists learn from, give support to those who share their ministry

WENDY KLESCH

Special to The Catholic Virginian

“I didn’t know I was a ‘catechist,’” said Angela del Carmen Phipps, a parishioner of St. Joseph, Hampton. “At first, there were times I panicked. But what God has given me, I knew he did not give just to me, but to share with others.”

Del Carmen Phipps spoke of her experiences in working in children’s and adult faith formation at “Heralds of Faith,” a bilingual celebration held Saturday, Oct. 22, at St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach. It was a day to recognize the diocese’s own modern-day heralds, those who go forth and proclaim the Gospel.

The second annual event, sponsored by the diocesan Office of Christian Formation, featured a Mass celebrated by Bishop Barry C. Knestout, and allowed the bishop to meet personally with catechists who serve the diocese’s Eastern Vicariate and to honor their ministry. More than 200 catechists were in attendance, representing parishes from Chesapeake to Williamsburg.

“It’s very much a part of the work of the Church,” Bishop Knestout said, “to — out of love for the Church and its teachings — further the confirmation of the Good



Catechists with more than 20 years of volunteer work are recognized at Heralds of Faith, an event to honor and celebrate the ministry of catechists, held at St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach, on Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022. (Photo/Vy Barto)

News and to hand off the faith to the next generation.”

Steven Schlossberg, a catechist at St. Mark, Virginia Beach, who attended with a large group from his parish for a day of camaraderie, said, “We’re a tight catechist community at St. Mark’s. So, we’ve all come out to celebrate with the bishop.”

Among the presentations given at the event were witness talks by catechists Nancy Poole of Church of the Ascension, Virginia Beach, Del Carmen Phipps, and Hector and Lilly Miranda from Holy Trinity, Norfolk.

### Like a balloon

Poole has been a catechist for 17 years. She began her ministry, she said, teaching fifth grade.

“The children had a greater depth of their understanding of faith than I ever could have imagined,” she said. “Indeed, I learned from them and with them in our sessions together.”

After several years of teaching, Poole was asked if she would assist with the eighth grade classes, where the ministry had a greater need.

“I was a bit nervous but thrilled

with the opportunity,” she said. “Though the eighth graders were older, they were children at heart.”

Watching the students share their middle-school experiences and affirm and encourage one another was a joy, she said.

During one class session, she said, when the students had been discussing how they might be more loving toward others, the group decided that love was like a balloon: that the more you fill it with words and actions of kindness, the more your love will grow.

“We had a little Christmas party the next week, and one young man came in with this huge balloon,” she said.

With a crinkle of metallic foil, she held up a deflated helium balloon, one shaped like a mug of hot chocolate, kept as a memento from that long-ago party.

“You can see it still means something to me,” she said with a gentle laugh.

The Christmas gift, she said, made her realize just how much the message had meant to him.

“When I read the card, it said, ‘Filled with a lot of love. Thank you

See *Catechists*, Page 13

# Deacons celebrate 10th anniversary of ordination

In 2012, Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo ordained 38 men as permanent deacons for the Diocese of Richmond. Because of the size of the class, 19 men were ordained on Oct. 13, and 19 were ordained on Nov. 3. In October and November issues, The Catholic Virginian will feature deacons celebrating their 10th anniversary.

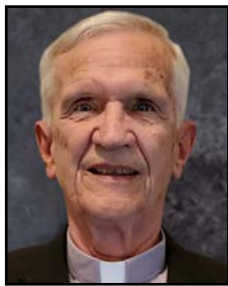


## Victor "V. J." Petillo

**Spouse:** Ronda  
**Parish:** St. Bridget, Richmond  
**Occupation:** Behavioral Consultant

### Describe the rewarding aspect(s) of your diaconal ministry:

It's a privilege to serve during Mass, to proclaim the Gospel and sometimes preach. I greatly enjoy spending time with people of the parish, teaching, providing pastoral care and being present with them in their various stages of life and spirituality. I've grown tremendously in my ability to carry out pre-marriage formation with couples and to celebrate the sacrament of matrimony. Celebrating the sacrament of baptism has also been a joy, especially because it gives so much hope regarding the future of our parish and our faith as a whole. Lastly, the grace of ordination has caused me to grow in exciting and unexpected ways regarding my evangelization.



## Jim Satterwhite

**Spouse:** Cyndi  
**Parish:** St. Joan of Arc, Yorktown  
**Occupation:** Retired: Northrop Grumman/TASC, Senior Program Engineer

### Describe the rewarding aspect(s) of your diaconal ministry:

The efforts of a deacon may not be seen or understood by the world, but God sees, understands and loves. To me, it feels a bit awkward to even discuss rewards for doing something that is so gratifying! I will, however, share two of my favorite aspects of diaconal ministry: administering the sacrament of baptism and comforting the loved ones of those who have died. Both celebrate Christ claiming and welcoming a soul as heaven rejoices! I pray my diaconal ministry blesses others at least half as much as it blesses me!



## Antonio Siochi

**Spouse:** Emilie  
**Parish:** Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newport News  
**Occupation:** Professor

### Describe the rewarding aspect(s) of your diaconal ministry:

The rewarding aspects of my diaconal ministry are the fruits of diaconal ordination. It is a blessing to be able to assist at Mass, to walk with my brothers and sisters in their need, to celebrate their joy, to learn from them and to see God's reflection in them.



## Kevin Trail

**Spouse:** Patricia  
**Parish:** St. Stephen, Martyr, Chesapeake  
**Occupation:** Propulsion Systems Engineer

### Describe the rewarding aspect(s) of your diaconal ministry:

I treasure the opportunity to be with God's people and serve them. The many aspects of my ministry – serving at Mass, teaching sacramental preparation, performing the sacraments, and visiting the sick and infirm – allow me to meet people where they are and bring them the message of Jesus through word and deed. Being a deacon causes me to constantly seek a deeper understanding of Jesus and has exposed me to a variety of experiences that I would have otherwise missed. The inspiration I receive from my brother deacons keeps me motivated and helps me draw closer to God.

# Pope to visit Bahrain

Will focus on interfaith dialogue, encouraging Catholics

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis is set to make a four-day visit to Bahrain, a journey that will make him the first pope to visit the Arab kingdom just off the coast of Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf.

The visit Nov. 3-6 has two main goals: to speak at the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue: East and West for Human Coexistence and to encourage the predominantly expatriate Catholic and Christian communities who live and work in the Muslim-majority region.

Underlining the theme of the visit, "Peace on Earth to people of goodwill," the pope is expected to be a "messenger of peace," appealing to all people and nations to come together, free from prejudice and open to seeing each other as brothers and sisters.

It will be the 13th Muslim-majority nation he has visited in his almost 10 years as pope.

Pope Francis is going to Bahrain to further promote interfaith cooperation because "there is a common interest among the monotheistic religions," Bishop Paul Hinder, administrator of the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia, told reporters by video call from Abu Dhabi Oct. 24.

The common desire is to help "care for creation ... knowing that if there is a conflict between Christian- and Muslim-majority nations, it is a problem for the whole world, not just for one or two countries," said the 80-year-old Swiss bishop, who was first appointed auxiliary bishop of Arabia in 2003, and now oversees Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and, formally, Saudi Arabia.

The intention of the pope, he said, is "to make us understand that it is absolutely necessary" to find a place where there can be strong mutual respect and cooperation.

The pope will have a chance to underline the role governments, diplomats and members of civil society need to play when he meets with them Nov. 3 at Sakhir Palace. The pope also will meet with King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, who invited the pope and is sponsoring the Forum for Dialogue event.

Bahrain, a prosperous archipelago nation of about 30 islands, is the smallest country in the Middle East, with about 1.5 million people, about half of whom are foreign workers. About 74% of the residents are Muslim and 9% are Christian. People of the Hindu, Buddhist and Jewish faiths are among the other communities present.

Bishop Hinder said there are

no official statistics for the number of Christians, but the Church estimates there are about 80,000 Catholics in Bahrain, about 1,000 of whom are citizens of the kingdom.

Catholics in Bahrain hail mainly from the Philippines, India and Sri Lanka. South Americans, Europeans and Arabs from the Levant region account for the rest of the island's Christian population.

Bishop Hinder said Catholics are overjoyed that the pope is coming to encourage them in the faith.

They are "a small flock with little or practically no power," he said. The papal visit makes them "feel recognized. 'We exist!'" and it will boost their morale.

The expatriate workers do not have an easy life, he said, not because they live in a Muslim country, but because it is a life filled with uncertainty as many try to figure out their next move: to stay, return home or seek employment in the West.

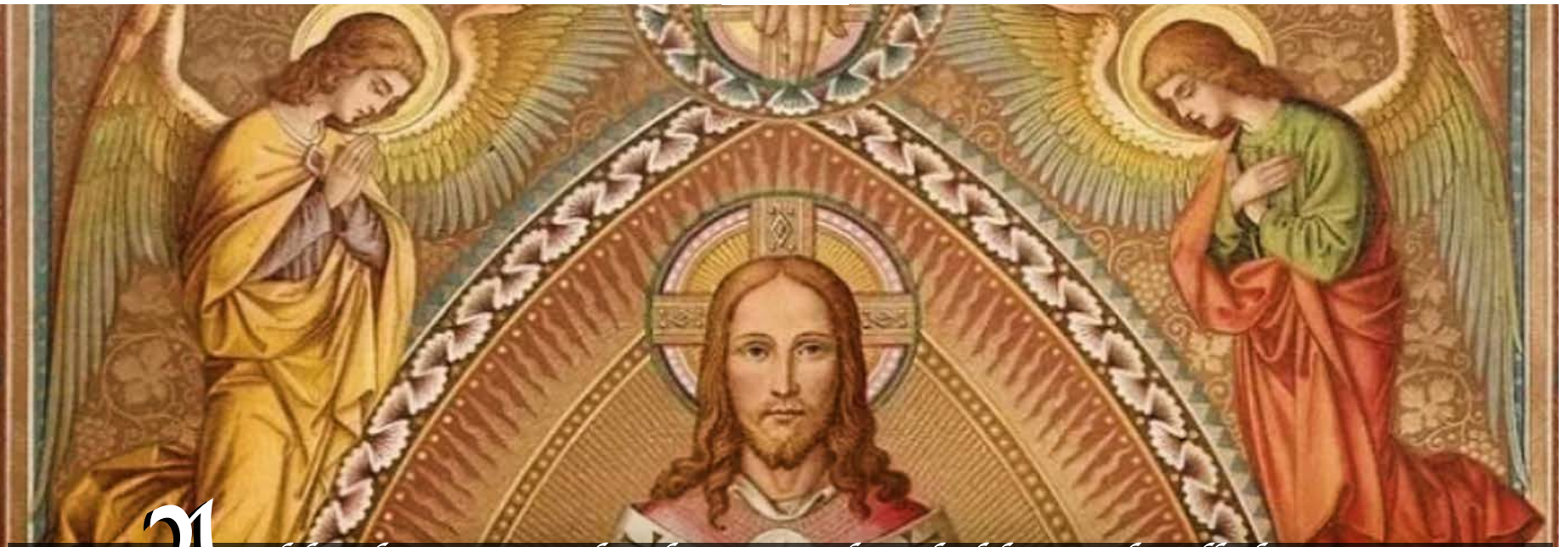
Bahrain was the first country in the Persian Gulf to build a Catholic church – the Sacred Heart Church, which was inaugurated in 1939 on Christmas Eve. On his last day in Bahrain, the pope will hold a prayer meeting there with bishops, priests, religious, seminarians and pastoral workers.

The pope will hold an ecumenical meeting and prayer for peace in the cathedral Nov. 4, right after he meets with Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of Egypt's Al-Azhar mosque and university, and with members of the Muslim Council of Elders – an international group of Islamic scholars and experts – at the mosque of Sakhir Palace.

Pope Francis will celebrate Mass at Bahrain National Stadium in Awali Nov. 5, and Bishop Hinder said organizers have set aside reserved seating for Catholics from nearby nations, especially from Saudi Arabia, which does not allow Christians to practice their faith openly.

The pope's visit will send "a strong signal" to Saudi Arabia, which will surely be watching, but is moving more slowly than some other nations in the region when it comes to greater respect for religious freedom and the dignity of all people, Bishop Hinder said.

Such "symbolic visits by a pope will have effects that we may not be able to foresee today," he said. "I think his courageous steps will open doors. We don't know where, but I hope they will also contribute to solutions for the conflicts in the area and perhaps also globally."



And he that sat on the throne said: Behold, I make all things new. - Revelation 21:5

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS

2022-2023



Rev. Mr. Armando Herrera  
Vocational Synthesis: Blessed Sacrament,  
Harrisonburg  
Theological College  
Virginia Military Institute  
Home Parish: Saint Andrew, Roanoke



Rev. Mr. William C. Buckley  
Fourth Theology  
Theological College  
University of Richmond  
Home Parish: Saint Bridget,  
Richmond



Rev. Mr. Christopher J. Weyer  
Fourth Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home Parish: Saint Theresa,  
Ashburn



David Arellano  
Third Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home Parish: Saint Francis of Assisi,  
Rocky Mount



Seth M. Seaman  
Third Theology  
Theological College  
Old Dominion University  
Home Parish: Saint Joseph,  
Hampton



William W. Douglas  
Pastoral Year,  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home Parish: Shrine of Our Lady of  
Walsingham, Williamsburg



Andrew R. Clark  
Pastoral Year,  
St. Matthew's, Virginia Beach  
Theological College  
Saint John Paul II Seminary,  
Home Parish: Saint Mark, VA Beach



Samuel G. Hill  
Pastoral Year,  
Holy Spirit, Virginia Beach  
Pontifical North American College  
Saint John Paul II Seminary,  
Home Parish: Holy Name of Mary, Bedford



Matthew R. Kelly  
Pastoral Year, Our Lady of Lourdes,  
Richmond, Pontifical North American  
College, Christopher Newport University  
Home Parish: Our Lady of Mount  
Carmel, Newport News



Chase A. Imoru  
Second Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
James Madison University  
Home Parish: Blessed Sacrament,  
Harrisonburg



Charles J. Palmer  
First Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Franciscan University of Steubenville  
Home Parish: Saint John the Apostle,  
Virginia Beach



John Paul Shanahan  
First Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home Parish: Saint Francis of  
Assisi, Rocky Mount, VA



Brennan D. McCoy  
First Theology  
Saint Mary's Seminary and University  
Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary  
Home Parish: Saint Theresa,  
Farmville



J. Graham Fassero  
Pre-Theology  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home School  
Home Parish: Saint Augustine,  
Chesterfield



David W. Uriwin  
First Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
James Madison University  
Home Parish: Saint Timothy,  
Chantilly



Michael J. Anctil  
Pre-Theology  
Theological College  
Iowa State University  
Home Parish: Saint Thomas Aquinas,  
Charlottesville



Scott H. Campolongo  
Pre-Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
College of William & Mary  
Home Parish: Saint Edward the  
Confessor, Richmond



Paul A. Flagg  
Pastoral Year, Holy Trinity, Norfolk  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Christendom College  
Home Parish: Holy Name of Mary,  
Bedford



William M.M. Yearout  
Pre-Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Saint Leo University  
Home Parish: All Saints,  
Floyd



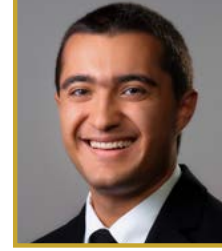
David A. Hairston, II  
Pre-Theology  
St. Mary's Seminary and University  
Westminster Choir College  
Home Parish: Our Lady of Nazareth,  
Roanoke



Samuel S. McPeak  
Pre-Theology  
Theological College  
University of Richmond  
Home Parish: Saint Joseph,  
Richmond



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Pre-Theology  
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary  
Longwood University  
Home Parish: Holy Name of Mary,  
Bedford



Charles A. Tamayo  
College IV (Senior)  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
First Colonial High School  
Home Parish: Saint John the Apostle,  
Virginia Beach



Peter T. Olbrych  
College III (Junior)  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home School  
Home Parish: Saint Bede,  
Williamsburg



Maximus C. McHugh  
College II (Sophomore)  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home School  
Home Parish: Saint Francis of Assisi,  
Staunton



Ivan M. Torres  
College II (Sophomore)  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Home School  
Home Parish: Saint Pius X,  
Norfolk



Jack M. Domark  
College I (Freshman)  
Saint John Paul II Seminary  
Catholic High School  
Home Parish: Saint Gregory the  
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# Troubled? Allow yourself to be drawn to Jesus

## GUEST COMMENTARY

SISTER CONSTANCE VEIT  
A LITTLE SISTER OF THE POOR

When I was a kid, I was fascinated by magnets. I loved to watch the little magnetic skaters glide across a mirror in our family's Christmas village at the flip of a switch, and I enjoyed doing science experiments with magnets and iron shavings in school.

I recall a comparison Pope St. John Paul II made between the Eucharist and the force of a magnet's pole.

"The presence of Jesus in the tabernacle must be a kind of magnetic pole attracting an ever greater number of souls enamored of him, ready to wait patiently to hear his voice and, as it were, to sense the beating of his heart," he wrote just six months before he died.

These words of John Paul II came to mind when I heard about the National Eucharistic Revival launched by the U.S. bishops earlier this year. It is a beautiful, powerful image – the idea of Jesus acting as a magnet drawing people to himself in the Blessed Sacrament.

I have begun to ask myself, "Do I allow myself to be drawn to Jesus in the tabernacle? Do I cling to him the way iron shavings cling to a strong magnet? Or do I allow myself to be pulled away too easily by distractions and my lack of love?"

The Eucharistic Revival will help us to renew our appreciation for many aspects of Jesus' ultimate gift to us, beginning with the centrality of the

Mass as the representation of Jesus' saving sacrifice on the cross.

But it seems to me that when all is said and done, our devotion to the Eucharist will be proportionate to our faith in what we call "the real presence" – our unwavering conviction that Jesus is really and truly present on the altar during every eucharistic sacrifice and in every tabernacle around the world.

Our foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan, was not a highly educated woman, but she was a person of profound faith and committed action.

She often told the young sisters to remember the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle, in the poor and in their own souls. And she gave them this very practical advice:

"Jesus is waiting for you in the chapel. Go and find him when your strength and patience are giving out, when you feel lonely and helpless. Say to him, 'You know well what is happening, my dear Jesus. I have only you. Come to my aid ...' And then go your way. And don't worry about knowing how you are going to manage. It is enough to have told our good Lord. He has an excellent memory."

Jeanne Jugan didn't have an easy life.

As a young person and then the foundress of a religious congregation, she worked hard and shared everything she had with the poor.

Although she was chosen to be superior by the young women who joined her, and she even achieved a measure of public notoriety, she was treated unjustly by a priest who had been appointed to assist the nascent religious community and

stripped of all authority in it, until, 27 years later, she died in total anonymity.

But Jeanne Jugan possessed something no one could take from her – a very real, strong and intimate relationship with Jesus, whom she knew was always waiting for her "in the chapel." Jesus Christ was real to her – more real than anyone or anything else.

No doubt St. Jeanne Jugan often told Jesus everything that was happening in her life, in both good times and bad.

Pope Francis recently spoke to seniors about how they should pray. I think his words would resonate with our foundress.

The pope said, "If you have some wound in your heart, some pain, and you want to object, object even to God. God will listen to you. God is a Father. God is not afraid of our prayer of protest, no! God understands. ... Prayer should be like this: spontaneous, like that of a child with his father, who says everything that comes out of his mouth because he knows his father understands him."

I believe that St. Jeanne Jugan was like a child with her father. She shared with him from the depths of her heart because she knew that God heard and understood her.

May her example, and the words of Pope Francis, convince you that it's okay to be honest with Jesus, truly present and waiting for us in every chapel or parish church!

*Sister Constance Veit is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.*

### Disagrees with pope about traditionalism

I was saddened by the comments of Pope Francis in The CV article entitled, "Pope celebrates Mass for 60th anniversary of Vatican II" (Catholic Virginian, Oct. 17).

Though I agree with the pontiff that "progressivism lines up behind the world," his thoughts on "traditionalism" are deeply troubling. He opines that "traditionalism longs for a bygone world," and is "not evidence of love, but of infidelity." He further states that, like progressivism, traditionalism is a "form of selfishness that puts our own tastes and plans above the love that pleases God." Based on my experience, the opposite is true. Faithful Catholics, including traditionalists, line up behind God (not the secular world) and follow God's plan above what pleases man.

On March 12, 2015, Pope Francis rightly cautioned that "there is no middle ground on the path to heaven." This is because one CANNOT compromise with evil. In this spiritual battle, one MUST choose sides. Do you believe in the traditional writings of bygone days, such as the Catholic Catechism, the Bible and the works of the Church doctors?

Traditionalists, please

take comfort in Matthew 5:10-11:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."

– Anthony R. Russo  
Chesapeake

### Supports DREAM Act

Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio's column "Why Congress should pass DREAM Act" (Catholic Virginian, Oct. 17) so eloquently explains the DACA program and builds a strong case for a pathway to citizenship for these young people who are already contributing to our nation in many ways – by completing their education even to advanced degrees, being gainfully employed, paying taxes, owning property, serving in our military and as first responders, and raising their American-born children to be proud citizens.

"Dreamers" were brought to this country as young children and "did not break the law of their own volition." That is a very important consideration.

I would hope that our politicians who are on the fence about this issue, or who oppose the DACA program

for whatever reason, will consider the benefits of full integration of the Dreamers into a society to which they are already contributing.

Congress has tried to pass the DREAM Act several times with no success. Now is the time to put politics aside and focus on a humanitarian approach toward young people who consider themselves American in every way but one.

– Helen Blough  
Mechanicsville

### Death penalty is just, required

Mr. Greg Erlandson condemns Catholics who do not view the death penalty in the same way as they condemn abortion (Catholic Virginian, Oct. 3). How faulty!

The death penalty is defined as just and required throughout the Bible: "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man" (Gn 9:6); "He who strikes man so that he dies shall surely be put to death" (Ex 21:12).

This punishment being just and required is repeated in Leviticus 24:17, Numbers 35:16-21, Proverbs 28:17, Revelation 21:8 and many other places in the Old and New Testaments. The death penalty for vicious murders is just,

fair and called for by God.

His second argument, that many mistakes have been made, has no bearing on anything. You do not throw out the baby with the bath water; you fix the problems. That is being done through improved defense techniques, DNA testing and scientific processing of evidence. Conviction of murder is becoming a very fair process.

I would interject that other prisoners and guards must also be protected from these murderers who get

life with no parole and have nothing to lose. Each year, a large number of guards and convicts are killed or maimed by these murderers, which would not be the case if the death penalty had been imposed.

The last fallacy is that this "James Coddington" does not represent the community of condemned murderers who, for the most part, were convicted justly and deserve the death penalty.

– John J. Lo Re Jr.  
Richmond

### CV letters policy

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

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# Garden builds, serves community

Central Virginia Catholic Cluster's project a team effort

ROSE MORRISETTE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

Community connection is always on Father Tochi Iwuji's mind. He is laser-focused on being present to his parishioners and the surrounding community, continually seeking ways to be visible and engaging, thereby creating opportunities for ministry.

Father Iwuji, affectionately called "Father Tochi" by parishioners, is pastor of the Central Virginia Catholic Cluster, which includes St. Theresa, Farmville; Immaculate Heart of Mary, Blackstone; and Sacred Heart, Meherrin.

He is headquartered at St. Theresa where, over the past year, a vibrant example of his approach to ministry and his desire for the Church to be present in the community has come to life in the form of a community garden.

"When I came here, my first priority was to create a platform for people to interact and build community and relationships," he said.

He sees the opportunity to do this through the lens of pro-life ministry, noting that "this means helping to create something for each stage of the lives of the members of a parish ... creating family engagements and parish engagements."

He considers this an holistic approach to pro-life, and has enlisted the support of what he has coined a "Life Ministries" committee in doing this work.

"He challenged us to act out our pro-life mission in ways that complement but go beyond anti-abortion efforts," said Heather Edwards, Life Ministries Committee co-chair.

## Forming a team

Father Iwuji's belief that one can't be pro-life and not take care of all life resonated with parishioner Leo Barber.

"Priests need the support of the laity," he said, so he answered the call.



Ezekiel, 3, and Aurora Blincoe, 5, children of Adam and Sarai Blincoe, inspect one of the Central Virginia Catholic Cluster's eight raised garden beds on Oct. 6, 2022. The garden provides a place for intergenerational encounter, according to Father Tochi Iwuji, pastor. (Photo/Sarai Blincoe)

"Leo Barber and I share the responsibility of co-chair of the committee," Edwards said. "He and I are like-minded but focused on different outreach projects, likely related to our different stages of life. ... It's the perfect collaboration."

"The committee members feel a bit like family to me," she said. "We get together once each month to brainstorm ways to minister to our parish and the greater Farmville community. We are each going a slightly different direction to accomplish the same goal: to support and celebrate life in all its stages."

Edwards explained that approximately 10 people serve on the core committee.

"They all heard and responded to Father Tochi's invitation to join," she said. "Members from Immaculate Heart of Mary in Blackstone and Sacred Heart in Meherrin are encouraged to join the meeting via Zoom."

"The garden is a team effort," Father Iwuji said of the project that began in the early part of this year. "And I consider myself part of the team."

## Build a garden; watch it grow

Participation in getting the garden underway and managing it has extended well beyond the committee.

"There has been a lot of involvement by parishioners," Barber said. "People are pretty forthcoming."

Among them are Adam and Sarai Blincoe. Although not on the committee, the Blincoes have been pivotal in the garden project from the beginning. They are limited in what they can do because they have young children but have made themselves available to the committee.

"Tell us what you need for the garden, and we can help," Sarai Blincoe said.

In considering the project, Father Iwuji thought, "The garden would become community outreach and a way of supporting the food pantry and providing them with organic and fresh produce. It would also create an environment of intergenerational encounter."

Once he approved the project, committee members and other volunteers began the process of setting up raised beds and planting.

Nearby Longwood University's Cormier Honors College provided the raised beds for the garden. Adam Blincoe, who works in the Honors College, and Barber transported the beds and filled them with several trailer loads of soil from different sources, including a local alpaca farm.

"They promised us a much bigger load for next season," Blincoe said.



Albert Brown, Father Tochi Iwuji, pastor of the Central Virginia Catholic Cluster, and Father Paul Lagco, parochial vicar, gather the community garden's first harvest on June 29, 2022. Vegetables from the community garden will go to St. Theresa's food pantry, which currently serves to up to 80 people each week. (Submitted photo)

"That type of soil is very good for gardens," Sarai Blincoe noted.

The community garden's eight raised beds, each 4 feet by 8 feet, provide a regular source of fresh produce for the St. Theresa Food Pantry. The garden will also be a source of fresh produce for FACES, a larger local food pantry, should St. Theresa have a surplus.

According to Doreen Hines, food pantry director, the pantry is currently serving up to 80 people a week and between 26-36 households.

## Still producing

For the summer, beds contained different varieties of tomatoes and peppers, basil, cantaloupe, watermelon, cucumbers, yellow squash, zucchini, sweet potatoes and bush beans.

The garden was planted the week of May 16 and its bounty first harvested on June 29.

Hines estimates that so far, about 300 pounds of fresh produce has gone directly from the garden, which is adjacent to the St. Theresa parish center, to the food pantry located in the center. But she believes this is an underestimate because of a late start in weighing the produce.

"There is no official record of poundage for this year," she said.

In the meantime, the garden is still producing.

In a second round of planting, the Blincoes included lettuce, radishes, turnips and peas.

Hines' husband planted October beans.

"Father Tochi wants to get greens in the ground, too," Hines said. "The garden has done well. Clients are happy. They told Father and the food pantry. They love the fresh veggies," she said.

And it's not just the vegetables they love.

## Spiritual nourishment

Father Iwuji is not only still watering the garden every day, checking on it and harvesting. He regularly spends time with food pantry clients, reading Scripture and praying.

"He's very engaging with them. They love it!" Hines said.

Although an experiment this year, by all accounts, the community garden project has been a success. After seeing how well it has worked, Father Iwuji would like to expand the garden, doubling the number of raised beds.

He would also like to see a prayer garden carved out in the community garden, and Barber is thinking of some landscaping.

Sarai Blincoe would like to see the garden include a winter as well as a summer crop.

"This year, we focused on hot weather, so we planted summer staples. Next year, we'll focus on cold weather, too," she said. "We'll plant things like cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, spinach, kale, potatoes. We can include some climbing vegetables, too. Maybe some flowers."

Blincoe is also thinking of other "audiences" they could reach.

For example, she would like to help address food insecurity among college students by encouraging those walking across the bridge from St. Theresa to a Longwood student housing complex to pick from the garden.

Volunteers of every stripe are invested in the community garden's continued success – from committee members to food pantry workers to the person who casually comes by to do some weeding or watering.

"I can't wait until next year to see how we can do," Hines said.

# Repairs to Wakefield church fix water, electric issues

Parish 'family' enjoys safe, comfortable sanctuary

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

**M**aking more than \$100,000 in improvements may seem daunting to many parishes, but it is particularly impressive for the Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague, Wakefield, which has only 17 registered families.

According to the Diocese of Richmond's "Shine Like Stars" bicentennial book, the small parish was established in 1948 to fulfill a promise made by Larry Monahan.

As he was hitchhiking around the country, Monahan bought the Virginia Diner in Wakefield and promised St. Jude that he would start a Catholic church in the area if his business were successful. It was.

At first, the few Catholics in the area worshiped in a "mission trailer" that came to town, St. Mary of the Highways Chapel. When the number of parishioners outgrew the trailer, the Monahans opened their home until the present church was built across from his restaurant in 1953.

Recently the church needed a multitude of repairs.

Several maintenance projects were scheduled as a multi-prong effort to reduce moisture in the church that was causing discoloration on the inside walls and rafters, and deterioration of the masonry. It is believed the moisture came from ambient humidity, water osmosis from surrounding soil, and water in the underground boiler room, which was constantly flooded due to water in the chimney and hydrostatic pressure on the walls.

The recently completed parking lot had been built at a higher elevation than the church, so rain would flow from it and run into the church walls, saturating the surrounding soil. When the church was built, it had copper downspouts and copper



**St. Mary of the Highways Chapel was active in the Diocese of Richmond from 1937-1960 to evangelize in rural areas that did not have an established parish. The motor chapel visited Wakefield before the Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague was built.** (Photo/Diocese of Richmond Archives)

gutters, but at some point, the downspouts were removed and the gutter drains filled with soil, explained John Walters, project coordinator.

As part of the recent improvements, the church interior was cleaned, the church property was regraded to redirect drainage from the parking lot, and a rock bed was placed around the church to better redirect rainwater.

Gutters were installed along the roofline, a foundation drain, also called a French drain, and a downspout drain were installed to divert rain. A replacement sump pump with a backup battery, discharge line and channeling system was installed, and the walls were draped with a non-porous material, directing water that seeps through the walls to the sump.

Additionally, a chimney cap was mounted to direct even more water away from the church, and a high-efficiency HVAC system replaced the air conditioner and LP-fired heating system to reduce the ambient humidity and to be more ecological in support of the pope's encyclical on the environment, Walters said.

"The boiler room is such a stark improvement over what it was. There were times that you would go down there and find three feet of water in that room, and now it is almost bone dry," Walters said.

The parish is in the process of fixing electrical problems, and it plans to repair the marble steps on the altar. The three exterior doorways will be replaced because they have pulled away from the church foundation and deteriorated.

The parish will repair the stained glass window and replace its protective covering, which has become opaque with age and prevents one from recognizing the Infant Jesus of Prague image from the church exterior, Walters added.

The parish began analyzing what work needed to be done in March, and Walters expects all of it to be completed by the end of the year. He expects the maintenance projects to reach \$120,000 by the time they are finished. The parish paid for the improvements with money from investments, a nest egg that came from contributions in excess of parish expenses over the years, Walters said.

He described the parish as a friendly, "very communal entity" that seems to appreciate all that has been done to renovate the church that many call home.

Karen Capps, Lois Klapetzky and Marilyn Tench are just three of the parishioners who verified that sentiment.

"Everyone is more comfortable in this church. We can breathe easier because I feel there's not as

*See Repairs, Page 13*



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# Reach eternal life by answering your baptismal call



IN LIGHT OF FAITH  
BARBARA HUGHES

## Called to Holiness

Having grown up in the shadow of the saints, I was smitten at a young age. As a youth, stories about the saints had my imagination soaring. I envisioned St. Francis of Assisi roaming the hills of Tuscany while serenading Lady Poverty as St. Therese showered the Earth with an endless supply of roses from heaven. The life of my patroness, St. Barbara, imprisoned by her father in the family tower, bore a striking resemblance to Rapunzel of fairytale fame.

These and other stories captured my imagination and had romanticized sanctity for me, not so differently than the way superheroes and fairy princesses capture the hearts and minds of young people today. And yet, there is a huge difference. The heroes and heroines enshrined in sainthood were real people while the imaginary heroes of today are just that – a figment of the imagination. Eventually, children grow beyond believing in superheroes, while childhood fantasies of saints are replaced by biographical accounts that offer a more realistic perspective. Saints become models to emulate while superheroes meet their demise somewhere along the



road to maturity.

As baptized Christians, we are all saints in the making, called to imitate the love for God and the virtues that the saints exemplified. However, we are not called to be reproductions of them. God does not make carbon copies, nor does he need another St. Francis, St. Therese or St. Barbara — at least not like the ones who lived centuries ago. Each generation is called to holiness within the context of its time and culture.

The feast of All Saints, which the Church celebrates on Nov. 1, followed by the feast of All Souls on Nov. 2 serve as reminders that our life on Earth is but a preparation for the life to come. How we live today matters because we never know when our earthly life will end. However, if we love God with our whole mind, heart and strength, and keep his commandments, we have nothing to fear, nor will we be lulled into a false sense of complacency.

With one eye on today and another eternity, a good maxim to live by is: “I will not put off until tomorrow what I can do today because I may not pass this way again.” It’s an approach that is motivated not by fear, but by wisdom. When we consider that every day, we have an opportunity to either further the coming of the kingdom of God or delay it, the power that God has given to human beings is pretty awesome.

Distinguished Belgian theologian Gerhard Lohfink wrote that God does not reveal his kingdom in bits and pieces but all at once. However, it’s the blindness of humankind that is unable to recognize the kingdom of God in its entirety in the present moment. This is the reason Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven.” The saints whose lives we celebrate, as well as those known only to God and perhaps the people they lived among while on

Earth, were able to recognize the kingdom of God present in their lives in a more complete way. Their clear-eyed vision gave them the strength to enter by the narrow gate, and as a result, they are now in heaven. Those who remain on the way even after death are the souls in purgatory, awaiting the day when they will behold God in all his glory and entirety.

As each person travels the road to eternity, the road to God will vary in the way that it is lived out. Our baptism places us the road to God; we can remain steadfast, or we can get off anytime; the choice is ours. Fortunately for us, we have a God whose mercy is without end. He never stops inviting us to return to the straight and narrow path that leads to salvation. Knowing that our time here is limited should prompt us all to remain faithful lest we die while we have strayed while pursuing false gods of our own making.

St. Teresa of Avila wrote on her famous bookmark, “Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things are passing. God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Nothing is wanting to those who possess God. God alone suffices.” May her wisdom be our guide regardless of our age or culture.

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

## Hope in the resurrection provides courage



BELIEVE AS  
YOU PRAY  
MELANIE CODDINGTON

I grew up in a house with a library of “Reader’s Digest Condensed Books.” These collections of then current novels (edited down to their essential plot points) allowed writers to get their work out to a larger audience and to build a fan base for their future literary efforts.

(I became a fan of the “Condensed Books” during visits home, when I would extract one of these handsome, hard-bound

volumes from the shelf and plow through several artfully abridged novels in a weekend.)

The Second Book of Maccabees, from which comes this Sunday’s first reading, clearly states its origin as a “digest,” having been condensed from a five-volume work focused on a tumultuous period of Jewish history. It says, “...we have aimed to please those who prefer simple reading, as well as to make it easy for the studious to commit things to memory” (2 Mc 2:25). As an editor, I sympathize with this author, who writes, “...the task, far from being easy, is one of sweat and of sleepless nights” (2:26).

The book deals with the conflict between Jewish identity and fidelity to the Torah, i.e., the

law given by God to guide the people in covenant living, and the seemingly irresistible influence of Greek culture, language, philosophy, and especially, polytheistic religion. With this large-scale conflict as backdrop, disagreements arose within the Jewish community. Some of the people saw value in certain aspects of Greek culture, provided the freedom to practice their Jewish religion remained intact. Others saw any concession to Greek influence as a “slippery slope” leading to destruction. Eventually, under Antiochus IV Epiphanes, freedom of religion no longer included Jewish practice. Faithful

Jews experienced oppression and violent persecution.

2 Maccabees makes for grim reading, both grisly and

graphic. Thankfully, this Sunday’s episode has undergone yet another condensation, one that leaves out the details of torture suffered by the seven brothers. The biblical text includes a stirring tribute to the mother that is well worth the read: “Most admirable and worthy of everlasting remembrance was the mother, who saw her seven sons perish in a single day, yet bore it courageously because of her hope in the Lord” (2 Mc 7:20). This woman of faith not only exhorted each of her sons with the assurance that “the Creator of the universe...in his mercy, will give you back both breath and life” (2Mc 7:23), she also shared their fate.

For us, this story of a mother and her sons demonstrates how belief in the resurrection

made martyrdom possible, even before the birth of Christ. These brave souls show us what it means to “believe” in the biblical sense of the word — to set one’s heart on, to stake one’s life on, to risk one’s life for.

Verses selected from Psalm 17 form today’s response, with an expression of innocence and hope worthy of the faithful martyrs of 2 Maccabees. The final line points to the hope of resurrection with the words, “...on waking I shall be content in your presence.”

Another story featuring the untimely demise of seven brothers appears in the Gospel and leads up to a trick question intended to trap Jesus. The Sadducees propose the convoluted scenario of one woman marrying a succession of brothers to demonstrate that belief in the resurrection of the dead conflicts with the law of Moses.

In response, Jesus provides a glimpse of resurrected life in the coming age. Those who rise will not need to marry (and procreate to live on through their descendants), because they will no longer die. He challenges the Sadducees with the testimony of Moses himself, who met the Lord (self-identified as “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob”) in the burning bush, and finally silences his opponents with the irrefutable insight, “and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

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

# Catholic groups urge diplomacy

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Catholic organizations and religious orders are calling President Joe Biden to undertake diplomatic means to prevent nuclear war with Russia. In an Oct. 26 letter to Biden sent by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, the organizations condemned Russian President Vladimir Putin's threat to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine and urged Biden not to respond in kind if such weapons are used. "We urge you to show great restraint, and to do everything in your power to de-escalate the conflict, to seek dialogue with Russia, and take immediate, concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament," the letter said. Susan Gunn, director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, said in a statement that "to work for peace in times of conflict requires imagination and faith. We hope President Biden is inspired by his Catholic faith, to see beyond the boundaries of race, religion and nation to keep pursuing diplomacy and dialogue, and not get caught in an escalation of arms but rather keep turning attention to the care for our common humanity that makes us all brothers and sisters on this one Earth," she said.

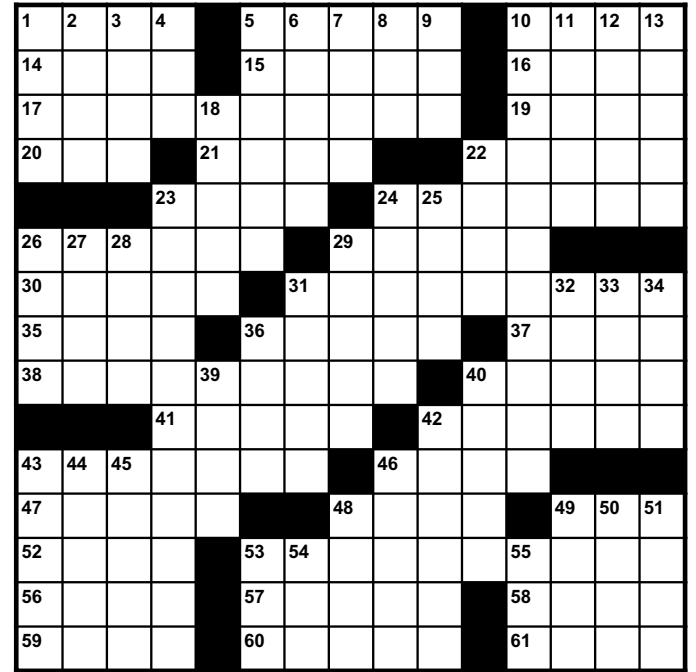
**ACROSS**

- 1 Prayer counter
- 5 "A \_\_\_ of one crying in the desert" (Lk 3:4)
- 10 H.S. science course
- 14 Actress Lancaster
- 15 Lyric poem
- 16 O'Neill's daughter
- 17 Fast partner
- 19 Kernels
- 20 Floor covering
- 21 She played Ginger on "Gilligan's Island"
- 22 Item having exchange value
- 23 They're above abs
- 24 Rachel and Leah
- 26 Receipts
- 29 47A happened off here
- 30 Faculty heads
- 31 Readily
- 35 Cain traveled this direction from Eden
- 36 Casts aside
- 37 Green and Pekoe
- 38 Innate abilities
- 40 Portion
- 41 Vatican news service
- 42 Long for
- 43 California "valley"
- 46 Moses' was radiant when he came down from Sinai
- 47 It happened to the ship Paul took to Rome
- 48 "Lord, teach me the way of your statutes; I shall keep them with \_\_\_" (Ps 119:33)
- 49 Permanently, in poems
- 52 Very small quantity

- 53 Holy symbol that is the capital of California
- 56 Annoyed condition
- 57 Attempts
- 58 Strikebreaker
- 59 End of a yearly song
- 60 Judas' method of betrayal
- 61 Cast leader?

**DOWN**

- 1 "...but do not perceive the wooden \_\_\_ in your own eye?" (Mt 7:3)
- 2 "Able was I ere I saw \_\_\_"
- 3 \_\_\_ D.A.
- 4 Dis partner
- 5 St. Mark is patron of this city
- 6 Unfolds
- 7 Catholic college in New Rochelle, NY
- 8 US health protection agency
- 9 Loafer letters
- 10 First Christian Roman Emperor
- 11 The \_\_\_ of David
- 12 "\_\_\_ through the narrow gate" (Mt 7:13)
- 13 Poles for sails
- 18 List parts
- 22 \_\_\_ Spumanti



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- 23 Papal reign
- 24 Old sailors
- 25 Maladies
- 26 Notion
- 27 A tide
- 28 Pope Benedict XVI asked us to \_\_\_ the light of Christ upon the world
- 29 "I can see for \_\_\_"
- 31 Broaden
- 32 Computer nerd
- 33 Ornamental fabric
- 34 North Sea feeder
- 36 Martial art
- 39 Bloodsucking insect
- 40 "\_\_\_ in terris"
- 42 Pester
- 43 Vatican Guard
- 44 Satirical dialogue
- 45 Allowed to enter
- 46 Prices of passages
- 48 202, in ancient Rome
- 49 Differ ending
- 50 And others (abbr.)
- 51 Biblical epic starring Burton and Mature (with "The")
- 53 RR stop
- 54 Noah built one
- 55 Superlative finish



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## Central Intelligence Agency visits All Saints School



Educational outreach representatives from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) visited All Saints School, Richmond, on Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2022. Eighth grade students gathered in the all-purpose room to learn about the various career opportunities available at the CIA. The visit included discussing cyber security and conducting experiments. (Photo provided)

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## Confession

*Continued from Page 1*

But “the moral condition of the priest at the moment of absolution is wholly irrelevant to the validity of absolution,” because God is absolving sins through the priest, he said.

4. “... I don’t know what to say.” This excuse is “the most prevalent,” but also the easiest to overcome, Msgr. Nykiel said. Just tell the priest, “I want to confess, but I don’t know what to say. Can you help me?”

Learning how to do “a good examination of conscience is helpful,” he said, but what really counts is a sincere desire “to think about the truth of one’s life before God.”

5. “... I’ll be embarrassed.” Feeling ashamed for one’s sins “is already the first healthy sign” of a conscience that has not grown numb or blind to evil, he said. It also should be seen as part of contrition and a form of penance that can strengthen the desire for conversion.

6. “... I always say the same things.” While it may be good there are no new sins to add to the list, confession is exactly what is needed, he said, to humbly plead with God for his mercy to win the daily battle against one’s vices.

7. “... I’m not committing serious sins.” One may not be guilty of committing theft or murder, but there are still

eight other commandments to keep, Msgr. Nykiel said. Believing only serious crimes count as sin can also be a kind of “self-justification” and DIY redemption.

The unworthiness one feels before God “is always directly proportional to one’s closeness to him,” which is why the greatest saints always felt like the greatest sinners. “If we don’t feel like we are sinners, then we still are not saints.”

8. “... I didn’t like it the last time I went.” Confessors might be distracted, unprepared, too “rigorous because he wanted to send me straight to hell” or too lax because “he wanted to almost canonize me despite my serious sins,” the monsignor said.

People can always seek out a different confessor, he said. But people also may be expecting more than the sacrament is meant for: to wipe away sin and experience God’s healing through forgiveness. It is not meant to fix one’s problems or make feelings of guilt disappear.

Msgr. Nykiel concluded that every objection comes from the same root: “a resistance to love.”

“The sacrament of reconciliation is too important and too essential to give up for any reason,” he said. “Divine mercy is always waiting for us. Let us not run away like capricious children, making up excuses not even we believe.”

## Wandersee

*Continued from Page 1*

tries, Wandersee said she has been challenged to figure out how to implement parts of her vision, but her trust that Jesus will “open up a path” to help questions get answered has strengthened her faith.

She said that she and others have “a part to play” in the overall mission of social ministries.

“I think that trust in God (opens a path), but also trust in one’s relationships. It’s God, yes, but it’s also those people around us who have value and needed information or ways that we can help each other,” she said. “And if I speak to that, it’s a complementarity of the other.”

A major part of finding the path God will open for her has been establishing connections that will be mutually beneficial.

“It’s so important to me that I’m reaching out every day building those relationships,” she explained. “I’m reaching out and holding meetings and gathering people, and it is my intent to continue to do so.”

Wandersee noted an upcoming meeting with social ministers in the Eastern Vicariate and her intention to connect with other areas, too, so she can “be of assistance” in any way possible.

She said that although she is currently operating as an office of one “and God,” there is “collaboration with different people on different things.”

Wandersee noted the numerous people

involved with teams dedicated to the areas on which the Office of Social Ministry is focused.

“I am really impressed at the lay leadership that there is in place for prison ministry and Haiti and those types of entities,” she said. “There are scores of people across the diocese that are in leadership roles.”

### Staying connected

Wandersee is life-professed in the Fraternity of St. Dominic Third Order, a decision she made after nearly 15 years of discernment. She explained that she wanted to be “connected with a group of people and follow a particular rule.”

“It provides me with a more intentional way of living, and for the Dominicans, there’s four pillars that we live by: prayer, community, study and apostolate,” she said. “Those four things guide and rule my day.”

Her desire to be connected and dedicate herself to an established rule is complementary to the work she has undertaken on the diocesan level.

The Office of Social Ministries oversees prison ministry, Haiti ministry and migrant ministry across the diocese. Caring for those vulnerable populations has looked a little different since the COVID-19 pandemic began, so Wandersee is working on meeting the various needs of those groups as the world opens up again.

She said she has received many calls about the need for prison ministry and that she is working to ensure all who are incarcerated and who want Catholic visits are getting them.

“Moving forward that relationship with Haiti and discovering what that is and what that looks like is also in the forefront of what I need to be paying attention to in the coming year,” she added.

Collaboration with the Office of Ethnic Ministries will be crucial for tending to the migrant ministry.

“This is kind of a combined effort,” Wandersee said. “I think that together, our hope is that, like prison ministry, as we’re getting out and about and as these ministries are coming back into play, that we still have the teams going out and visiting those migrant camps and making sure that we’re connected with them and providing them with whatever resources that they need.”

She noted that not only are social ministers addressing their “normal” concerns, such as a lack of food, health care or education, but they are also dealing with “another whole layer of psychological problems, emotional problems” as a result of a global pandemic.

“It’s not just back to business as usual, especially for those who are doing the work of social ministry,” she said, “but it’s adding another layer on top of that... that I am very much aware that social ministers throughout the diocese have added to their plate.”

Wandersee said that she wants to “lift up” social ministers and “give them the tools they need for the time that we live in so that they can also serve their brothers and sisters and the teams of people that are (also doing the work).”

# Cardinal Gregory highlights need for racial justice

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Catholics, and all people of faith, must engage in the “critically important work” of fighting injustice, racism and other societal ills that prevent people from living in peace, Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory said in an Oct. 13 address at Fairfield University in Connecticut.

In his lecture – as the inaugural speaker in the Jesuit-run university’s “Faith Leaders for Racial Justice” series – the cardinal pointed out that while the Catholic Church “has been at the forefront of racial reconciliation and racial justice for many years ... we have not overcome all obstacles of injustice even within the Church herself.”

He also said it is “fitting that we, as a Church, discuss the important topic of racism within the context of our faith” and stressed that to overcome the sin of racism, parishes and ministries must be places of genuine hospitality and welcome.

The cardinal said the faithful “are called to model Christ in our society in every way we can,” and can be guided to do so by following Catholic Social Teaching, which he called “an incredibly valuable part of our faith.”

He lamented what he called “a unique and tense time in our history,” adding: “We are bombarded with the negative heaviness of it all as it becomes painfully clear that we are not caring for our neighbor

... We see these things happening all around us and know that we cannot sit by and just let them continue.”

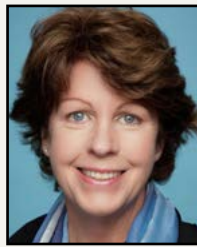
Cardinal Gregory urged the faithful to familiarize themselves with Pope Francis’ encyclical letter, “Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship,” issued in 2020 as a call for the world to reject racism and war and strive toward global fraternity and solidarity.

He also suggested a careful review of the U.S. bishops’ pastoral letter, “Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love,” against racism.

He stressed that racism can be defeated if believers “experience ongoing conversion to live the Gospel message and work for justice. When our brothers and sisters are treated unjustly because of their country of origin or subjected to structural racism due to the color of their skin or discriminated against because of a disability or anything else – we are called to proclaim the Gospel message,” he said.

“We are on a journey as a human family, and I have great hope that we will experience racial reconciliation in our ongoing conversion through honest and respectful dialogue,” he added. “With this and our rededicated commitment to progress, led by our devotion to prayer and active work to end racism and division, we will get there.”

## WHAT WE’VE HEARD



**Hired:** Lauren Mazzari is the new head of school at St. Patrick School, Norfolk. Her nearly 30 years of experience includes the last five years as head of upper school at St. Luke’s School in New York. She holds a master’s degree in educational administration and certificates of eligibility for principal and supervisor from Caldwell University, a teaching certification from Montclair State University and a bachelor’s degree from Georgetown University.

**Dollars help young scholars:** The Social Ministry Committee from St. Jude, Mineral, and Immaculate Conception, Bumpass, recently presented Thomas Jefferson Elementary School a check in the amount of \$1,275. Donations were collected in the annual school “supply” drive collection.

**Now, they can picnic:** It might not have been a picnic while they were doing the hard work, but thanks to the Knights of Columbus and members of Catholic Campus Ministry at Hampden-Sydney College, parishioners at Sacred Heart, Mehrrin, and others in the Central Virginia Cluster can picnic in their repaired and upgraded picnic pavilion. The Knights and CCM students did the work on Saturday, Sept. 10.

**Deeply planted:** Although it was written in 2015, parishioners at Immaculate Conception, Hampton, continue to hear and practice what Pope Francis wrote in his encyclical “Laudato Si’.” They recently gathered for their annual tree planting project, which is tied to the parish’s commitment to create as many carbon offset locations as possible. For every 1,000 trees the parish has purchased — 15,000 to date for farmers in Kenya — the parish plants a tree on its own property as an act of solidarity and support, especially with people struggling to improve the land and make a living.

**Speaking of support for those who struggle...** The Church of the Redeemer Knights of Columbus in Mechanicsville, in cooperation with Hanover Evangelical Friends Church and the Central Virginia Food Bank Feed More program, is in its 20th year of collecting and distributing food to those in need. They, too, have taken to heart Pope Francis’ words from a 2019 address to the European Federation of Food Banks: “Waste reveals an indifference toward things and toward those who go without. To throw food away means to throw people away.”



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The evening will commence at 5pm with Silent and Chance Auctions open for bidding. Live Auction will begin at 7:15pm. Dinner buffet with complimentary beer, wine, soda, and water are included with table or ticket purchase. Dinner will be served from 5-7pm.

Bidding for Silent Auction items will be open online starting Monday, November 14th and will close on Saturday, November 19th. Live Auction bidding will only be available in person at the event.

Tickets are \$55 per person in advance only. Limited Reserved tables with seating for 10 are available for \$600. No tickets will be sold at the door. The deadline to purchase tickets is Monday, November 14, 2022 at 10am.

To Register for the Silent Auction, purchase your Reserved table, or purchase individual tickets to attend in person, please go to <https://one.bidpal.net/stmattsaucaution> or scan me

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Stella Havens and Mark Stinard, employees of Holy Family, Virginia Beach, present the list of planners, donors and builders of the renovation to Bishop Barry C. Knestout during the Mass on Oct. 20, 2022. (Photo/Laurie Powers)

## Renovation

Continued from Page 3

allow for selective lighting, such as spotlighting a piano solo, rather than having to illuminate the entire area.

Among other changes that were made, a new baptismal font made from the same type of marble as the altar was installed, and the HVAC system was upgraded.

At the Mass on Thursday, Oct. 20, during which he dedicated the altar, Bishop Barry C. Knestout reminded the congregation during his homily that the new worship space, though “beautiful” and “important,” is “just the outside envelope” of one’s faith life. It is the “environment” in which persons build personal relationships with each other and with God, a

place “where we bring our lives toward him in prayer and praise and grace, and in receiving that we are able to bring that presence to those around us.”

### ‘Minor’ resistance, then gratitude

At first there was “minor” resistance among some parishioners to do such an extensive renovation, but as they realized some improvements would make the worship space more accessible for people with disabilities or as they saw the beauty of the construction unfolding, many came around, Battaglia said.

“To me it’s a more traditional church that I grew up in,” Glenn Rodriguez said. “I think everyone that’s been in there has been pleased with the outcome.”

Ruth Spartz, a charter mem-

ber, and her daughter, Paula Spartz-Sanders, also like the traditional style of the worship space, which they feel has a greater sense of “reverence.”

“It’s beautiful. It’s what I’ve been dreaming and praying for all these years,” Spartz said. “My heart is happy.”

Such was the case with Linda Baker, an original CHF member, who was “hesitant at first” but is “delighted now with the beauty” of the new space.

“We are family here, and that’s what’s most important, and being together in this new space will give us a chance to grow and be open and welcome new people,” Baker said. “Change is difficult, but change can be good. It’s all how you look at it, and this is where we can worship and love and be disciples of our Lord.”

Jill Broome, a parishioner for about 25 years, initially considered the changes to be too extensive, but once the project started, she said she changed her attitude and volunteered in various ways to help make the renovations successful.

“In the end, it was the right thing to do, and the result is it’s just gorgeous,” she said, explaining that the worship space is “warm and welcoming and beautiful,” and as part of the choir, she appreciates the new acoustics that make “an incredible difference.”

“It’s just wonderful. I am totally a person who has come around 180 degrees from where I started with this process,” Broome said. “I’m just so excited and happy to get to use the new space.”

## Repairs

Continued from Page 8

much moisture in the air,” Capps said.

“The improvements have made our church better and more comfortable in the sanctuary,” Klapetzky said.

“The improvements are wonderful!” said Tench. “It’s safe now.”

Father Emmanuel “Tabi” Mensah, pastor, said it was important to “maintain that beautiful church” for posterity.

That’s important to those belonging to the quaint church as well. The community is so close-knit that if one person doesn’t attend Mass, they can expect a phone call from at least one other parishioner to ensure they are OK, Tench said.

For some, other churches are closer to home than the shrine, but they make the drive anyway because they enjoy its sense of family.

“The camaraderie and fellowship in this church is unbelievable. It’s a small church, and everyone knows each other,” Klapetzky said.

Similarly, Capps said she attended a different church before joining the shrine but found the latter to be more inviting.

“After coming here, I’ll never leave,” she said. “This parish has made me feel like I belong, and it’s like a big family here.”

Although the parish is small, it is not exclusive.

“The people are so friendly, and we love it,” said parishioner Gordon Tracy. “We’ll be reaching out to other Catholics who do not belong to another parish. We want to expand our congregation.”

## Catechists

Continued from Page 3

for spending your time with us and showing us your ways and God’s ways.”

“What a wonderful gift,” she said.

### Sharing the faith

After making her presentation in Spanish, del Carmen Phipps spoke about her catechetical ministry.

“When I was born, there was no one who would have said that I would be a ‘Herald of Faith,’” del Carmen Phipps said, smiling as she gestured toward her name tag proclaiming her as a catechist.

“There was a time when I had been away from God, and Jesus rescued me,” she said. “I had so many people who God put on my path, that I wanted to give back to others in return.”

Originally from El Salvador, del Carmen Phipps had studied theology for three years before coming to the U.S. She is a life-long learner, currently enrolled in online courses with the University of Dayton, completing a certificate in pastoral theology.

“I have a passion for learning,” she said. “How can I answer people’s questions, if I don’t study?”

She is also always learning, she said, from those whom she strives to teach.

“Jesus is always transforming me, transforming all of us,” she said. “We’re all still learning and changing.”

“I wish we could get away from the idea that catechists are unique. Can you imagine what the world would be like if we could all just talk about it? If we could all just share our love for God?”

“Someday,” she said, quietly. “Someday. For now, I have to start with my own community.”

For the Mirandas, serving has been a labor of love and an integral part of their marriage.

“Reflecting on the path of our faith, we realize that the response to the call to serve the Church of Christ as catechists was given to us the first year of the 32 that we have lived as married Catholic Christians,” Hector Miranda said.

Understanding the importance of service, he said, helps us in ways we might not have imagined, taking us

beyond our initial answer to the call.

“Always making sure that serving brought us joy,” he said, “ultimately brought us closer and helped us grow in faith.”

St. Luke tells us that Jesus bid the apostles to row into deep waters and to cast the net into a specific place where the fish could be found, Miranda said.

“His promise is also for us,” he said. “If we trust in Christ, we will find what we need in taking up his charge to proclaim the Gospel. He has taken us to deep waters, but he has also brought us to the seashore.”

### Taking the leap

The event featured live-video presentations from keynote speakers Joe Paprocki, a consultant with Loyola Press, and author Adrián Alberto Herrera, associate director for the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

During breaks, the catechists had the chance to mingle — and to share their experiences and their sources of inspiration.

How do we begin the conversation? How do we take that leap of

faith that allows us to share our faith with others?

The wish to remain open to the Holy Spirit, to keep growing and to keep learning — both from fellow catechists and from the students themselves — are mainstays cited by the heralds of faith of Hampton Roads.

Longtime faith formation volunteer Mark Shofner of St. Mark, Virginia Beach, said he was drawn to attend the gathering to hear what he might learn from his fellow catechists.

“I feel like you can never know enough,” he said. “I always feel I need to learn more.”

“When you are teaching teens,” said Chris Emsley, a catechist from St. Stephen, Martyr, Chesapeake, “so often, they are worried about giving you the wrong answer. It’s amazing to see the light that comes into their eyes when you tell them, ‘No, I want to know what *you* think.’”

“Religion is not a subject, so much as it’s a way of life,” Kathy Dowdy, a catechist from Holy Family, Virginia Beach, said. “The best way to teach religion is to show them. To learn with them. It’s been a joy, to be a part of it all.”

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Norfolk**, is seeking a part-time coordinator of Christian formation (K-5). Applicant must be a practicing Catholic and possess a love for and knowledge of the Catholic faith, as well as a strong commitment to the faith development of children and their parents. Professional work ethic and excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, are essential. This is a part time position that requires variable hours.

**Primary responsibilities:** Organize sacrament preparation for first reconciliation and first Eucharist. Develop and provide catechetical program for children. Aid catechists in the instruction of the Catholic faith for children's programs. Organize and manage the Vacation Bible School yearly. Maintain files for the Pathways and Safe Environment programs. Provide catechists for Children's Liturgy of the Word. Participate with local, regional and diocesan meetings regularly. Work variable hours including weekends, nights and holidays to meet the needs of children's programs. **Qualifications:** At least a bachelor's degree preferable of related field, or equivalent in ministry experience is required. Required skills include strong interpersonal and communication skills, organization. Children and/or youth ministry programming experience desired. Send cover letter, resume and completed diocesan application (<https://bit.ly/36ndEsX>) to pastoral associate Alfie Martinez-Coyle or email PA2@blessed-sacrament.com.

**Church of the Epiphany, North Chesterfield**, is seeking to fill the following full-time positions:

**Director of religious education** to develop and maintain the total parish catechetical program for children, youth and adults, as well as set and implement the catechetical vision for the parish based on the "Catechism of the Catholic Church" to develop the parish as an evangelizing community. Master's degree in religious education, theology or related field preferred. Equivalency in graduate level studies, skills and experience will also be considered. Qualified candidates should send a résumé and cover letter to Susan Crudup at [susancrudup@epiphanychurch.org](mailto:susancrudup@epiphanychurch.org).

**Human concerns coordinator** to develop and maintain the parish's social justice and pastoral care ministries, including charitable outreach to individuals and organizations, directing the ministry to the sick and homebound, and funeral planning. Bachelor's degree in theology or pastoral ministry preferred. Equivalency in studies, skills and experience will also be considered. Qualified candidates should send a résumé and cover letter to Susan Crudup at [susancrudup@epiphanychurch.org](mailto:susancrudup@epiphanychurch.org).

**Administrative assistant / recep-**

**tionist** to greet visitors in the front office, manage the parish telephone switchboard and provide administrative support to the parish clergy and staff. High school diploma required. 3-5 years administrative experience preferred, as well as a proficiency in Microsoft Office products. Qualified candidates should send a résumé and cover letter to Susan Crudup at [susancrudup@epiphanychurch.org](mailto:susancrudup@epiphanychurch.org).

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Newport News**, has an opening for a long-term substitute for kindergarten to begin at the end of January through April 6, 2023. Holding a teacher license and experience teaching young students is preferred. Candidates must desire to work in a Christ-centered environment. Please submit a resume and a diocesan application (<https://bit.ly/36ndEsX>) to [sajoseph@olmc-school.com](mailto:sajoseph@olmc-school.com). All inquiries should be directed to Sister Anna Joseph at 757-596-2754.

**The Catholic Diocese of Richmond** is seeking a full-time payroll specialist for the Pastoral Center. The payroll specialist processes payroll in the HRMS/Payroll System (UKG) for diocesan locations and performs tasks to maintain accurate employee payroll records. The payroll specialist is responsible for monitoring and auditing payroll submissions on a bi-weekly basis to ensure accurate payroll processing and to ensure compliance with diocesan policy and state/federal regulations. The ideal candidate will have a working knowledge of payroll policies and procedures, federal and state statutes pertaining to FLSA, tax status and wage reduction programs, and computer operations is necessary. Ability to multi-task to handle multiple projects simultaneously; ability to think analytically to identify discrepancies and errors in payroll reports; ability to communicate effectively verbally and in writing and to create effective working relationships with employees and other departments is critical. Ability to apply modern accounting principles and procedures in a non-profit setting is preferred. A minimum of an Associated degree in accounting, business, or closely related field, plus two years of full-time payroll or accounting experience in a high-volume environment (or equivalent combination of education and experience) is required.

**Apply here** <https://bit.ly/3D7bf3D>. For questions, please contact Kelly Shumate, HR generalist/recruiter at [jobs@richmonddioocese.org](mailto:jobs@richmonddioocese.org).

**Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Virginia Beach**, is seeking a full-time music coordinator, 35 hours per week, devoted to the liturgical music of the parish. The position comprises of playing at all weekend, holy days & holy day Masses, weddings, and funerals. Includes planning and directing the music program for the parish, with both an adult and teen choir. The music coordinator will be responsible for planning, rehearsing and co-

ordinating music for all sacramental events. They will develop and maintain instrumentalist and cantors. Must have knowledge of computer skills and liturgical music software. Qualified candidates must be a practicing Roman Catholic with an undergraduate degree (B.S. or B.A.), proficient in piano or organ with knowledge of the Catholic theology. Compensation will be based on Diocese of Richmond guidelines. Interested candidates should email Father Steve at [frsteve@staroftheseaparissh.com](mailto:frsteve@staroftheseaparissh.com).

**St. Gabriel, Chesterfield**, is seeking applicants for the position of children's formation coordinator. This position is responsible for overseeing the faith formation program for pre-school through grade 5, children's preparation for first reconciliation and first Eucharist and Vacation Bible School.

**Qualifications:** Candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing; possess an undergraduate degree in theology, ministry, religious education or equivalent; excellent people skills; outstanding computer skills; and the ability to maintain confidentiality. This is a 25 hour per week, part-time position with regular weekend events and occasional evening meetings. Office days are Tuesday – Friday. **To apply:** Please send a resume and diocesan application (<https://bit.ly/36ndEsX>) to Therese Venti, 8901 Winterpock Road, Chesterfield, VA 23832 or [thereseventi@saintgabriel.org](mailto:thereseventi@saintgabriel.org).

**St. Gabriel, Chesterfield**, is seeking to hire a part-time music coordinator (25 hours/week) to facilitate and plan the music for all liturgies. The ideal candidate must possess a solid understanding of Catholic liturgy, have knowledge of liturgical music in a variety of styles, leadership skills to enable vocal training with the cantors, and the ability to work in cooperation with and under the direction of the pastor. Keyboard or guitar proficiency is preferred. The ability to play the keyboard, piano and/or guitar is a plus. A degree in music is preferred but not required. In addition to coordination of the cantors, musicians and choirs, this position will help coordinate holy day, wedding, funeral and other special occasion music. Strong computer skills a must. Must be a Roman Catholic in good standing. Salary is in accordance with diocesan scale. **Education/Certification:** Degree in music performances and composition or equivalent education is preferred. **Experience:** Three to five years of liturgical music experience. Strong knowledge and appreciation of Catholic liturgy. To apply: Please send a resume and diocesan application (<https://bit.ly/36ndEsX>) to: Therese Venti by mail: 8901 Winterpock Road, Chesterfield, VA 23832; fax: 804-639-6591; or email: [therese.venti@saintgabriel.org](mailto:therese.venti@saintgabriel.org).

**St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen**, is looking for a full-time maintenance technician who would be responsible for ensuring all areas of the

campus and all projects are in good repair and maintain a safe environment. The maintenance technician works in a manner that is consistent with the mission and guiding principles of the parish. The maintenance technician will perform general and advanced maintenance duties that include plumbing, electrical, painting, HVAC, carpentry, general, facility setup. Please visit <https://www.saintmikes.org/were-hiring> for the detailed job description and instructions on how to apply.

## SHORTAKES

**The annual memorial Mass at Holy Cross Cemetery**, 1700 1st Ave., Richmond, will take place Sunday, Nov. 6, 2 p.m. Father Walter G. Lewis will officiate. Contact the chapel at 804-321-5936.

**Baroque Brilliance:** The Wren Masters Baroque Ensemble will present the program, "Baroque Brilliance," featuring music by virtuoso composer/performers of the 18th century including works by Telemann, Marin Marais, Buxtehude and J.S. Bach played on harpsichord, recorder, baroque violin and viola da gamba. Our guest artist will be tenor Joel Kumro from Richmond. The Virginia Commission for the Arts is sponsoring this free concert on Sunday, Nov. 13, 2 p.m., at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, 520 Richmond Road, Williamsburg. For more information, call 757-229-3631 or visit [www.bedeveva.org/concerts](http://www.bedeveva.org/concerts).

**Please join the Knights of Columbus Council #14129** for their annual Soup to Go fundraising event. The 32 oz. quarts of soups being sold include black bean, vegetable beef, Italian sausage (\$15 each) and lobster bisque (\$20). Orders can be placed at St Mary's website, [www.stmarysrichmond.org](http://www.stmarysrichmond.org). Proceeds will support VKC-CI families in need. Pick up of the soup orders will occur on Saturday, Jan. 19, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the side door of the St Mary parish hall, 9505 Gayton Rd. Richmond VA, 23229.

**Remember – Honor – Teach.** Help St. Paul's Assembly #1166 – Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus honor local heroes on National Wreaths Across America Day on Dec. 17! Sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a veteran's grave this December at All Saints Catholic Cemetery, 12 p.m., Portsmouth. Go to [www.wreathscrossamerica.org/VA0754](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/VA0754) to purchase and for additional event information. You may call the WAA customer service number at 1-877-385-9504 to order. For every two wreaths ordered, the cemetery will receive a complimentary third wreath. Personal wreaths for home may also be ordered through the WAA website at <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org>. Thank you for your support to remember and honor our local Catholic veteran heroes and to help teach the significance of their service.

# El Papa en la catequesis: El deseo, la brújula que nos guía hacia la plenitud

En la audiencia general de este miércoles, 12 de octubre, el Papa Francisco continuó explicando los elementos constitutivos del discernimiento, en esta ocasión reflexionó sobre “el deseo”, e invitó a todos a “pedir al Señor que nos ayude a conocer el deseo profundo de Él, que Dios mismo ha puesto en nuestro corazón”.

RENATO MARTINEZ – CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

“El deseo es la brújula para entender dónde me encuentro y dónde estoy yendo, es más, es la brújula para entender si estoy detenido o estoy caminando, una persona que jamás desea es una persona estática, tal vez enferma, casi muerta”, lo dijo el Papa Francisco en la audiencia general de este miércoles, 12 de octubre, continuando con su ciclo de catequesis sobre el discernimiento, en esta ocasión reflexionando sobre “el deseo” como elemento constitutivo del discernimiento.

## Nostalgia de plenitud que no encuentra plena satisfacción

En su catequesis, el Santo Padre recordó que, estamos repasando los elementos del discernimiento. “Después de la oración y el conocimiento de sí, hoy – dijo el Papa – quisiera hablar de otro ‘ingrediente’ indispensable: hoy quisiera hablar del deseo. De hecho, el discernimiento es una forma de búsqueda, y la búsqueda nace siempre de algo que nos falta pero que de alguna manera conocemos”. Los maestros espirituales lo indican con el término “deseo”, que, en la raíz, es una nostalgia de plenitud que no encuentra nunca plena satisfacción, y es el signo de la presencia de Dios en nosotros. “El deseo – señaló el Pontífice – no son las ganas del momento. La palabra italiana viene de un término latín muy hermoso, de-sidus, literalmente “la falta de la estrella”, la falta del punto de referencia que orienta el camino de la vida; esta evoca un sufrimiento, una carencia, y al mismo tiempo una tensión para alcanzar el bien que falta”.

*“El deseo entonces es la brújula para entender dónde me encuentro y dónde estoy yendo, es más, es la brújula para entender si estoy detenido o estoy caminando, una persona que jamás desea es una persona estática, tal vez enferma, casi muerta”*

## ¿Cómo es posible reconocer el deseo?

Para reconocerlo, dijo el Papa Francisco, es necesario estar atentos, ya que, “un deseo sincero sabe tocar en profundidad las cuerdas de nuestro ser, por eso no se apaga frente a las dificultades o a los contratiempos”. Es como cuando tenemos sed: si no encontramos algo para beber, esto no significa que renunciemos, es más, la búsqueda ocupa cada vez más nuestros pensamientos y nuestras acciones, hasta que estamos dispuestos a hacer cualquier sacrificio para apaciguarlo. Obstáculos y fracasos no sofocan el deseo, al contrario, lo hacen todavía más vivo en nosotros.

## El deseo dura en el tiempo y tiende a concretizarse

A diferencia de las ganas o de la emoción del momento, el Santo Padre precisó que, el deseo dura en el tiempo, un tiempo también largo, y tiende a concretizarse. Si, por ejemplo, un joven desea convertirse en médico, tendrá que emprender un recorrido de estudios y de trabajo



El Papa Francisco saluda a la multitud durante su audiencia general en la Plaza de San Pedro en el Vaticano el 12 de octubre de 2022. (Foto CNS/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

que ocupará algunos años de su vida, como consecuencia tendrá que poner límites, decir algún “no”, en primer lugar, a otros recorridos de estudio, pero también a posibles entretenimientos o distracciones, especialmente en los momentos de estudio más intenso. Pero, el deseo de dar una dirección a su vida y de alcanzar esa meta le consiente superar estas dificultades.

*“El deseo te hace fuerte, te da valor, te hace ir adelante siempre porque tú quieres llegar a eso: Yo deseo esto”*

## Jesús nos invita a aclarar el corazón

En efecto, indicó el Papa Francisco, un valor se vuelve bello y más fácilmente realizable cuando es atractivo. Como alguno dijo, «más que ser bueno es importante tener las ganas de serlo». Llama la atención el hecho de que Jesús, antes de realizar un milagro, a menudo pregunta a la persona sobre su deseo: ¿quieres ser sanado? Y a veces esta pregunta parece estar fuera de lugar. Por ejemplo, cuando encuentra al paralítico en la piscina de Betesda, que estaba allí desde hacía muchos años y nunca encontraba el momento adecuado para entrar en el agua. Jesús le pregunta: «¿Quieres curarte» (Jn 5,6)? ¿Por qué? En realidad, la respuesta del paralítico revela una serie de resistencias extrañas a la sanación, que no tienen que ver solo con él. La pregunta de Jesús era una invitación a aclarar su corazón, para acoger un posible salto de calidad: no pensar más en sí mismo y en la propia vida “de paralítico”, transportado por otros. Pero el hombre en la camilla no parecer estar tan convencido.

*“Dialogando con el Señor, aprendemos a entender qué queremos realmente de nuestra vida”*

## Las quejas no dejan crecer el deseo

Luego, hablando sin seguir su discurso escrito, el Papa Francisco advirtió de tener cuidado con las quejas, porque son el veneno del alma. Y para explicar esto, puso como ejemplo ese paralítico del cual habla el Evangelio, que decía: ‘Sí, sí, quiero, quiero’ pero no quiero no hago nada. “El querer hacer – subrayó el Papa – se convierte en una ilusión y uno no da el paso para hacerlo. Las personas que quieren y no quieren. Es feo esto y este enfermo 38 años allí, pero

siempre con las quejas. Pero, cuidado que las quejas son veneno, veneno para el alma, veneno para la vida porque no te hacen crecer las ganas de seguir. Tenga cuidado con las quejas. Cuando se quejan en la familia, los cónyuges se quejan, se quejan unos de otros, los hijos de papá o los sacerdotes del obispo o los obispos de tantas otras cosas.

*“Si te encuentras en la queja, ten cuidado, es casi un pecado, porque no deja crecer el deseo”*

## Valorar con calma lo que realmente queremos

A menudo, indicó el Santo Padre, es precisamente el deseo lo que marca la diferencia entre un proyecto exitoso, coherente y duradero, y las mil ambiciones y los tantos buenos propósitos de los que, como se dice, “está empedrado el infierno”. La época en la que vivimos – precisó el Pontífice – parece favorecer la máxima libertad de elección, pero al mismo tiempo atrofia el deseo, mayormente reducido a las ganas del momento. Estamos bombardeados por miles de propuestas, proyectos, posibilidades, que corremos el riesgo de distraernos y no permitimos valorar con calma lo que realmente queremos.

## Pedir a Dios que nos ayude a conocer el deseo profundo de Él

Finalmente, el Papa Francisco dijo que, muchas personas sufren porque no saben qué quieren hacer con su vida; probablemente nunca han tomado contacto con su deseo profundo. De aquí el riesgo de trascurrir la existencia entre intentos y expedientes de diversa índole, sin llegar nunca a ningún lado, o desperdiciando oportunidades valiosas. Y así algunos cambios, aunque queridos en teoría, nunca son realizados cuando se presenta la ocasión.

Si el Señor nos dirigiera, hoy, la pregunta que hizo al ciego de Jericó: «¿Qué quieres que te haga?» (Mc 10,51), ¿qué responderíamos? Quizá, podríamos finalmente pedirle que nos ayude a conocer el deseo profundo de Él, que Dios mismo ha puesto en nuestro corazón. Y darnos la fuerza de concretizarlo. Es una gracia inmensa, en la base de todas las demás: consentir al Señor, como en el Evangelio, de hacer milagros por nosotros.

# Myanmar catechists deliver aid to ‘starving’ neighbors

More than 1 million displaced by military violence since 2021

PAUL JEFFREY  
Catholic News Service

MAE SAM LAEP, Thailand — Pah Kler climbs onto a boat laden with bags of rice and disappears around a bend in the Salween River, on his way to deliver lifesaving aid to families hiding in the jungle in Myanmar.

A Catholic catechist, Kler coordinates cross-border aid to 43 separate groups of people displaced by the brutal violence that followed a 2021 military coup in Myanmar.

“People began showing up near my village at the beginning of the year, and new families continue to arrive. They can’t go back to their villages because they’re afraid of airstrikes by the military,” Kler told Catholic News Service.

“They’re in bad shape. When they left home in a hurry, they couldn’t carry anything. They look for root crops in the jungle that they can boil. They’ve gotten some help from other villagers, but this is the time of year between crops when there’s no excess food. When we get this rice to them, they’ll boil it with forest greens and bamboo shoots. It will keep them alive for a while.”

More than 1.3 million people remain displaced across the country; more than 1 million of them have been displaced since the 2021 military takeover, according to an Oct. 1 report from the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Over 14 million people – roughly one-quarter of the country’s population – need humanitarian assistance, according to the World Food Program. Yet the military continues to restrict or outright block their access to aid, so getting food and other supplies to the needy is challenging.

Kler works closely with officials from Thailand’s Diocese of Chiang Mai. With support from Maryknoll – the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America – diocesan officials purchase food, medicines and shelter materials and transport them to where the Salween River forms the international border.

There, Kler and other volunteers from Myanmar’s Diocese of Hpa-an take over, transporting the material along the river to a point where it can be offloaded. The rice is then transported on the backs of volunteers, who walk circuitous forest paths that take them far from military checkpoints along the roads. Some routes take up to two-and-a-half days, Kler said.

During one recent trip, he and other volunteers carried in one month’s supply of rice to 429 families living in one displaced settlement.

While food – particularly rice – remains the priority, the Catholic supply chain also brings in medicines; Kler said malaria, diarrhea and malnutrition are commonplace among the displaced.

Kler told Catholic News Service his faith motivates him to help.

“I do this because I witnessed the suffering of the people. When faced with the sick and hungry, as a catechist, my role is to make Church teaching real in the lives of the people,” he said. “And I am the one who knows the people on the Thai side, so I try to be the bridge between the churches on each side of the border.”

Father John Barth, a Maryknoll missionary from Buffalo, New York, who works with the aid operation, said poor Myanmar residents carrying food through the jungle to their suffering neighbors is an image of the Church at its best.

“The catechists and other volunteers are amazing. They take tremendous risks simply to feed hungry people. If we can provide the food, they’ll get it where it needs to be,” he said.

“I grew up hearing the stories of the saints, and these people are as close as I’ve come to meeting real saints. They are heroes.”

Father Barth said the Church is in a unique position to aid the displaced in a political environment where other humanitarian agencies are not welcome.

“Thais are in general very hospitable, but the Thai military walks a tightrope. They’re pressured by the U.S. and other coun-



Maryknoll Father John Barth, a U.S. missionary, talks with Pah Kler, a Burmese Catholic catechist who supervises the movement of food and other humanitarian supplies to internally displaced families hiding in the forests of Myanmar, as rice is loaded on boats in Mae Sam Laep, a Thai village on the Salween River, Sept. 29, 2022. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

tries to crack down on Myanmar. Yet Thailand doesn’t want to piss off the Burmese,” he said, using the alternative name for people of Myanmar. “The last time they went to war, the Burmese kicked ass. So the Thais don’t want to antagonize them by allowing a highly visible humanitarian operation.”

Father Barth said because the Church-run operation relies on clergy and laypeople already on the ground, it is both efficient and low-profile.

Yet Church workers express frustration that they can’t reach more people. Their operations are largely limited to communities that can be reached on foot from the border.

“People are starving. In the past year, with so many people on the run, farmers haven’t been able to plant. And U.N. agencies and NGOs are not allowed to help them,” said a Church worker involved in getting assistance to settlements of displaced Myanmar people near the border. He asked not to be named for security reasons. He fled Myanmar earlier this year after the killing of several coworkers, yet his family remains.

He says the Myanmar military government has criminalized the provision of food to the hungry.

“Helping anyone is against their rules. Even if you are just bringing

a bag of rice or some medicines, they can arrest you and do anything to you. And the Thai military is very close to the Myanmar military. If they arrest me in Thailand and deport me back to Myanmar, then I am dead,” he said.

In a few border areas, he said, they’ve been able to get supplies past military checkpoints because Myanmar soldiers sympathetically looked the other way. In other cases, he said, the poorly supplied soldiers can be bribed with food. Yet such collaboration is unusual and can change with deadly consequences, without warning.

Despite the risks, the Church worker continues helping the displaced.

“There are a lot of people we can’t reach with food, but they contact me. They’re on the brink of starvation,” he said.

“The World Food Program has so many rules and regulations about who they can help, and they can only go where the Myanmar military lets them,” he said. But many displaced people “are in hidden areas, and when the military finds them, it forces them to return home.”

The man said Myanmar does not want the world to see displaced people or refugees. “For them, the people who oppose the regime are terrorists, not refugees.”

## Pope: Be humble before the Lord

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — “Spiritual arrogance” – thinking one is holier or better than others – is a temptation everyone faces and is a form of self-worship, Pope Francis said. “Where there is too much ‘I,’ there is too little God,” the pope told an estimated 35,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square Oct. 23 for the recitation of the Angelus prayer. Commenting on the Gospel parable about the Pharisee and the tax collector, the pope said the lesson Jesus was trying to teach was that to approach God, people must

look inside themselves and be aware of their own needs and failings. “Indeed, in humility we become capable of bringing what we really are to God, without pretense: the wounds, the sins and the miseries that weigh on our hearts, and to invoke his mercy so that he may heal us, restore us and raise us up,” the pope said. In the Gospel story, the tax collector “asks for forgiveness, and the Lord raises him up,” the pope said, while “the Pharisee exalts himself, self-assured, convinced that he is fine.”

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