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UVA community comes together in prayer

Students support, love one another through tragedy

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

Students at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville are experiencing “great sadness and even anger” and “a tremendous amount of grief” following a shooting on the grounds Sunday evening, Nov. 13, Dominican Father Joseph-Anthony Kress, chaplain of the university’s Catholic Campus Ministry, said.

“Obviously for the students who were friends, teammates, hall mates, with the young men that were killed, they’re taking it pretty hard, and they’re devastated,” he said, adding that “the trauma of being on a 12-plus hour shelter-in-place through the night” affects the whole student population.

“When an entire university community of 18- to 22-year-olds gets a text message in all capital

letters that says ‘Run, hide and fight,’ that has a major impact on you,” he said. “So they’re struggling with that.”

Just after 11 p.m. on Nov. 13, Devin Chandler, Lavel Davis Jr. and D’Sean Perry, all members of the university’s football team, were fatally shot on the grounds. Two other students were wounded.

The University of Virginia issued a shelter-in-place order that was not lifted until the suspected gunman was arrested the next morning.

Father Kress described the current situation at UVA as “kind of the emotions of a conflicted heart.”

In the midst of the sadness, anger, hurt and grief blanketing the community, he looked to UVA students with pride.

“You (see how) they have come

together to support each other, to love each other, to grieve together as a community, to check in on each other,” he said. “And you can sense a tremendous amount of pride... in being able to witness to their strength together in that.”

When the shelter-in-place order was lifted, the St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish building was opened for students as a “place of prayer and support.” Father Kress said CCM focused its efforts into the evening of Monday, Nov. 14.

Nearly 400 people, the majority of whom were undergraduate students, attended a 5:15 requiem Mass for the three students who were killed.

“We had this huge outpouring of students coming together, allowing this church to be a place of healing and coming together as

a community of prayer, and even an opportunity to grieve together,” Father Kress said.

Following Mass, a meal was served in the parish hall to provide “a space of hospitality” for students to be in one another’s presence following the lockdown.

Adoration was held from 6-9 p.m., with different periods of intentional prayer throughout the evening, including vespers and a rosary intended for the students who were killed.

At 9 p.m., the church had night prayer and benediction.

The university held a candlelight vigil at 7 p.m. Father Kress said many students attended Mass before joining the public vigil.

Father Kress noted that as students came to the parish throughout the evening, “they were show-

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Amended marriage bill still threatens religious liberty

JULIE ASHER
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON – A bill on same-sex marriage advancing in the Senate is “a bad deal for the many courageous Americans of faith and no faith who continue to believe and uphold the truth about marriage in the public square today,” said New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan.

“It is deeply concerning that the U.S. Senate has voted to proceed toward potential passage of the Respect for Marriage Act, which would essentially codify the Supreme Court’s ruling in Obergefell (in 2015) that found a constitutional right to same-sex civil marriages,” the cardinal said Nov. 17.

The Respect for Marriage Act “does not strike a balance that appropriately respects our nation’s commitment to the fundamental right of

religious liberty,” said the cardinal, who is chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Religious Liberty.

The Senate advanced the measure with a 62-37 vote Nov. 16. A final vote will take place after the Thanksgiving holiday.

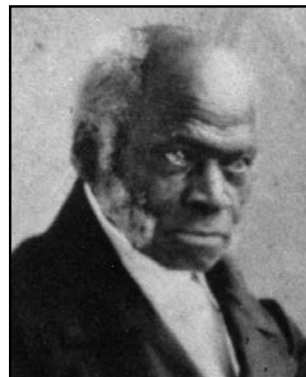
Every Democrat supported it. They were joined by 12 Republicans after they worked out an amendment they said would protect religious freedom.

These senators “have claimed that their amended bill ‘respects and protects American’s religious liberties,’ but the provisions of the act that relate to religious liberty are insufficient,” Cardinal Dolan said.

Obergefell “created countless religious liberty conflicts, but the act offers only limited protections,” he said.

See Marriage Bill, Page 6

Parishes celebrate Black Catholic history



Venerable Pierre Toussaint, top left, Venerable Augustus Tolton, bottom left, and Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman, right, are among six African American Catholics whose causes for canonization are being considered by the Church. Twelve parishes in the Diocese of Richmond raised awareness about these individuals during Black Catholic History Month. See story, Page 5. (CNS photos)

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Cultivate virtues of hope, patience during Advent



CHRIST OUR HOPE
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

As I drove I-95 to Washington, Baltimore and into Delaware to spend Thanksgiving with family and friends at my sister's home, I, like thousands of travelers throughout the U.S., had multiple opportunities — and plenty of time — to practice what Pope Francis tweeted more than nine years ago: “Charity, patience and tenderness are very beautiful gifts. If you have them, you want to share them with others.”

Experiencing the “stop and go” drive, hearing every traffic report include, “You can expect delays,” and while grinding my teeth with the stress of holiday traffic, I thought about the 1987 movie “Planes, Trains and Automobiles.”

Neal Page (Steve Martin) is a high-strung, self-centered marketing executive trying to get from New York to be with his family in Chicago for Thanksgiving. Del Griffith (John Candy), an outgoing, caring shower curtain ring salesman who is genuinely interested in people, is headed there, too.

The film's title gives you an idea what it takes for them to get to their destination. Over their two days together, Neal's animosity toward Del melts as he accepts and then practices the charity exemplified by his accidental travel companion.

While the conclusion is a heart-warming expression of that charity, the story is a

reminder that getting to that point can be a painful journey, fraught with multiple occasions for being at wit's end. It may require us to endure the foibles and weaknesses of those whose words and behaviors frustrate us.

The movie is a good source for Advent reflection. When we travel for the holidays, we know we might encounter challenges and unexpected obstacles — not only with the traffic, but maybe in dealing with family situations which are difficult or painful.

This season is an occasion for us to cultivate the virtues of hope and patience, virtues that are highlighted and reflected during these four weeks.

The concerns and difficulties we encounter this time of year make us aware of the opportunity — the need! — to be fully immersed in Advent. Hope is a starting point as we anticipate Christ's coming when he will ultimately give us the rest and the hope for which we long.

The spiritual struggles or battles we encounter might make it hard for us to comprehend that, especially when mention of the hope that Jesus provides is nowhere to be found in the secular messages with which we are inundated this time of year. However, as Christians we know that our hope in Christ will sustain us.

The waiting and anticipation that define Advent require us to practice patience — one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. In the passage from the Letter of James that we will hear on the Third Sunday of Advent, he writes, “Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord” (5:7) and “Make your hearts firm,

because the coming of the Lord is at hand” (5:8).

As we encounter people and situations that test our ability to respond in a Christian manner, pause for a moment and consider who we are awaiting during this season. Act as he would act — with charity, patience and tenderness.

Taking the advice of Pope Francis, share these beautiful gifts with others. Doing that in a good spirit will help us be filled with the Christmas joy we anticipate.

May you patiently experience a blessed, hope-filled Advent.

Bishop to head child protection committee

Bishop Barry C. Knestout was elected chairman-elect of the Committee on Protection of Children and Young People at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' fall general assembly held in Baltimore, Nov. 14-16, 2022. The vote took place on Wednesday, Nov. 16.

The committee provides the U.S. bishops with comprehensive planning and recommendations concerning child and youth protection in coordination with the National Review Board as dictated by the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.”

Bishops plan supplemental material for ‘Faithful Citizenship’

Future updates will reflect teachings of Pope Francis

DENNIS SADOWSKI
Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE – The U.S. bishops' quadrennial document on Catholic participation in public life will get a tweaking rather than a wholesale update, but will be supplemented with a new introductory note, parish bulletin inserts, additional social media and video components.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops overwhelmingly approved the steps Nov. 16 during their fall general assembly in Baltimore with the goal of submitting the document for a wholesale reworking after the 2024 elections.

The document, “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” has been issued every four years since it was first adopted in 2007. The bishops have issued the document a year ahead of the presidential election so as not to appear partisan.

The document serves as a guide to the faithful, applying Catholic Social Teaching to current policies and political concerns facing U.S. society.

The plan for changes in materials to supplement the document was approved by 88.7% of bishops

voting on the measure.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, who presented a series of options for the bishops to consider before the vote, told reporters afterward that the new supplementary materials “will help people realize that it is a document that is applicable to the challenges we're facing today.”

The specific content of the supplementary materials remains to be determined, Archbishop Coakley said.

He also acknowledged that the USCCB must do a better job of getting the document and related materials into parishes, dioceses and even the wider community.

“We acknowledge it's a long document and a teaching document, but we need to digest it perhaps where people can have access to the content of it by other means — video clips, social media,” he said. “I don't know what it is. We'll try to be creative.”

As for the content, the archbishop expressed that it is expected to reflect the teachings of the nearly decadelong tenure of Pope Francis.

“It's a rich pontificate already that offers us plenty to lay out for people, and to use that will help them inform their consciences and erase division,” he said.

Bishop John E. Stowe of Lexington, Kentucky, urged that the current 15-year-old document undergo a major revision to incorporate papal encyclicals addressing politics and relationships among human brothers and sisters.

“I'm not really sure how we can do justice to just revising and updating, considering we have a different pope who has given us a specific encyclical in teaching on the political order and a new kind of politics calling the whole world to revision what politics is all about,” he told the assembly.

At the very least, Bishop Stowe and others said, the document must be supplemented with materials that reflect that teaching.

Similarly, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego urged that any new materials that will eventually be developed devote “great attention to the crisis of democracy that we've been experiencing.”

Citing the violence that erupted at the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6, 2021, as

Congress prepared to certify the election of President Joe Biden, he said Catholics are concerned that democracy is in danger.

“Our people are uneasy about this, and we must speak to this question in a nonpartisan way, in an elevating way, in a way that comes from our tradition,” Cardinal McElroy said.

Several bishops said the time to begin thinking about the content of a new “Faithful Citizenship” document is now and that work should begin immediately after the 2024 presidential election.

The bishops will consider the new components of “Faithful Citizenship” at their fall general assembly next November with specific supplemental materials to be developed, followed by distribution of those materials throughout 2024.

Also during the meeting, the bishops elected Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Military Archdiocese as president-elect of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore as vice president-elect. Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington was elected chairman-elect of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

As priest, Deacon Herrera will 'love with the heart of Jesus'

Encounter with Christ in the Eucharist led VMI graduate to formation

JANNA REYNOLDS
The Catholic Virginian

The Lord knows me so well. He knew that I was going to be a priest from the moment he was forming me in my mother's womb," said Deacon Armando Herrera. "He knew. This is what he made me for."

The Lord's wish for Deacon Herrera will come true on Saturday, Dec. 10, 2022, when Bishop Barry C. Knestout ordains him a priest for the Diocese of Richmond at the 10:30 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond. Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Military Services will be in attendance.

Deacon Herrera is co-sponsored by the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services. After ordination, he will serve in the Richmond Diocese for three years. Then, the bishop will release him for military service under the auspices of the Military Archdiocese.

The Army will commission him as a captain, and he will begin his service as a chaplain.

The oldest of Armando and Lizette Herrera's three children, Deacon Herrera, 29, was born in New Jersey and moved with his family to the Diocese of Richmond in 2009. He has two younger sisters, Bianca, who is married and has a son, and Ariana.

He had a variety of educational experiences growing up, including public and Catholic schools. He was homeschooled for some of elementary and middle school, which he said had a positive impact on his faith formation.

"We did this really intentional Catholic homeschooling, and I learned about the lives of the saints, and the faith was integrated in all of that," he said.

He graduated in 2012 from Roanoke Catholic School, which he attended since the ninth grade.

Desire for military service

Along with an appreciation for the faith, his family helped plant the seeds of a desire to serve in the military at a young age as well.

Deacon Herrera said he became interested in the military when he accompanied his father to work at Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey.

"I would see all these men in uniform, and I was very inspired by them," he said. "And then, the desire to go to VMI and serve our country and be in the Army (grew from there)."

Deacon Herrera earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the Virginia Military Institute in 2016.

His involvement with Army ROTC required various trainings, including one during which he learned about the shortage of



Deacon Armando Herrera

priests in the military and about the soldiers on deployment who go months without the sacraments.

The realization had an impact on Deacon Herrera.

"I felt this burning in my heart, and I was like, 'OK, Lord. I think this is what you want me to do,'" he said, describing the call he feels to minister to the men and women who serve the country. "It's just a big desire of my heart... to go out there and be with them in sometimes very difficult situations."

He was also a member of VMI's wrestling team, which involved traveling on the weekends. He said he stopped going to Sunday Mass and started straying from his faith.

"But then I just felt this restlessness in my heart and a desire for something more from life," he said.

Encounter with the Lord

During his sophomore year, he participated in a non-denominational mission trip to New York City. While on the trip, he attended a Protestant worship service, which had "great music and lively preaching," but he felt something was still missing.

When he returned to VMI, he got involved with Newman Club, the school's Catholic campus ministry.

He also went on an Encounter with Christ retreat that same year.

As he sat before the Eucharist during Sunday adoration, his life was forever changed.

"I was telling the Lord, 'I don't know why I'm here. I would never go on a retreat willingly. But if you're real, just let me know. If this is worth it, let me know,'" the deacon said. "And the Lord spoke to me in my heart in that moment, and he said, 'Armando, I love you. Just come back. I love you.'"

Deacon Herrera said he was visibly moved and said, "OK."

"I just, right there, gave my life to Jesus," he recalled. "My life was never the same again, and I just really fell in love with Jesus, and I really fell in love with him in the Eucharist, in particular."

With a renewed interest in the faith and return to the Church, Deacon Herrera said he was "on fire." He became more involved with Newman Club, and he committed to praying for at least 10 minutes each day. His prayer life continued to grow.

He joined the Encounter with Christ team to put on retreats for other college students, which he did his junior year. That experience, he said, made him feel "full of life."

"I was like, 'Lord, this is amazing. If this is what it's like following you, just let me know what else you want me to do, and I'll do it,'" he said. "I was just so open to whatever the Lord wanted me to do."

Except, he realized, becoming a priest.

"He said, 'Be my priest,' and I was like, 'No, Lord, I don't want to do that. Anything but that.' I tried to push it away..." he said. "I just kept praying, and it just kept coming up."

Influenced by priests

Deacon Herrera had a conversation with God in which he realized the need to be open to God's will. He agreed to go to seminary even though he did not want to be a priest.

He entered formation at Theological College in Washington in 2016, where he earned a Bachelor of Sacred Theology and a Master of Divinity.

He said he had been considering leaving formation when he had the opportunity to attend the Institute for Priestly Formation in summer 2018.

There, Deacon Herrera met Father Jim Rafferty, who became his spiritual director and who helped him through challenges in his life and discernment.

"I experienced a lot of healing and a lot of conversion there, especially with this priest in the confessional. The way that he loved me and the way that he brought healing into my life was powerful and convinced me to stay," he said.

Deacon Herrera said Father Jaime Robledo, his formator at Theological College, and Father Brian Capuano, director of the Office of Vocations, were also influential in helping him discern his vocation.

"I discovered in seminary a deep desire in my heart to be a priest, which I didn't even know was there, so thanks be to God," he said.

Loving like Jesus loves

Deacon Herrera completed his pastoral year at St. Benedict, Richmond, during the COVID pandemic. He was struck by the way the faithful desired "the presence of God" and wanted "the Church and the clergy, the people who repre-

sent the Church" to be there for them in a time of need. He said the demonstrations of faith reminded

See Priesthood, Page 6

Inspired by examples of holiness

Two models of holiness – one a saint and the other on the path to canonization – have inspired Deacon Armando Herrera's priestly formation.

"For me, St. Therese (of Lisieux) very much emphasizes the interior life that I need to have," Deacon Herrera said.

The Carmelite nun, who the future priest said has helped him with his own discouragement and sinfulness, gave him a desire to be "a missionary of God's mercy to the world."

Deacon Herrera noted that the saint's "big thing" is inspiring confidence in God and his merciful love.

"She taught me a lot about God's mercy, and she really changed my whole image of God," he said. "The way that she loves God and experiences love really transformed my spiritual life."

He emphasized St. Therese's understanding of God as a merciful father who desires the holiness of his children, and the importance of having a relationship with him.

Deacon Herrera credits the witness of Servant of God Father Emil Kapaun's life for inspiring him to pursue the priesthood and Army chaplaincy.

"(He) is a demonstration of holiness and the particular vocation that I feel called to as a priest," said Deacon Herrera.

Father Kapaun, an Army chaplain during the Korean War, was captured by North Korean forces and detained as a prisoner of war in November 1950. He died in the POW camp seven months later.

"What they say about him is 'Father Kapaun was all man and all priest,' which is pretty cool," Deacon Herrera said. "I hope people say that about me someday."

He described Father Kapaun as "a servant" who bathed his fellow POWs, washed their clothes, gave them clean water or his own food rations. And when the priest had nothing else, "he would just give them a blessing."

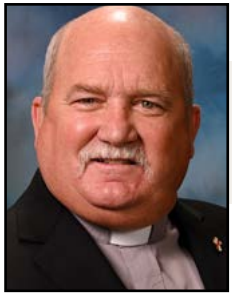
Deacon Herrera said Father Kapaun brought hope and light to a very dark place by proclaiming the Gospel and never allowing himself to be phased by his captors.

"His whole life was just about others, about those men," he said, "and that's how I want to live my life – for other people."

— Janna Reynolds

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 November issues, The Catholic Virginian will feature deacons celebrating their 10th anniversary.



Daniel Sorady

Spouse: Cathleen
Parish: St. Matthew, Virginia Beach
Occupation: Retired US Navy Command Master Chief, Retired Telecom Installation Manager

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

It has been an honor to serve the St. Matthew community for the past 10 years. I especially enjoy preparing young families for the baptism of their new babies and walking with those families who have lost a loved one.



Michael Swisher

Spouse: Rosemarie
Parish: St. Mary Star of the Sea, Fort Monroe; St. Joseph, Hampton; and St. Vincent de Paul, Newport News
Occupation: Retired Government Financial Manager

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

The most rewarding aspect of my diaconal ministry has been the countless little moments of grace that come through the loving service of liturgy, Word and charity. They come while proclaiming the Gospel and preaching. They come while sharing the faith in catechesis. They come while accompanying parishioners on their faith journeys – preparing couples and witnessing their marriages, baptizing their children, being present for the funeral of a family member. These moments of grace also come in a special way through the relationships that I have been privileged to form with the people in our community.



James O. Tubbs

Spouse: Sharon
Parish: St. John Neumann, Powhatan
Occupation: Retired Military, Pastoral Associate at St. John Neumann

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

The most rewarding aspect of my diaconal ministry is bringing Eucharist to, and visiting with, the homebound, the hospitalized and the elderly. While there is a lot of fear, struggle, pain and grief associated with this ministry, the grace that flows into each visit is greater.



John T. Tucker III

Spouse: Lynn
Parish: St. Paul, Richmond
Occupation: Retired Attorney

Describe the rewarding aspect of your diaconal ministry:

Those times I am privileged to feel the presence and power of God: in distributing the Eucharist, in baptizing an infant, in leading a couple through their marriage vows, in being at the bedside of one whose earthly existence is ending, in approaching an ambo. What a tremendous responsibility it is to preach the Word of God. If the words escaping from my lips in any small way leave listeners with a ray of hope, a deepened faith, a knowledge that they are loved beyond measure, then they do so only through the presence and power of God.

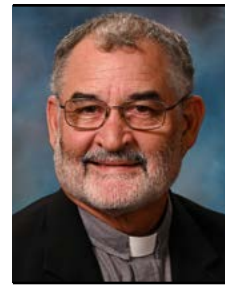


James E. VanWyk

Spouse: Marie (Deceased)
Parish: Our Lady of Lourdes, Richmond
Occupation: Retired Chemical Engineer

Describe the rewarding aspect of your diaconal ministry:

I have found great joy in helping young people transition to an adult. I have also found great joy in helping people achieve their sacraments. I feel an inner calm when I help people in their sorrow over the passing of a loved one.



Bob Young

Spouse: Diane
Parish: St. Joseph, Petersburg
Occupation: Retired; Director of the diocesan Office of the Propagation of the Faith

Describe the rewarding aspect of your diaconal ministry:

The diaconate has been a true blessing for me. Through the formation process, I always told myself that the Lord could change his mind at any time and close this door. I had to be ready for that response from him. It was not about me, but about him. However, through his grace and mercy, I did make it to ordination and have not had any regrets since. My wife, family and the parishioners of St. Joseph have been gracious and understanding of my duties and responsibilities and have given me the freedom to serve God's Church in whatever way he calls.

Remember Advent in your excitement for Christmas.
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Parishes celebrate Black Catholic History Month

Faithful learn about Black American Catholics on path to sainthood

WENDY KLESCH

Special to The Catholic Virginian

Beginning with All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, November invites the faithful into the quiet — and to honor the holy men and women who have gone before us.

It is also Black Catholic History Month, as inaugurated by the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus in 1990.

This year, 12 parishes across the diocese are remembering the stories of six Black Catholics who are on the path to sainthood, each of whom has a unique story: Venerable Augustus Tolton, Venerable Pierre Toussaint, Venerable Henriette DeLille, and Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange, Sister Thea Bowman and Julia Greeley, who have the title "Servant of God."

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, a Servant of God is "a candidate for sainthood whose cause is still under investigation, prior to being declared venerable." One who is named venerable "has not yet reached the beatification stage but whose heroic virtue has been declared by the pope."

"They remained Catholic even when it was difficult to remain Catholic," said Abby Causey, director of evangelization at Holy Family, Virginia Beach. "Their perseverance is a lesson for everyone who struggles with their faith."

Through church bulletins and candlelit displays, film showings and special presentations, the parishes are working to raise awareness of these six people who serve as models of the Catholic faith.

Their efforts have been facilitated by Virginia Catholics for Racial Justice, a group that began in June 2020, when 75 members from various parishes were brought together by a series of online modules on racial justice, organized by JustFaith ministries.



Carol Dufresne Skubic portrays Sister Thea Bowman, Ruby Carter portrays Mother Mary Lange and Jimmy Lemelle portrays Father Augustus Tolton at "We've Come This Far by Faith" at Immaculate Conception, Hampton, Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022. (Photo/Joan Kennedy)

The late Deacon Charles Williams, then director of the Office for Black Catholics, challenged the group to move from conversation to action, Causey said.

Rekindling stories from our past, she said, seemed the perfect way to begin.

Lessons in hope

"I believe in God. I hope in God. I love. I want to live and die for God."

Venerable Henriette DeLille, born in 1812, wrote these words in a prayer book, having resolved to commit her life to the Lord. She founded the Sisters of the Holy Family, an order that opened the first Catholic home for the elderly in the country.

Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, is making her biography — as well as those of the others — known through weekly bulletin columns and faith formation classes.

"Black Catholic History is the history of the

Catholic faith," said parishioner Colleen Hernandez. "If I don't know the many contributions of Black American Catholics, I am missing an important piece of my faith formation."

The parish also watched a film about the lives of the six, including Venerable Pierre Toussaint, who — born into slavery in Haiti — went on to become an entrepreneur and philanthropist, funding New York City's first Catholic orphanage, its first school for Black children and the construction of Old St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The hope in sharing these stories, Hernandez said, is that parishioners might have a more complete understanding of the history of the Catholic Church in America.

'Joy for her faith'

St. Edward the Confessor, Richmond, celebrated the month with a viewing of "Going Home Like a Shooting Star: Thea Bowman's Jour-

See *Sainthood*, Page 7

Richmond parish begins yearlong centennial celebration

'The future is bright' for growing St. Elizabeth community

KRISTEN L. BYRD

Special to The Catholic Virginian

For a nearly a century, St. Elizabeth, Richmond, has welcomed people from all walks of life through its doors. The parish will officially mark its 100th anniversary in July 2023, but the celebration has already begun.

Surrounded by the sounds of Swahili worship songs, St. Elizabeth kicked off its year-long centennial celebration on Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022, with a Mass at which Bishop Barry C. Knestout was the principal celebrant. Concelebrating were current pastor Father James Arsenault, former pastors Msgr. Walter Barrett, Msgr. Michael Schmied and Father Daniel Brady, and Msgr. William Carr.

"Today we celebrate the work, life and activity of the parish community that has facilitated the faith of generations in the past and continues to do so now and into the future," Bishop Knestout said in his homily.

The bishop also blessed the newly restored stained glass window depicting St. Elizabeth of Hungary, which was made possible by funds provided by the diocesan



Sister of Mercy Cora Marie Billings, who served as pastoral coordinator at St. Elizabeth, Richmond, from 1990-2004, delivers opening remarks at the Mass that opened the parish's yearlong centennial anniversary celebration, Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022. (Photo/Emily Jansen)

Office of Archives.

Humble beginnings

In the 1920s, immigrant families with roots in Italy, Germany and Poland worked together to start a Catholic parish in Highland Park. Worshippers first met on the bottom floor of a former residence that was converted into a chapel, with the

pastor living on the second floor.

In early 1925, the church was built on a donated lot at the corner of Second Avenue and Fourquare-an Lane. The first Mass in the new church was celebrated on Christmas Day of the same year.

From its humble beginnings, St. Elizabeth grew and changed over the next several decades.

According to the parish's centennial celebration booklet, St. Elizabeth became more racially and economically diverse in the 1950s and 1960s as many white parishioners left for the suburbs, and more Black families moved into the neighborhood. Many new parishioners came from St. Joseph Parish after it closed in 1969. St. Elizabeth became part of the Diocese of Richmond's refugee resettlement program in the early 1980s and welcomed families from Vietnam, Cuba and Ethiopia. Today, families from Africa also help fill the church's pews, worshipping alongside Asian, Latino and white parishioners.

Years without a pastor

The 1980s and 1990s saw a

sharp decline in vocations across the country, and for many years, St. Elizabeth was left without a resident pastor. Bishop Walter F. Sullivan appointed Sister of Mercy Cora Marie Billings, who has been a member of the parish since 1981, as pastoral coordinator to serve the parish.

She was the first African American woman in the United States to serve in this role, which she held from 1990-2004. She concurrently served as the head of the diocesan Office for Black Catholics, a post she held for 25 years.

"I did everything that a pastor would be doing," Sister Billings said. "I took care of the spiritual, corporal and financial aspects of the parish. I was responsible for everything."

She also led services, scheduled visiting priests, helped with fundraising efforts, participated in outreach programs and more.

Of the parish she said, "It's one that is welcoming, one that is a community that is open-minded, one that can many times look

See *St. Elizabeth*, Page 7

Marriage Bill

Continued from Page 1

“Those protections,” he continued, “fail to resolve the main problem with the (Respect for Marriage) Act: In any context in which conflicts between religious beliefs and same-sex civil marriage arise, the act will be used as evidence that religious believers must surrender to the state’s interest in recognizing same-sex civil marriages.”

The U.S. House passed the bill July 19 with a large, bipartisan vote of 267-157.

Ahead of the House vote, the chairmen of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life and marriage and family committees wrote a joint letter to House members urging they reject the measure.

In mid-September, the Senate decided to hold off voting on the measure until after the Nov. 8 midterms.

A bipartisan group of negotiators – headed by Sens. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., and Susan Collins, R-Maine – also wanted more time to consider “an amendment designed to respond to the concerns of GOP lawmakers who feared the legislation could put churches and other religious institutions at legal risk if Congress voted to codify same-sex marriage rights.”

The group agreed on an amendment to the bill that “protects all religious liberty and conscience protections available under the Constitution or federal law, including but not limited to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and prevents this bill from being used to diminish or repeal any such protection.”

The amendment also “confirms that nonprofit religious organizations will not be required to provide any services, facilities or goods for the solemnization or celebration of a marriage.”

Two of the Republican senators opposed to the bill, Mike Lee of Utah and

Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, said the measure’s protections for religious liberty are not adequate.

The Respect for Marriage Act would repeal the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, signed into Law by President Bill Clinton. It barred the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that law unconstitutional in 2013.

The push in Congress to codify a right to same-sex marriage in federal law followed an opinion by Justice Clarence Thomas in the Dobbs ruling that overturned Roe v. Wade.

Thomas voted with the 6-3 majority that struck down Roe, but in a concurring opinion, he said the court should reconsider other rulings, including Obergefell and its 1965 Griswold decision that said a state’s ban on the use of contraceptives violated the right to marital privacy.

But the majority opinion in Dobbs said the ruling only concerned a constitutional right to abortion.

If the Senate passes the measure, the House would have to vote on it again because it has been amended.

Cardinal Dolan urged senators who back the measure to “reverse course and consider the consequences of passing an unnecessary law that fails to provide affirmative protections for the many Americans” who believe traditional marriage is “both true and foundational to the common good.”

“The Catholic Church will always uphold the unique meaning of marriage as a lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman,” he added.

“In doing so, we are joined by millions of what the Obergefell court called ‘reasonable and sincere’ Americans – both religious and secular – who share this time-honored understanding of the truth and beauty of marriage,” the cardinal said.

Priesthood

Continued from Page 3

him that being present to people is a huge and important part of priestly ministry.

“I fell more in love with the Church during that pastoral year,” he said. “Still to this day, that was probably one of the best years of formation, just a lot of joy even in the midst of COVID.”

When he is ordained a priest, Deacon Herrera said the faithful will get “a priest who belongs to Jesus Christ and who belongs to them, to serve them, to love them like Jesus does.”

“They will get a sinful man as well, but a man who wants to love them with the heart of Jesus,” he added, noting that the love of a priest is unique because his heart is configured to Christ during ordination.

The desire to bring the love of Jesus to the people of God has been modeled by priests the deacon has encountered and also by a saint and an Army chaplain on the path to sainthood. (See sidebar, Page 3.)

“Jesus really wants to restore my heart and bring healing, and he wants to use me to bring healing to other people as well,” Deacon Herrera said.

He expressed an excitement to bless people and bring them the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and confession.

“Only a priest can absolve sins and bring people healing in that way, in that very intimate moment of the confessional,” he said. “I’m very much looking forward to that.”

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Mental Health Counseling

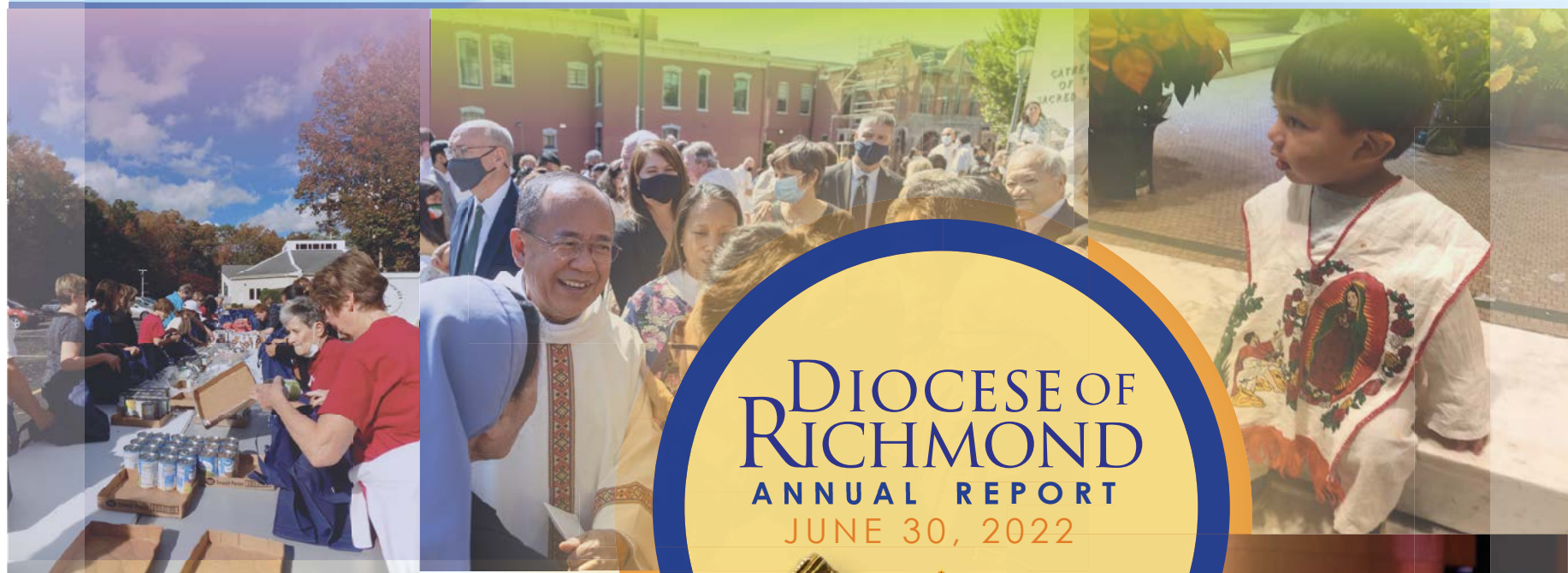
Telehealth and In-Person Available

Adult and Children • Marriage and Family • Depression Screenings • 24-Hour Emergency On Call Coverage



757-467-7707





2022
WE JOURNEY TOGETHER

November 28, 2022

A Message from Bishop Knestout

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Earlier this year, parishioners, members of Catholic organizations and advisory councils in the Diocese of Richmond participated in synod listening sessions called for by Pope Francis as preparation for the 2023 World Synod of Bishops. These gatherings were opportunities for us to come together in prayer and to intentionally listen to each other about our concerns and hopes for the mission of the Church.

This is not merely a program, but the start of an ongoing process of discernment and engagement for our Church — locally and universally — with the purpose of deepening our communion with God and each other.

It is this communion that allows us to remain people of faith, hope and charity during unsettled times, including those that are the result of the geopolitical environment in which we live, the shortage of raw materials, supply line disruptions and the highest inflation in more than 40 years.


This economic uncertainty has impacted diocesan financial results, and this year's financial statements reflect sizable investment losses. While these losses lower our investment balances, we continually work to manage our operating budgets in a conservative manner so our ability to serve God's people through our programs and ministries may remain strong.

Many parishes have reported an increase in offertory. Although some parishes have experienced declines, as a group, offertory in our parishes improved by 7.5% during the recent year. The Annual Diocesan Appeal continues to be the recipient of generous gifts from many committed members of the community and is on track to match or even exceed last year's campaign.

Your contributions allow the diocese and parishes to fulfill their respective missions to serve. Coupled with your gifts of time and talent, your stewardship is integral to the communion of the Church, which is a hallmark of our faith communities.

The Eucharist we celebrate and receive — the source and summit of our faith — is at the core of our Christian life. During the coming 18 months, we, along with the other dioceses of the United States, through prayer, teaching and local activities, will foster a Eucharistic Revival. This revival will refocus us on the Real Presence of Jesus, with us in word and sacrament, and remind us to continue our witness of the Gospel in the face of the challenges our world presents. When we are nourished by the Bread of Life, we are fortified to be more Christ-like, giving us the strength to live our baptismal call to holiness.

Thank you for the support you give to your parish, our diocese and to the Church. Let us continue to grow in communion with the members of the Church through our communion with Christ in the reception of the Eucharist.



Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Bishop of Richmond



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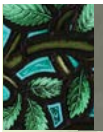
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M I S S I O N



We, the Christian faithful of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, led by our Bishop and in union with the universal Church, are listeners, learners, teachers and Disciples of Christ. We embrace our diversity and its expression in faith. We share a vision of a diocese where love grows, life triumphs and justice and peace prevail. We participate in God's work to renew our Church and the world, through Word, Worship, Community and Service.



STEPPING FORWARD



The future of our students is at the heart of the Learn to Lead campaign, which is an investment in their futures as leaders and servants of God and community.

Learn to Lead:

The *Learn to Lead* Campaign is the first-ever campaign in the Diocese of Richmond dedicated solely to strengthening the ability of Catholic schools to serve families and educate students. Begun in fiscal year 2021-2022, initial gifts already show great promise that the \$30 million overall goal is on track to be surpassed. As of June 30, 2022, \$13.1 million had been pledged or already received, including a \$1 million planned gift. Donors throughout the Diocese of Richmond can designate their gifts to benefit a particular school or direct their giving to one of the overarching priorities such as scholarship aid. Learn more at www.learn-to-lead-campaign.org.

Annual Appeal 2022:

Every year, the aim of the Annual Diocesan Appeal is to fund critical ministries and programs that have an impact for today and for years to come. The 2022 Appeal has a nearly \$4 million target and as of November 8, 2022, has raised \$4.6 million with two-thirds of parishes exceeding their goal. When the lay faithful contribute to the Appeal, they are sharing their gifts with those in their local community as well as those they may not ever see. The Case for Support has three main initiatives: Empowering the Next Generation, Providing for Those in Need, and Strengthening Catholic Communities. Some examples of funding priorities include the Fuel & Hunger Fund, Seminarian Education, Home Mission Grants, Campus Ministries, and many other essential programs.

2022 LEMI Commissioning



\$639,000	\$1,360,000	\$1,507,000	\$475,000
EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION	PROVIDING FOR THOSE IN NEED (Partial List)	STRENGTHENING CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES (Partial List)	BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE ANNUAL APPEAL
Seminarian Education \$400,000 Campus Ministries \$145,000 Segura Educational Initiative for Children \$94,000	Fuel and Hunger Fund \$500,000 Pastoral Support \$350,000 Retired Priests \$300,000 Saint Francis Home \$100,000	Parish Sharing \$1,052,000 International Priests \$260,000 Lay Leadership and LEMI \$140,000	The 2022 Appeal administrative costs represent a decrease from the 2021 Appeal, meaning more of the funds raised for the Appeal will go to the Case for Support ministries.

RESTORATION

Basilica of Saint Mary, Norfolk:

The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Norfolk underwent both structural and cosmetic changes, such as a new floor, restoration of stained-glass windows, roof repairs and new pews arranged to give the church a central aisle. Bishop Knestout celebrated Mass on Sept. 26, 2021, to consecrate the new altar after the success of the \$6.7 million project that commenced over four years ago. Nearly 400 people attended the celebration.

\$6.7 million



Saint Andrew, Roanoke:

Saint Andrew in Roanoke completed a seven-year, \$7.7 million restoration project, which was funded by donations from parishioners and others in the area. The nearly 120-year-old building was given new steeples, a repaired roof, new baptismal font, as well as general cosmetic improvements. The statewide organization Preservation Virginia honored St. Andrew with the Gabriella Page Preservation Award for Outstanding Preservation Project, remarking on the dedication of the restoration effort as well as the importance of preserving religious sites for communities past, present and future.

\$7.7 million

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, West Point:

Parishioners of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament in West Point raised \$386,000 in only three months for the *Our Hope, Our Home, Our Lady* capital campaign to preserve the church's buildings. Established by Polish immigrants in 1918, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament continues to serve their descendants as well as growing Anglo, Hispanic and Vietnamese communities. The generosity of those in every cultural group that call the parish home will allow for repairs to the church's three buildings, including repairing water damage, a new roof, restoring the masonry stairs and walkway and new doors to the classroom wing.

\$386,000



Church of the Visitation, Topping:

A \$1.6 million addition at the Church of the Visitation in Topping has given the mission church a separate worship area. Previously, the parish had used the multipurpose space for liturgy as well as social events. Now, the addition includes a confessional, 14 stained glass windows, pews and kneelers, a baptismal font and altar constructed by parishioners, and a tabernacle previously used by the Little Sisters of the Poor in Richmond.

\$1.6 million





SERVING THE VULNERABLE

Crisis Pregnancies:

To journey with those on the peripheries, individuals and organizations across the diocese have dedicated themselves to life-affirming causes, especially regarding women facing crisis pregnancies.

Mary's Choice RVA, an organization devoted to housing and supporting mothers with unplanned pregnancies, first began its planning in 2019, with fundraising efforts continuing today. This is the only pro-

gram of its kind in the Richmond area, giving a mother and her child a place to stay for up to four years along with an array of other services.

Commonwealth Catholic Charities (CCC) developed the Seton Housing program, which helps mothers facing homelessness find housing and provides access to counseling, employment training and nutrition assistance. With the pilot announced in May 2021, the program has secured funding and housing for mothers in Richmond and Roanoke with plans to expand across the rest of CCC's territory.



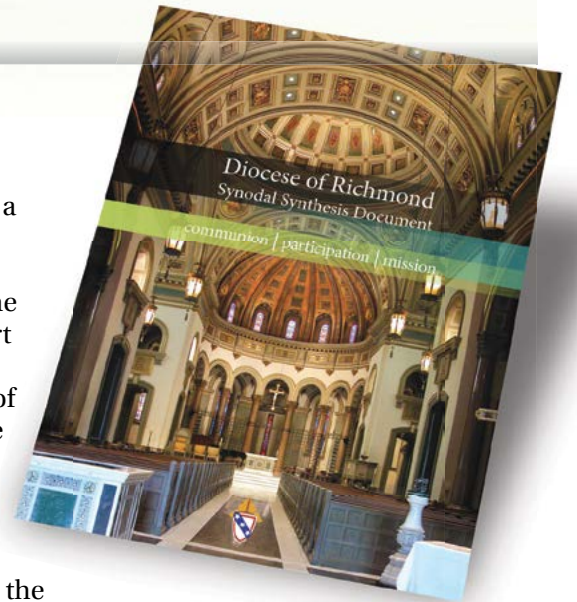
Cristo Rey:

In 2013, Benedictine College Preparatory relocated from the Museum District of Richmond to the Benedictine Abbey campus. This allowed the Diocese of Richmond to purchase the Museum District property. On May 20, 2022, the diocese closed on the sale of this property to Cristo Rey for \$6.8 million. This rigorous college preparatory Catholic high school educates young people of limited economic means with an integrated work study experience and will see its first senior class graduate in 2023.



Synod Report:

The Synod on Synodality began with a solemn opening in Rome on Oct. 9 and 10, 2021, with Bishop Knestout celebrating the Mass for the opening of the Synod at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on Sunday, Oct. 17, 2021. The synodal process will close in 2023 after two years of listening and dialogue globally, with three prominent themes in our diocese: Communion, Discussion and Dialogue, and Participation and Mission. The Synodal Synthesis Document published feedback gathered in listening sessions at the parish and diocesan levels, with 89% of parishes participating in the synodal process. The full synthesis report is available in English and Spanish at richmonddiocese.org



Opening Mass of Synod

Portsmouth Catholic Regional School Shoe Drive:

Middle school students at Portsmouth Catholic Regional School participated in a service project collecting shoes for an orphanage in Hinche, Haiti. The project collected more than 300 pairs of shoes, which were given to the Maison Fortune Orphanage Foundation to distribute. The service project provided students an opportunity to journey with others and make the physical journeying safer and more comfortable for those less fortunate.



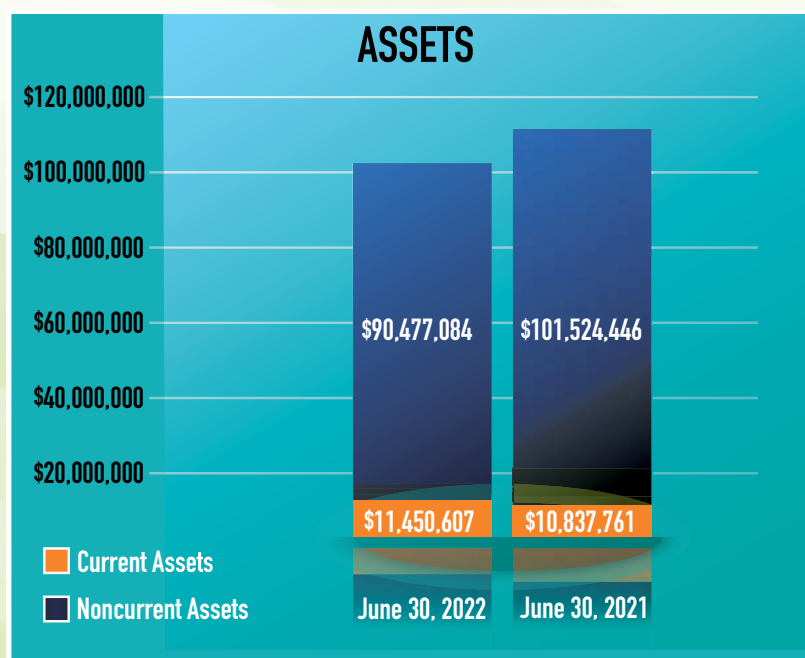
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

	JUNE 30, 2022	JUNE 30, 2021
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 901,190	\$ 882,063
Short-Term Investments	4,430,680	3,906,350
Accounts Receivable	3,224,178	4,130,821
Pledges Receivable - Current Portion, Net	1,541,810	772,342
Prepaid Expenses and Other Current Assets	1,352,749	1,146,185
Total Current Assets	11,450,607	10,837,761
NONCURRENT ASSETS		
Investments	69,680,773	80,764,690
Notes Receivable	6,809,691	—
Pledges Receivable - Non Current Portion, Net	2,384,977	553,559
Other Noncurrent Assets	1,021,843	744,395
Land, Buildings and Equipment, Less Accumulated Depreciation	10,579,800	19,461,802
Total Noncurrent Assets	90,477,084	101,524,446
Total Assets	\$ 101,927,691	\$ 112,362,207

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 3,401,109	\$ 4,014,111
Notes Payable	15,217,642	19,128,730
Other Current Liabilities	2,786,950	2,861,626
Parish Share Liability	1,555,390	903,980
Total Current Liabilities	22,961,091	26,908,447
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES		
Net Unfunded Priest Other Postretirement Employee Benefits Liability	7,124,991	8,198,119
Net Unfunded Priest Pension Liability	2,724,093	2,239,311
Other Noncurrent Liabilities	32,162	55,100
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	9,881,246	10,492,530
Total Liabilities	32,842,337	37,400,977
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	22,173,902	23,017,400
With donor restrictions:		
To be spent for specific purpose	39,284,079	44,186,190
Maintained in perpetuity	7,627,373	7,757,640
Total Net Assets	69,085,354	74,961,230
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 101,927,691	\$ 112,362,207



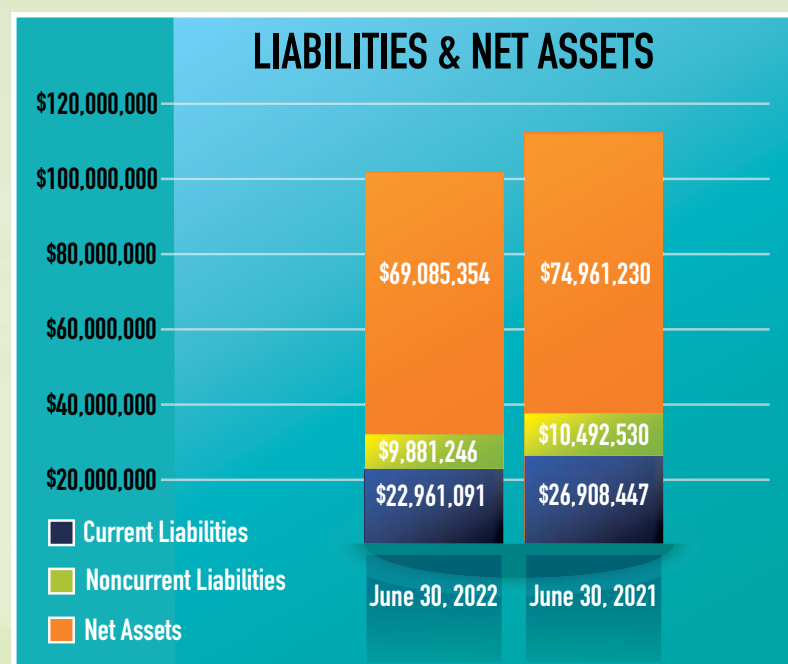
Statements of Financial Position

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond's financial position was impacted by four notable items in addition to ordinary operations. Volatility in the financial markets impacted investments and not surprisingly, the long-term investments declined 12.4% for the twelve months ended June 30, 2022, lowering the noncurrent investments by \$11.1 million to \$69.7 million as of the end of the year. When evaluating investment performance, it is necessary to consider the performance over different periods of time. The diocese's long-term investments returned 31.7% for the twelve months ended June 30, 2021, and despite this year's declines, noncurrent investments are \$8.0 million higher as compared to two years ago.

Two significant real estate transactions closed during the year, the sale of the former Benedictine College Prep High School property to Cristo Rey Richmond and the sale of the former Holy Cross Regional School to a developer in Lynchburg, VA. As a result, Land and Buildings are lower by nearly \$9 million, a new \$6.8 million note receivable was given to Cristo Rey in the owner-financed deal, and \$3.5 million in Holy Cross School debt was paid with the proceeds generated by the sale.

The *Learn to Lead Campaign* for Catholic Schools is just underway, and the diocese's financial statements reflect \$3.9 million in pledges receivable primarily from this new effort to secure new financial resources for Catholic schools.

The diocese did see one positive impact from the aforementioned volatility in the financial markets related to higher interest rates which had the effect of lowering the obligation for Priest Other Postretirement Benefits by nearly \$1.1 million.



Changes in Net Assets

The effect of the notable items mentioned above combined with the normal operations resulted in net assets of \$69.1 million as compared to \$75.0 million in the prior year.

See the Statements of Activities for a further explanation in the Changes in Net Assets.

For questions regarding the 2022 Catholic Diocese of Richmond Annual Report, contact the Diocesan Finance Office located at the Pastoral Center at (804) 359-5661.

Statements of Activities

Investment losses of \$9.0 million during the year lowered total operating revenue to \$10.9 million, versus the prior year's operating revenue of \$41.0 million which included an extraordinary \$18.9 million of investment income. Broader economic conditions and the geopolitical environment have created headwinds in the financial markets. This year's investment losses are only giving back a portion of the investment gains in the previous year. Taking into consideration the recent losses, the investment portfolio continues to have a 6.6% annualized average return on a five-year basis as of June 30, 2022.

Campaign contributions of \$8.9 million reflect contributions to the *Learn to Lead Campaign* as it gets underway. Other revenue and expense line items remained mostly consistent on a year-over-year basis with the exception of the Office for Evangelization which saw an increase in activity as programs began to return to pre-pandemic levels. Administrative and Financial Services were lower by 10.9% for numerous reasons, including lower bad debt expense as a larger provision was made in the prior year related to the wrap up of the pledge redemption period for the *Living Our Mission Campaign* and lower legal and professional fees.

Large gains were recognized during the prior year, the year ended June 30, 2021, in the Priest Pension and Other Postretirement Health Obligations. Higher interest rates as of June 30, 2022, resulted in another \$1.1 million gain in Priest Other Postretirement Health Obligations.

(See the complete audited financial statements on the diocesan website at www.richmonddiocese.org/office/office-of-finance/ for a more detailed report and explanation of all activities.)

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

	JUNE 30, 2022	JUNE 30, 2021
OPERATING REVENUES		
Diocesan Assessments	\$ 10,129,656	\$ 9,814,998
Contributions and Collections	2,103,825	4,335,086
Contributions from Elderly Housing Facilities	3,597,000	3,938,514
Other Income	1,753,470	2,594,043
Program and Fee Revenue	2,231,008	1,546,934
Investment Income	(8,959,859)	18,788,200
Total Operating Revenues	10,855,100	41,017,775
OTHER REVENUES		
Insurance Assessments	15,847,198	15,412,177
Campaign Contributions, Net	8,916,798	4,987,890
Tuition Assistance Assessments	4,768,032	4,515,459
Payroll Protection Program Loan Forgiveness	—	1,999,000
Total Other Revenues	29,532,028	26,914,526
Total Revenues	40,387,128	67,932,301
AUXILIARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES		
Insurance Expenses	14,708,232	16,070,475
Tuition Assistance Program	4,527,046	3,961,115
Change in Unfunded Priest Pension Liability	484,782	(8,360,562)
Change in Unfunded Priest Other Postretirement Health Obligations	(1,073,128)	(2,218,682)
Campaign Case Distributions	3,009,218	913,535
Total Auxiliary Programs and Services	21,656,150	10,365,881
PROGRAM EXPENSES*	14,404,793	12,735,019
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES*	10,202,061	11,456,007
Total Expenses	46,263,004	34,556,907
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(5,875,876)	33,375,394
Net Assets – Beginning of Year	74,961,230	41,585,836
NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR	\$ 69,085,354	\$ 74,961,230

*Please see page AR-8 for further detail

\$50,000,000

\$40,000,000

\$30,000,000

\$20,000,000

\$10,000,000

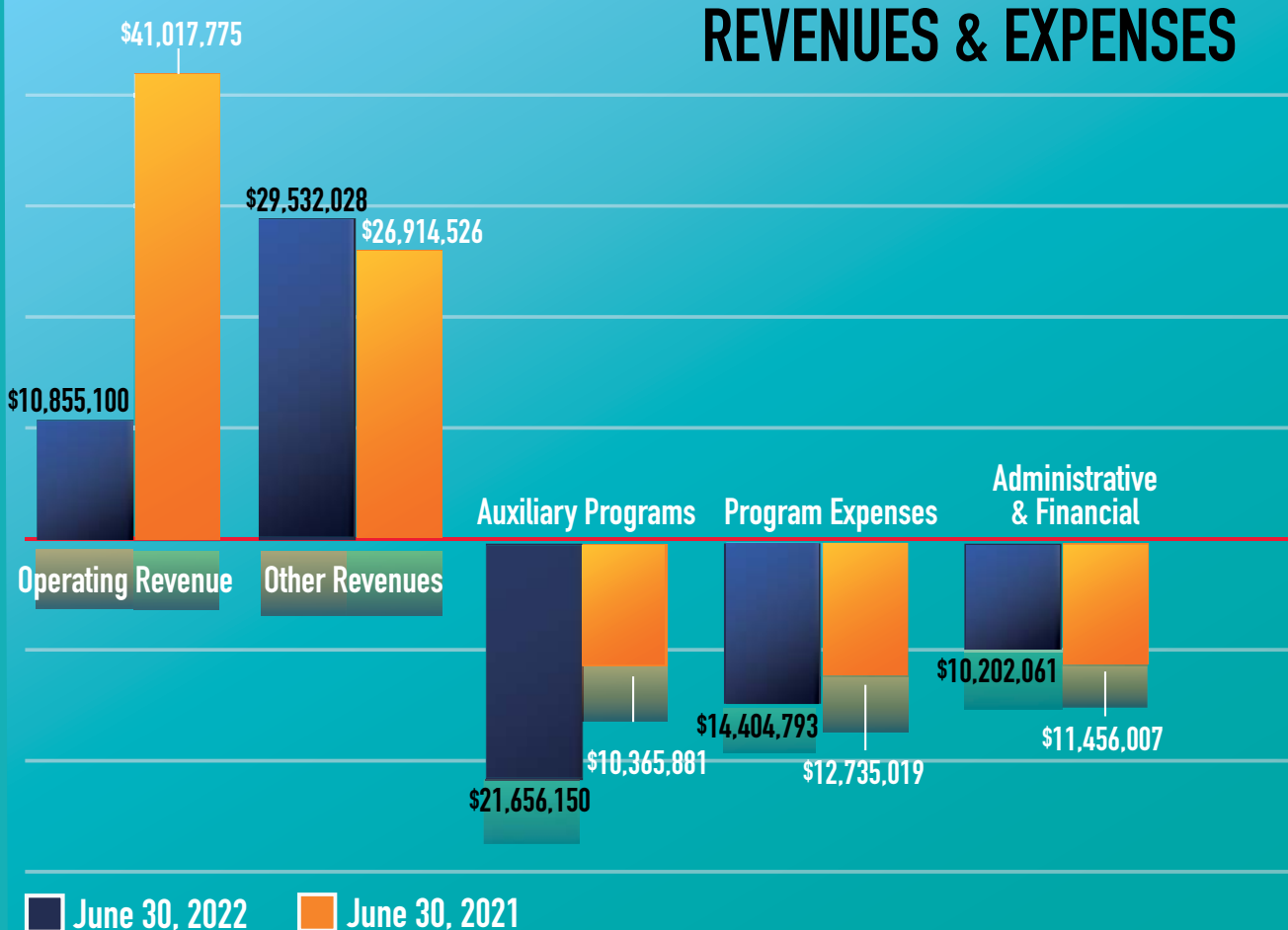
\$0

(\$10,000,000)

(\$20,000,000)

(\$30,000,000)

REVENUES & EXPENSES



PROGRAM EXPENSES

OFFICES OF BISHOP AND VICARS

	JUNE 30, 2022	JUNE 30, 2021
Bishop's Office	\$ 318,743	\$ 276,328
Vicar General	189,662	207,620
Vicar for Clergy	270,132	171,723
Total Offices of Bishop and Vicars	778,537	655,671

PASTORAL MINISTRIES

Support for Priests:		
International priests enculturation and mentorship	897,840	599,145
Diocesan support for priests	804,997	959,428
Priest auto fund grants	572,224	288,649
Priests long-term care	549,693	529,397
Retired priests health care and support	253,253	256,740
Priests convocation and formation	92,514	3,031
Vocations	1,582,720	1,312,286
Cemeteries	782,467	744,733
Tribunal and Chancellor's Office	433,640	472,349
Custodial Fund Contributions	336,773	492,994
Permanent Diaconate	213,546	146,235
Education Endowment Contributions	169,801	171,742
Retreat Centers	166,130	236,411
Diocesan Theologian, Worship, and Other	102,693	136,072
Diocese of Richmond Housing Corporation	32,876	55,896
Total Pastoral Ministries	6,991,167	6,405,108

CATHOLIC EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Office of Catholic Schools	853,914	846,173
Christian Formation	614,157	510,369
Total Catholic Education Ministries	1,468,071	1,356,542

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL MINISTRIES

Social Ministries	590,977	421,368
Fuel and Hunger Fund	519,328	402,922
Ethnic Ministries	204,829	263,854
Home Missions Program	155,106	288,222
Total Social and Cultural Ministries	1,470,240	1,376,366

OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION

Campus field operations	1,463,310	1,227,516
Administration and cross-office programs	509,730	353,008
Youth programs and events	391,981	30,122
Campus programs and events	146,233	32,434
Marriage and Family	63,960	97,259
Young Adult programs and events	21,002	1,403
Total Office for Evangelization	2,596,216	1,741,742

COMMUNICATIONS

Catholic Virginian	783,070	819,383
Office of Communications	317,492	380,207
Total Communications	1,100,562	1,199,590

TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES

	\$ 14,404,793	\$ 12,735,019
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Finance, Real Estate and Risk Management	\$ 1,294,601	\$ 1,313,338
Catholic Community Foundation (Development)	1,141,279	1,155,276
Human Resources	1,048,419	960,175
Information Technology	953,543	906,521
Professional fees and general administration	866,273	1,424,593
Depreciation	833,655	988,892
Facility operations, repairs and maintenance	625,377	567,473
Annual Diocesan Appeal	609,047	497,838
Payroll Processing	485,326	485,267
Learn to Lead/Living Our Mission	439,569	91,652
Interest Expense	407,641	420,065
USCCB and Virginia Catholic Conference Dues	380,866	281,836
Bad debt expense	355,851	1,265,070
Plant Fund Administration of Properties	323,213	506,099
ParishSoft Accounting Fees	195,354	182,480
Copy Services	132,064	115,405
Archives and Museum	109,983	111,422
Bicentennial Celebration	-	182,605

TOTAL ADMIN & FINANCIAL SERVICES	\$ 10,202,061	\$ 11,456,007
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A Year in Highlights

Heralds of Faith



Permanent Diaconate Ordination



Feast of Corpus Christi



Dedication of St. Joseph



Priest Ordination

Prayer Service for Haiti



St. Elizabeth

Continued from Page 5

beyond what's there and fulfill the hopes and vision of something even better than what it is."

Rich in diversity

The parish motto, "Umoja," or "unity" in Swahili, was adopted in the late 1970s.

The parish has a ministry of the same name in which refugees are provided with financial assistance, transportation, job training, help with education and literacy and more. Refugee children with gaps in their education are offered a unique weekend and summer school program to help them catch up in math and reading. Older students receive help earning their GEDs. Many participants remain active in the parish and help in welcoming new refugees.

St. Elizabeth is also partnering with Commonwealth Catholic Charities to help provide affordable housing to struggling parishioners.

"All these little stories that are happening here are just kind of amazing," said Father Arsenault, who has spent the past decade at St. Elizabeth.

The priest credits the parishioners for the longevity of the parish. He sees the influx of African immigrants as a major reason why the parish population has doubled in size over the last five years and has enjoyed incorporating some of their culture into Mass. He's even trying to learn Swahili.

"I believe the future is bright because we have a community who is growing, especially with young

people, from African countries and locally, both Black and white," he said. "Where in the past there was a racial tension, I don't see young people and millennials having that same concern."

The parish offers a series of "Conversations on Racism" that began after the murder of George Floyd in 2020. The church invited its members, including teenagers, to attend and participate in conversations in an effort to better understand how racism materializes.

"Racism is still a major part of our society, that's why we are working on it," said Sister Billings. "If we continue to deny it, then it never gets eradicated. If I am not a part of helping to change it, then I'm going to continue to be a problem and not become a solution to the problem."

"Combatting racism is a daily intentional thing," she said.

Through the parish's many social justice programs, she sees hope for the future as long as people are willing to work together for lasting change.

"People are interested and trying to be the disciples that Jesus wanted us to be. They are looking for the ways to do that and not just sitting back," she said.

'Stronger than ever'

Larry Williford has attended St. Elizabeth since 1972 but didn't convert to Catholicism until 10 years later. Like his children, he was baptized, confirmed and received first Eucharist at St. Elizabeth. Williford said he and his wife, a white Catholic, found their place here after



Members of the St. Elizabeth, Richmond, Gospel Choir perform at the Mass that kicked-off a yearlong celebration of the parish's centennial anniversary, Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022. The choir will celebrate its 45th anniversary next year. (Photo/Emily Jansen)

visiting several different churches.

"It just felt like home," he said.

"We were welcomed there as a mixed couple. There was no tension, no barriers."

Over the years, Williford has served the parish in multiple capacities. He has been a lector and eucharistic minister; has sung in the choir and served on the parish council. He has also been president of the church's men's group. In the 1980s, he helped relocate refugee families and is now teaching younger members of the parish to do the same.

"We just try to praise the Lord. That's all we do. And help others do the same," he said.

Many milestones of Mary Ann Allen's life have taken place at St. Elizabeth. A member for 86 years, Allen is the parish's longest parishioner.

Born in 1936, she was baptized

at the parish. She remembers celebrating Midnight Mass and walking in May processions as a child, carrying a bouquet of flowers just as she would years later when she and her husband were married.

"I love this parish," she said. "We have been through a lot over the years. Integrating the neighborhood and parish was difficult and we lost a number of white parishioners. However, we gained so much more."

Allen said parishioners had, at times, been worried that St. Elizabeth would be closed due to many hardships.

"But we have survived and are stronger than ever," she said.

Editor's note: More information about St. Elizabeth's centennial celebration, including a calendar of events, can be found at <https://stelizcc.org>.

Sainthood

Continued from Page 5

ney to Sainthood" on Sunday, Nov. 13.

"I had never heard of her," said Dave Evans, who helped organize the event. "I don't think I'll ever forget about her, though."

Born in 1937, the daughter of a doctor and a teacher, Sister Bowman, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, converted to Catholicism at the age of 9, inspired by the Franciscan sisters who were her teachers.

She joined the order at 15 and went on to become a highly-acclaimed evangelizer, writer and professor. She was a founding member of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University, New Orleans.

In 1984, she was diagnosed with cancer. Throughout her illness, she kept up her busy schedule, tirelessly working to spread the Gospel.

"What stood out for me, was how reverently people spoke of her — priests, her fellow sisters," Evans said. "How much joy she had for her faith, and how she brought her whole self to it."

A legacy of scholarship

The Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk, held a dinner Friday, Nov. 4, for the retirement of Msgr. Walter Barrett, with proceeds from the event going toward a scholarship established in his honor.

The scholarship, said Eric Labat, a member of the organizing committee, will bear the name of a man who went against great odds in seeking the opportunity to study: Venerable Augustus Tolton.

Father Tolton, born in 1854, was called to become a priest, but no seminary in the United

States would accept a Black student. With the help of his pastor, Father Peter McGirr, he secured an appointment in Rome, and, after six years of study, was ordained on April 24, 1886.

"He was the first African-American priest in the country," Labat said.

Father Tolton was assigned to serve in Chicago, and — although he became known nationally for his eloquent and insightful homilies — he devoted his life to the pastoral care of his congregants, many of whom lived in poverty.

"We're looking to award the first scholarship for the fall of 2023," Labat said. The award will be granted to a member of the Basilica who attends either a historically Black college or university, or a trade school.

Organizers plan to make the scholarship, which they hope will reach \$2,000, available annually, he said, aiding the next generation of Catholics as they put their minds, hands and hearts to work in carrying on Father Tolton's legacy.

Bringing the past to life

Immaculate Conception, Hampton, brought history to life with its program, "We've Come This Far by Faith: An Introduction to Black Catholic History," held Sunday, Nov. 20. For the event, three presenters portrayed Sister Bowman, Father Tolton and Mother Mary Lange, the founder of The Oblate Sisters of Providence, a religious order devoted to educating Black girls.

Joan Kennedy, one of the organizers of the event, said she hoped the reenactments would shed light on a little-known part of Catholic history.

"When I started to learn more about Black Catholic history, I found that it goes back to the

very roots of Catholicism," she said. "So many of the Church Fathers were from northern Africa, and so much of Catholic history in the Americas is Black Catholic history as well."

Immaculate Conception has also set up a display in its commons area featuring portraits of the six, including Julia Greeley, known in her life as "Denver's Angel of Mercy." A member of the Secular Franciscan Order, she was a comforting figure in the city, often seen pulling a wagon through the streets to deliver food to the poor.

"There's a richness to our history," Kennedy said. "Our Church truly is universal."

'A place at the table'

Evelyn Welch, volunteer social ministry chair at Holy Rosary, Richmond, said that her parish has celebrated Black Catholic History Month for more than three decades.

"This year, my church, Holy Rosary, which is predominately African American, is going to get together with Church of the Redeemer, which has a predominately white congregation, to watch the film 'A Place at the Table,'" she said.

The film features biographical sketches on each of the six men and women who are on the journey to canonization.

Welch converted to Catholicism at the age of 10, she said, but still finds "there's always something new to learn." She said she hopes the movie night will inspire others to do their own research and to continue to discover more.

"Three of them have been designated as venerable, which means they have two more steps to go. I hope I'm living to see one of them make it," she said, laughing.

UVA

Continued from Page 1

ing up in community with each other to pray with each other.”

He said that upper-classmen are investing time into being with underclassmen “who are taking it a little harder” and that the campus ministry staff is “making sure that everybody is being checked in on and that they know that they have the support” to talk about and process the event.

In this “tremendous moment of grief,” Father Kress wants the UVA community to come together “and recognize that it’s only true goodness that can overcome evil.”

“Even though this evil has invaded our space, invaded our lives and our university, we will not let evil overcome us, but we will overcome evil with good and with the God who himself is goodness,” he said.

“And we continue to pray for these men,” he said. “We keep them in our hearts, and we let the relationships that we had with them persevere, albeit changed, but truly persevere.”

In conjunction with the support students and

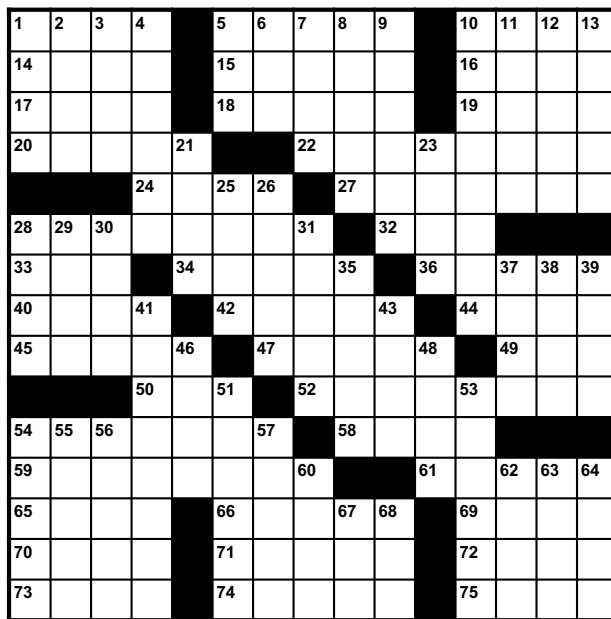
the UVA community have shown one another since the tragedy, Father Kress has expressed gratitude for the outpouring of prayers from the faithful outside of Charlottesville, as well.

“I have felt the support, knowing that we are hurting at this moment,” he said. “The rest of the diocese is aware of that and has offered prayerful support to join us. That is a great consolation, and I think a true testament to the beauty that is the Body of Christ and how that’s lived out in the Diocese of Richmond.”

In a Nov. 14 statement, Bishop Barry C. Knestout asked for prayers for the victims, their families and the university community.

“Like you, I grieve for the loss of life, and my heart breaks for the suffering caused by this troubling act,” the bishop said in the statement.

“While we await more details from school and law enforcement officials, let us reflect on how violence permeates the culture in which we live, and our efforts to promote peace within our society,” he continued. “May our Blessed Mother, Queen of Peace, intercede for us.”



www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

ACROSS

- 1 Italian town associated with a Doctor of the Church
- 6 Middle Easterners
- 11 Atlanta medical oversight agcy.
- 14 Unfolds
- 15 Daughter of Jacob
- 16 US government agency
- 17 Skins an apple
- 18 Scoop
- 19 OT prophetic book
- 20 Marriage ceremony
- 22 “Great” teacher of Aquinas
- 24 902, to Nero
- 25 Not pro
- 26 Personal interests
- 28 Quick examination
- 32 Toyland denizens
- 33 Bishop’s hat
- 34 We try to manage without further of this
- 35 Parched
- 36 Bundled hay
- 37 Readily fluent

DOWN

- 38 Son of Jacob
- 39 Exhausted
- 40 Schemes
- 41 The Good ____
- 43 Charles Martel saved Christian Europe here
- 44 Very small
- 45 Light melody
- 46 “Many are invited, but few are ____.” (Mt 22:14)
- 49 The Diocese of Winnipeg is here
- 53 Road service org.
- 54 Catholic custom of dropping into the Church for a few minutes to say a quick prayer
- 56 The ____ of Babel
- 57 “So, ____ you!”
- 58 “...thy will be done on ____”
- 59 Bay
- 60 Tool of trade for Peter and Andrew
- 61 It may be blank
- 62 Tombs

DOWN

- 1 Leader of the Church
- 2 Monkeys
- 3 “We hold the death of the Lord ____ in our hearts...”
- 4 Left open
- 5 Supposes
- 6 Two-time loser to Ike
- 7 Monetary unit of Iran
- 8 Besides
- 9 Even
- 10 Refuge
- 11 “____ let us adore him...”
- 12 “Angel of God, my guardian ____”
- 13 Young male horse
- 21 Sib
- 23 Playbill feature
- 25 Put in a stake
- 26 Her tomb was the first thing bought in the Bible
- 27 Tolerate
- 28 Greased
- 29 Boldness
- 30 Prepares for publication
- 31 Steals from
- 32 Sacks
- 33 Join in wedlock
- 36 Happening every two years
- 37 A deadly sin
- 39 Jesus was crucified between two of these
- 40 Tactful
- 42 A TD is worth six
- 43 Metallic element
- 45 Shaper
- 46 Son of Adam
- 47 Detest
- 48 Brewery device
- 49 Baseball glove
- 50 Ululating birds
- 51 Red vegetable
- 52 Crafts’ partner
- 55 Mme., across the Pyrenees

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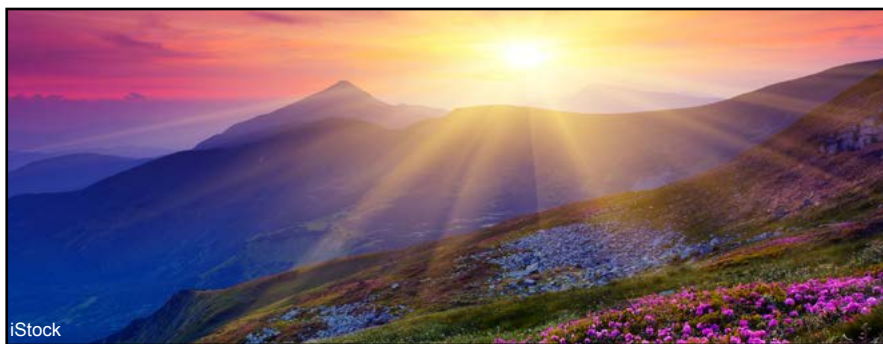
IN LIGHT OF FAITH
BARBARA HUGHES

Rising before daylight to praise the Lord has been the practice of monks and some cloistered nuns for centuries. Before the first light of dawn breaks through the nighttime sky, the beginning of a new day is appropriately heralded by praising God with psalms.

While most of the world is asleep, these citadels of faith celebrate the presence of God in the hushed silence of the predawn hours, a universal practice that unites the Church in a way that for the most part remains hidden. Yet I believe there is a latent monk waiting to be awakened within the depths of every person's heart, and what better time for such an awakening to occur than during Advent?

I'm not suggesting that every Catholic should set their alarm clocks for 3:30 a.m. However, in keeping with this season of heightened expectation, we do well to stay awake and alert lest we miss the coming of Christ because we've been asleep, oblivious to the miracle in our midst.

Whether knowingly or unknowingly, there lies deep within the recesses of the human heart a longing that can only be filled by Emmanuel, who continues to make his presence known in pregnant silence, waiting to be filled. Unless



we fill that void by preparing for Christ's coming, we can easily be overwhelmed by the distractions that have all but removed Christ from Christmas.

It's no accident that the noise and clamor of vendors hawking their wares rises to fever pitch during the weeks preceding Christmas. The retail industry depends on the popular penchant of a population, whose love language is giving gifts that are bigger and better than last year's offerings.

Black Friday is rightly named for it obscures the true reason for the season. No longer limited to the day after Thanksgiving, the entire month of November is held hostage by Black Friday commercials, as they dangle "deals of a lifetime" before the eyes of an unsuspecting public whose charge accounts remain largely in the red. Fortunately, the Church offers a more meaningful approach to the season.

In the "Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis wrote that all who share in the Gospel share in the joy of the Good News, and no one exemplifies this joy more perfectly than

Mary. In our noise-polluted world, it's easy to become deaf to the voice of God, a type of deafness that is nothing new. As early as the second century, Ignatius of Antioch wrote about the importance of being attentive to silence:

"There is one Teacher who spoke and it happened. And the things he did in silence are worthy of the Father. The one who truly possesses Jesus's word can truly also hear his silence, that he may be perfect, that he may act through what he says and be known by his silence. Let us do everything as if it comes from him who is dwelling in us, that we may be His temples and that our God may be in us."

No one was closer to Jesus than Mary. Mindful of the mystery that she housed within her womb, she remained ever attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit and her joy was complete. Like us, she walked by faith.

Although she lived in the presence of mystery, she was not able

to understand all that she experienced. Scripture tells us that she kept all these things in her heart. Consider that the greatest mysteries, the Incarnation and Resurrection, were enacted through silence, and yet, their effects continue to speak volumes to the world.

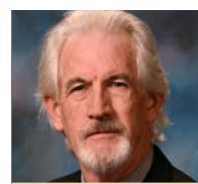
As people of faith, are we duly attentive? Could it be that we've heard or read the Annunciation story so often that it no longer takes away our breath? Are we so distracted by the events of this world that we've become casual bystanders to the greatest story ever told? And does all our doing take precedence over pondering the mysteries of God?

Happily, Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical cycle. It's an invitation to welcome the season with all the joyful anticipation that accompanies New Year celebrations, because that's what it is. However, rather than breaking into strains of Auld Lang Syne amid the sound of noisemakers and clinking glasses of champagne, let's gather around the Advent wreath and resolve to make this liturgical new year the most God-centered yet.

As we peer into the nighttime sky, may we bow before the Son that entered the womb of the humble Virgin of Nazareth, as we pray, "Come, Emmanuel."

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

Let Advent be your opportunity for reconciliation



BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY
DEACON CHRISTOPHER COLVILLE

We most often think of Advent as a time of preparation to celebrate and remember the coming of the

long-awaited Messiah over 2,000 years ago. However, it is also a time to look toward and renew our preparation for Jesus' return in his glory and a time to prepare for Jesus' presence in our lives every day.

Encompassed in all these, it can also be a season of reconciliation. While we don't often think of Advent in this way, it is the culmination of humanity's reconciliation with God that begins in the lowly stable in Bethlehem.

Reconciliation is powerful. It can bring opposing groups or individuals together so both benefit and exist together peacefully. It can bring peace and goodwill as was proclaimed from the heavens that Christmas morning. It can change things for the better and bring

about justice. Reconciliation is one of the messages in this weekend's readings.

Isaiah proclaims that in the day of the Lord, things not commonly thought of as compatible, i.e., the lamb and the wolf or the calf and the lion, will live together in peace. We can interpret this literally and figuratively. In the day of the Lord, people who differ widely in their views will come together in peace. Nation will reconcile with nation, and there will be peace among all people.

Isaiah also tells us, "On that day... there shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain." People of different races, creeds and ethnic backgrounds will treat each other with equality. There will be justice for all in the Kingdom of God.

As sons and daughters, we are called to share God's justice, charged to help bring about God's kingdom. The psalmist prays that God will endow the king with God's judgment and the king's son with God's justice. We refer to Jesus as our king and celebrated him as King of the Universe just two weeks ago.

By virtue of our baptism, we are joined to our king. In the anointing with Chrism during the baptismal rite, we pray, "As Christ was anointed priest, prophet and king, so may you

live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life."

Isaiah says that in the day of the Lord, God will judge not by "appearance or hearsay." In the second reading, Paul prays that the "God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another." If we are to help bring about the day of the Lord, the kingdom of God, we cannot judge by the color of our skin, the church or synagogue or mosque we attend, the country from which we come, or anything else that makes us different. We must treat people equally and justly with the understanding that we are all made in God's image.

Christmas is a time for sharing, giving and receiving gifts, and for gatherings with loved ones. Advent helps us prepare for these things, but if we get too wrapped up in these activities, we lose sight of Advent's call to reconciliation.

We forget that we are called to work for the kingdom of God; to prepare for our encounter with God in our daily lives and share that presence with our world. We forget to prepare for our encounter with God at the end of our lives here on Earth. We forget we are called to live a life of justice which leads to peace.

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

Second Sunday of Advent, Cycle A

Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17;
Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

OPPORTUNITIES

St. Pius X Catholic Church, Norfolk, is seeking a full-time parish community coordinator with professional skills related to coordinating the parish's communication initiatives; assisting with various pastoral ministries, e.g., funeral ministry, wedding ministry, food pantry; and supporting liturgical ministries, including the music ministry. For additional information and to review the complete job description, please visit www.spxnorfolk.org/jobs.

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 adult and teen choir. The music coordinator will be responsible for planning, rehearsing and coordinating music for all sacramental events. They will develop and maintain instrumentalists 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 guidelines for the Diocese of Richmond. Interested candidates should email Father Steve at 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. Candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. Excellent people skills, outstanding computer skills and the ability to maintain confidentiality. This is a 25 hour per week, part-time position with one Sunday per month 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 Rd., Chesterfield, 23832 or thereseventi@saintgabriel.org

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, West Point, is seeking applicants for the position of director of music. The successful applicant should have a bachelor's degree in music or equivalent professional experience. They should have a working knowledge of MS Office products and preferred to have bilingual English/Spanish skills. This position is responsible for overseeing the music arrangements for all parish liturgies. This is an 8-12 hour per week part-time position with flexible hours to include nights and weekends, available Dec. 1, 2022. Salary is negotiable based upon qualifications and experience. If interested, please submit a completed Diocese of Richmond employment application with a cover letter to Robert S. Ryalls, business manager, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 207 W. Euclid Blvd., West Point, Virginia 23181 or submit via email to: businessmgr@olbs-catholic.org.

The Office for Evangelization, at the Pastoral Center in Richmond, is looking for an administrative assistant for communications and office support. This position supports the office in its mission to further evangelization efforts across the diocese. This position is responsible for implementing and maintaining a communication plan through social media, newsletters, print materials and online presence. They assist with the production of resources for parishes and individuals. Additionally, they have ownership of event registration processes and financial procedures for the office. The ideal candidate will be team oriented, flexible, creative and be able to draw from the beauty of the Catholic Church as they assist in evangelization efforts. This position is a full time (35 hours per week), non-exempt position. It requires occasional work in the evening and on weekends. To apply, please visit bit.ly/3X178xT.

SHORTTAKES

Advent Morning of Reflection will be offered at St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach, Saturday, Dec. 3, 9-10:15 a.m. in the Tobias Room. Who better to help us prepare for Christmas than Jesus' own mother, Mary? Join Barbara Hughes, author and columnist with The Catholic Virginian, as she shares insights from her re-

cent book, "Mary the Perfect Contemplative." Books will be available at a discount price of \$20 with an option for signing – a lovely Christmas gift for someone special. For more information or questions, please call 757-469-3950.

St. Francis of Assisi Church located at 15 Glenwood Dr., Rocky Mount, is having their Christmas Gift & Craft Sale on Saturday, Dec. 3, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. We are selling many gifts & homemade items, Christmas decorations & ornaments. Raffle table with items to win with tickets for \$1 or 6 for \$5. Children's table with many items priced at \$5 or less for children to buy for parents or themselves. All proceeds to benefit our church. For questions, contact Donna Allgauer: jdall1969@gmail.com or 540-721-4343.

Church of the Holy Family, 1279 N. Great Neck Rd, Virginia Beach, is thrilled to welcome back its favorite Irish tenor, Emmet Cahill, for a magical evening on Wed, Dec. 7, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Emmet, former lead singer of Celtic Thunder, has entertained us with his "Christmas in Ireland" show in pre-pandemic years. Named "Irish Tenor of the Year," his debut album went straight to #1. He's also appeared on "The Today Show" and performed at a sold-out Carnegie Hall and St. Patrick's Cathedral. Go to <https://emmetcahill.com> to read about and watch Emmet and for tickets (click on "Tour" at the top) \$35 per ticket; \$55 for "Meet and Greet" plus the concert ticket.

Church of the Epiphany located at 11000 Smoketree Drive, Richmond, is hosting Advent Lessons and Carols, an evening of music and reflection on Sunday, Dec. 11, 7 p.m. Please contact Patricia Schrock pschrock@epiphanychurch.org with questions. All are welcome.

St. Edward Music Ministry presents the 10th Candlelight Carol Sing, Sunday, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Free admission, free reception. Soloists Pablo Talamante, Anne O'Byrne and Alicia Romeo will be featured. Music of Handel,

Britten, Vivaldi and traditional caroling. St. Edward Church, 2700 Dolfeld Dr., North Chesterfield, 23235. Contact Liz Goodwin at liz.goodwin@stedwardch.org.

Virginia Symphony Holiday Brass: The bold sounds of the Virginia Symphony Brass Section will ring in the holidays with a blast! Experience the festive sounds of the season in a concert filled with wit, virtuosity and the glorious music of the holidays – featuring the VSO brass and percussion sections in an all-new program. You'll enjoy music from a variety of styles that have made this concert a new holiday tradition. Join us Wednesday, Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. at St. Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Rd., Williamsburg. Tickets can be purchased through the Virginia Symphony at www.virginiasympphony.org/concerts. For more information, call 757-229-3631 or visit www.bedeva.org/concerts.

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 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.

The Office of Asian Ministry is proud to announce that the Simbang Gabi Special Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Barry C. Knestout at Holy Cross, Lynchburg, 6 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15. Find the schedule for celebrations to follow at bit.ly/SimbangGabi22. Please contact Araceli Perez with any questions: 804-622-5241.

The nave of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, is turning into a theater Dec. 2-4 for the revival of "Like Winter Waiting," a play written by Jesuit Father John Foley, who tells the story of Advent with songs and humor. Parishioners along with a local theater company, Logus Theatricus, are putting on the production, eight years after the show was last performed at the church. Admission is free for all four performances: Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 3 at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Dec. 4 at 3 p.m. Reservations are required and available at <https://www.olin-parish.com>. A collection will be taken up to benefit The Least of These Ministry, a local non-profit organization that serves the homeless.

All are welcome to join Father John Kazibwe from the Church of the Epiphany on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan April 19-29, 2023. This 11-day tour to two countries for \$4,399 includes round-trip airfare, 4-star hotels, daily Mass, breakfast and dinner, and much more! A few places on the itinerary include the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Garden of Gethsemane and the Basilica of Agony, the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu. In Tiberias, we will sail through the Sea of Galilee, tour Nazareth, and witness the site of the Transfiguration. Pilgrims can also go to the Dead Sea. We will spend two nights in Amman and visit Petra. For further information, please contact Alba Kim at 804-298-4035 or tours@albastours.com. You can also visit <https://www.albastours.com>. Reservations are available now. Spaces are limited.

All are welcome to join Msgr. Patrick Golden on a pilgrimage to Scotland and Ireland May 16-28, 2023. This 13-day tour for \$4,899 includes airfare, 4-star hotels, daily Mass, local tours, breakfast, dinner, and much more! Some places on the itinerary include Blarney Castle; the Ring of Kerry; Knock, where Our Blessed Mother appeared in 1879; and Dublin. Next, the tour moves to Edinburgh, which will serve as a base for trips outside the city to explore Scottish history and natural beauty. For further information, please contact: Alba's Tours at albastours.com, phone 804-298-4035 or email tours@albastours.com. Reservations are available now. Spaces are limited.

El Papa: No se dejen engañar por falsos mesías y den testimonio

En la Jornada Mundial de los Pobres, Francisco, junto a los pobres en la Basílica Vaticana, invita a no dejarse engañar por magos y horóscopos, por profetas del desastre y populismos, a no dejarse vencer por la sordera interior y escuchar el grito sofocado de los más débiles, de los pobres y a testimoniar el Evangelio de Jesús.

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

La misa de hoy en la Basílica de San Pedro tuvo como invitados de honor a los pobres, vestidos de dignidad, humildes en la oración, agradecidos a Dios y también al Papa Francisco que hace 6 años, en el Jubileo de la Misericordia de 2016, decidió abrir las puertas del grandioso templo vaticano con la sola intención de abrir los corazones del mundo a los más necesitados y vulnerables.

En la Basílica Vaticana repleta de obispos, sacerdotes y fieles, en su mayoría, familias pobres, algunas personas sintecho, inmigrantes, discapacitados, acompañados por voluntarios de la Cáritas y otras asociaciones, pudieron escuchar las palabras del Santo Padre que invitaba a dejar de mirar los majestuosos y colorados mármoles y piedras del templo, para ver al ser humano, que es “el templo de Dios”, para que puedan leer, como pide el mismo Jesús en el Evangelio de hoy, los “eventos turbulentos y dramáticos que marcan la historia humana”, sin dejarse engañar y dando su propio testimonio.

No a la superstición y al engaño

Eventos y dificultades, dice Francisco, que no deben alarmar o preocupar, incluso, como dice Jesús “no se dejen engañar” por suplantadores, no se alarmen “cuando oigan hablar de guerras y revoluciones”, en otras palabras, no caer en la “tentación de leer los hechos más dramáticos de manera supersticiosa o catastrófica” y pensando en un supuesto fin de mundo, dejar de hacer el bien.

“Si pensamos de esta manera, nos dejamos guiar por el miedo, y quizás luego buscamos respuestas con curiosidad morbosa en las fábulas de magos u horóscopos, que nunca faltan; o bien, confiamos en fantásticas teorías propuestas por algún “mesías” de última hora, generalmente siempre derrotistas y conspirativas. Aquí no está el Espíritu del Señor”.

No a la resignación y el desaliento

El llamado, subraya el Papa, es a no dejarse deslumbrar por “curiosidades ridículas”, a no dejarse engañar por el miedo, a no ceder al derrotismo, sino a aprender a leer con los ojos de la fe, los acontecimientos dramáticos, las situaciones de dolor, guerras, revoluciones y calamidades, porque como dice Jesús, “todo esto no es el final”.



El papa Francisco se reúne con unos 1,300 invitados para almorzar en la sala de audiencias del Vaticano en la Jornada Mundial de los Pobres el 13 de noviembre de 2022. (Foto CNS/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

El discípulo del Señor no se deja atrofiar por la resignación, no cede al desaliento ni siquiera en las situaciones más difíciles, porque su Dios es el Dios de la resurrección y de la esperanza, que siempre reanima, con Él siempre se puede levantar la mirada, empezar de nuevo y volver a caminar.

No al victimismo

Con esta perspectiva, ante las crisis, ante las cosas malas que ocurren y generan pobreza y sufrimiento, el cristiano debe preguntarse qué puede hacer, en lugar de quedarse “como víctimas de lo que sucede” y aprovechar la oportunidad para hacer el bien y construir también a partir de situaciones negativas, porque cada crisis es una posibilidad y ofrece oportunidades de crecimiento.

No a la sordera interior, a corazones adormecidos

“Hermanos y hermanas, en esta Jornada Mundial de los Pobres la Palabra de Jesús es una fuerte advertencia para romper esa sordera interior que nos impide escuchar el grito sofocado de dolor de los más débiles”, exclama el Papa Francisco al recordar que vivimos en sociedades heridas y asistimos, a escenarios de violencia, injusticia y persecución, asistimos a una guerra cruel y despiadada como la de Ucrania “que provoca la muerte de tantos inocentes y multiplica el veneno del odio”. Presenciamos, a decir del Pontífice, la crisis del cambio climático, los miles de personas que emigran en busca de esperanza y muchas otras que viven en precariedad por la falta de empleo, en condiciones injustas e indignas.

“Y también hoy los pobres son las víctimas más penalizadas de cada crisis. Pero, si nuestro corazón permanece adormecido e insensible,

no logramos escuchar su débil grito de dolor, llorar con ellos y por ellos, ver cuánta soledad y angustia se esconden también en los rincones más olvidados de nuestras ciudades”.

No al populismo, a la marginación

Ante este panorama desolador, el Papa exhorta a dar testimonio del Evangelio y a “encender luces de esperanza en medio de la oscuridad”, a comprometernos con valentía por la justicia, la legalidad y la paz, estando del lado de los débiles.

“No escuchemos a los profetas de desventura; no nos dejemos seducir por los cantos de sirena del populismo, que instrumentaliza las necesidades del pueblo proponiendo soluciones demasiado fáciles y apresuradas. No sigamos a los falsos “mesías” que, en nombre de la ganancia, proclaman recetas útiles solo para aumentar la riqueza de unos pocos, condenando a los pobres a la marginación”.

Somos el templo de Dios

Al concluir su homilía, el Papa recordó que la fuerza para seguir adelante es abrir nuestro corazón para aumentar nuestra capacidad de amar, es confiar en Dios conscientes de que está nos conoce, está a nuestro lado y cuida de nosotros. Entonces, amados por Él – exhortó Francisco -decidámonos a amar a los hijos más descartados, cuidemos de los pobres, en quienes está Jesús, que se hizo pobre por nosotros

“No podemos quedarnos, como aquellos de los que habla el Evangelio, admirando las hermosas piedras del templo, sin reconocer el verdadero templo de Dios, que es el ser humano, especialmente el pobre, en cuyo rostro, en cuya historia, en cuyas heridas está Jesús. Él lo dijo. Nunca lo olvidemos”.



Nota del director del Ministerio Hispano: Daniel Villar

¡Saludos hermanas y hermanos en la fe! Para este adviento, tengamos en mente y corazón todas las personas que necesitan escuchar estas palabras alentadoras de nuestro Santo Padre. Ayudémoslas a caminar con María llevando en su vientre el Salvador del Mundo. Los pobres, los descartados, los marginados, los que siguen tristes y

con problemas del espíritu, todos son hijas e hijos de Dios. ¡Seamos esa luz de Cristo para ellos durante este tiempo para que puedan llegar a conocer el verdadero Luz de Cristo en la Navidad!

¡Que Dios Padre los bendiga, Dios Hijo los guíe y los proteja, y Dios Espíritu Santo los inspire y los llene con gracia!

K of C playgrounds continue serving children of Rome



A Rome soccer team in 1928 poses for a photo on a Knights of Columbus playground located near the Tiber River. (CNS photo/courtesy Knights of Columbus Multimedia Archives)

ANDREW FOWLER
Catholic News Service

The eyes of avid soccer fans are on the 2022 World Cup in Qatar featuring the greatest and most recognizable athletes in the world – including baptized Catholics such as Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

The global tournament held every four years is a nearly century-old tradition with the first competition held in 1930.

But several thousand miles away, the next generation of soccer players, religious and even the Vatican's national team have displayed their skills on five fields nestled in a Rome neighborhood – overlooking St. Peter's Basilica – maintained by the Knights of Columbus for just as long.

The soccer fields have served a loftier goal than simply being arenas of competition. They function under a mission entrusted to the Knights by Pope Benedict XV: to keep the children of Rome Catholic.

Such a responsibility was imparted on the Catholic fraternal organization's leaders when meeting with the pope on a pilgrimage to the Eternal City Aug. 28, 1920.

Impressed by the order's recreation efforts during World War I, Pope Benedict XV addressed his concerns over emerging anti-Catholic sentiments ravaging secular sports associations that attracted Catholic youth. The best prevention of apostasy, he believed, was providing high quality sports centers under the auspices of a Catholic organization.

"There is another field of competition before you, may the struggle bring you as much merit as it brings us hope," the pope told the Knights' leaders.

The Knights heeded the pope's plea. Between 1922 and 1927, the organization constructed five recreation centers. Known as "playgrounds," each center was designed in the architectural style of the surrounding neighborhood. They included an outdoor soccer field, clubhouse and gymnasium.

True to the mission, Rome's children, parishes and schools were, and still are, allowed free use of the five fields. More than 100,000

children utilized the center in the San Lorenzo district alone within the first year.

However, the playgrounds soon were threatened under Italian leader Benito Mussolini and the rise of fascism. The government suspended the centers' operations in 1931 in order to absorb all youth programs under its indoctrinating jurisdiction.

Recognizing how such an arrangement was antithetical to the centers' mission, Galeazzi urgently persuaded Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to eventually allow the Knights to continue their work. Other organizations such as the Boy Scouts and Catholic Action had to shut down unless they formed part of a fascist youth organization.

Throughout World War II, the playgrounds remained open, but also served as Vatican hubs for food distribution to Rome's citizens. In collaboration with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, reportedly 400,000 were fed daily at the sports centers after the war.

This nearly century-long work is aligned with the Knights' tradition of providing sports opportunities for children including baseball and basketball leagues throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, as well as the annual Free Throw Championship, Soccer Challenge and Special Olympics competitions.

In more recent years, the soccer fields – particularly Campo Pio XI – have hosted three matches for the Vatican City national team in 2014, 2017 and 2019. Prior to the pandemic, the annual Clericus Cup tournament for the pontifical seminaries and universities in Rome has taken place at Campo Pio XI.

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CHRIST BEHIND US
CHRIST BEFORE US

celebrating 150 years

Saint Patrick Parish in Lexington, VA invites you to the following events as we celebrate our 150th anniversary.

DECEMBER 9, 2022
7:00pm at St Patrick Church

Christ Within Us. Adult Faith Formation presents "An Advent Evening of Reflection with Fr. Gerald E. Murray, J.C.D." His topic will be *Fidelity to Christ in the Church*. Book signing and reception to follow.

JANUARY 26, 2023
7:00pm at Salerno's

Theology on the Town. Join Fr. Dan Molochko for a discussion on "The Best of the Worst: The Worst Sinners Who Became the Greatest Saints".

FEBRUARY 24, 2023
7:45pm at JM Hall, VMI

Christ Within Us. Adult Faith Formation presents "Being Catholic and in the Military" with Archbishop Timothy Broglio, Archdiocese for Military Services, USA.

APRIL 28, 2023
7:00pm at Saint Patrick Church

Christ Within Us. Adult Faith Formation presents "Eucharistic Miracles" with Fr. John Anthony Boughton, C.F.R. Gen. Vicar, VMI graduate, Eucharistic Revival Preacher. A reception follows in the hall.

MAY 11, 2023
6:30pm at Great Valley Farm Brewery

Theology on the Town. Join Megan Cottam for a discussion on "Raising Counter-Cultural Disciples: Parenting with the Gifts of Faith."

for more events + updates visit us online
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