



# The Catholic Virginian

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## Bishop: 'remain vigilant' in safeguarding children

LILY NGUYEN DUNKLE  
The Catholic Virginian

**T**he Church experienced great sorrow and great failures when it came to abuse by clergy of young people," Bishop Barry C. Knestout said during the Mass for the Protection of Children and Families on April 4 at the Pastoral Center in Richmond.

"Each year we revisit that tragedy and those circumstances with a renewed commitment, a desire to overcome that – and make sure that all the work of the Church and its missions are carried out with fidelity, with strength, with authenticity, and with care for all those who are vulnerable, and those who are in need," the bishop said during his homily.

The Mass, which was livestreamed by the diocese, was in observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month, part of a nationwide effort each April to advance a deeper awareness of the impact of child abuse, and to work for prevention.

Bishop Knestout is also the chairman-elect of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People.

"He is so committed to protecting children," said Karen Loper, Victim Assistance Coordinator and Safe Environment Coordinator for the diocesan Office of Safe Environment. "His heart is right there with victims."

"We join our parishes and schools throughout the diocese to pray for the eradication of child abuse in all its heinous forms, and to pray for and support survivors of abuse," Loper said.

As Victim Assistance Coordinator, Loper serves as a liaison to advocate for survivors of clergy abuse, and provides counseling and other support services.

"The diocese is committed to supporting survivors of clergy abuse on their journeys to healing and wholeness," she said.

The Office of Safe Environment focuses on



Blue pinwheels are used to mark April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, symbolizing the innocence of childhood. Bishop Barry C. Knestout said safeguarding children is a top priority for the diocese. (Photo/Stephen Previtera)

both victim assistance and prevention across the diocese. The Safe Environment program provides child-protection training for adults and children, and conducts background screenings for all adult volunteers, employees, and clergy, in compliance with the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

The office has trained thousands of people in child protection, said Loper, putting practices in place to safeguard children.

Loper said the Office of Safe Environment partners each year with organizations that support young families. This year, the office is partnering with Commonwealth Catholic Charities, focusing in particular on its counseling, adoption and foster care programs.

Efforts continue throughout the year, with Bishop Knestout planning to celebrate another

Mass for Hope and Healing in October. Masses for Hope and Healing were celebrated in each of the three vicariates last year across the diocese.

Bishop Knestout said during his homily that while it was difficult at the time, the Church is grateful for all the victims who were persistent in speaking up, as well as the culture that helped bring the scourge of abuse by clergy to light.

"The commitment the Church has made in response to that" was needed, said the bishop, "in order that we might overcome the sins and the tragedies of the past and be able to move forward in a way that is committed to life and love – an authentic life in love for all God's people."

*Editor's note: Look for this story at catholicvirginian.org to watch the livestream of the Mass, and for links to the Office of Safe Environment.*

## Congregations join forces to fight social injustices

'Loving our neighbor requires that we stick our necks out for justice'

KRISTEN L. BYRD  
Special to The Catholic Virginian

**T**he mission of social justice group IMPACT is to bring together people of all faiths to change the world, one problem at a

time. Its name stands for Interfaith Movement Promoting Action by Congregations Together.

Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and those of other faiths meet throughout the year

to not only identify issues facing the community, but to solve them.

The Charlottesville-based initiative's annual Nehemiah Action assembly is where members of IMPACT and the general public meet

with local government officials to openly express their concerns and propose ways to address them. This year's assembly was held on March 21 at the city's Martin Luther King Jr.

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Richmond, VA 23294  
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The Catholic Virginian

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# Three components key to sustaining Catholic schools



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

During the last two months, I have been traveling throughout the diocese to visit parishes and to administer the sacrament of confirmation. At one parish I celebrated Mass with the students, teachers, staff and parents of the parish's school. The school children served as lectors, sang in the choir, led the prayer of the faithful and presented the offertory gifts.

During the reception that followed Mass, people recalled memories of their years as students at the school, their pride evident as they shared their stories. All saw the school as a key part of their lives and of parish life.

What I heard here is what I have heard at our other regional and parish schools: a determination to make sure the school is strong and sustaining its mission. This is important because there are many challenges facing Catholic schools. The primary one is financial.

That is why we initiated the *Learn to Lead* campaign last year as a way of raising money for scholarships, professional development for teachers, leadership, and grants for schools in need. Our goal is \$30 million — \$18 million to be raised by the diocese; \$12 million to be raised by the schools.

From the early 19th century until the mid-1960s, religious communities — particularly sisters — provided our schools throughout the United States, including our diocese, with a large pool of high-quality, low-cost teachers. That's not the case today. To hire and keep the highly professional, well-prepared men and women who teach in our schools comes with a worthwhile but costly investment in our children.

One of the first decisions I had to make after becoming bishop of our diocese was to close Holy Cross School, Lynchburg. This was a painful decision for me and for those affected by its closing.

Knowing that the biggest challenges facing our diocesan elementary schools are financial, I determined a couple of years ago that we would do what we could to strengthen and sustain our Catholic schools.

There are three major components to sustaining Catholic schools. The first is a strong, visible Catholic identity. Due to the involvement of pastors and many faith-filled men and women, we are blessed with a great Catholic identity in our Catholic schools.

The second is academic excellence. Data from multiple studies shows that our schools provide strong academic preparation and formation. For many children this is a path toward higher education and successful lives and careers. This is a story alumni from each of our schools can tell.

Catholic schools were one of the few bright spots during COVID. While other school systems closed, ours remained open. Administrators implemented measures to ensure a safe learning environment while teachers adapted their methods to make sure students continued to receive quality instruction.

Our decision did not go unnoticed. Not only did students and their parents appreciate having in-person education, but others took note. The following academic year our overall enrollment increased nearly 4%.

Affordability is the third component. In order to make sure we meet our budgets, tuition has to be higher than the modest tuition parents paid years ago when religious sisters provided most of the teaching staff. Keep in mind that the average tuition in our schools covers only about 70-80% of the cost of a student's education. The difference is made up in other ways.

Through support from generous donors — often alumni who appreciate the positive impact a Catholic school education has had on their lives — we're able to make up part of the remaining 20-30%. Endowment income, subsidies from the parish with a school, along with an assess-

ment of all diocesan parishes on their offertory collection, cover the rest.

Something about which all Catholics should be aware is Virginia's Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits (EISTC). Donations to approved foundations like the diocese's McMahon Parater Scholarship Foundation provide scholarships to students from low-income families at non-public schools. Individual or business donors receive a 65% percent tax credit for their contributions. Further information is available at <https://richmonddioocese.org/office/mcmahon-parater-foundation/>.

EISTC is a blessing that is often challenged by state legislators who do not support school choice. We need to be vigilant in monitoring what is happening in the Senate and House of Delegates regarding EISTC lest it not be sustained. The Virginia Catholic Conference <https://vacatholic.org> can assist you with information and updates in that regard.

Catholic education is an integral part of the Church's mission. I'm grateful for all those who have an interest in and support for Catholic schools, especially through their participation in *Learn to Lead*. While Catholic schools would not exist without the generosity of our donors and parish families, nor would they exist were it not for the committed educators for whom teaching is not only a profession, but a vocation. Our teachers help us sustain our Catholic identity and excellence in education.

This Thursday, April 20, I'll be gathering with teachers from each of our elementary schools for the annual Excellence in Education awards presentation sponsored by our diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. I am grateful to our teachers who, like so many involved in our parish catechetical programs, are vital in helping us pass on the faith to another generation.

On March 1, 2014, Pope Francis tweeted, "Let us thank all those who teach in Catholic schools. Educating is an act of love; it is like giving life."

I couldn't agree more.

## IN MEMORIAM

### Benedictine Father Eric Vogt



A funeral Mass was celebrated for Benedictine Father Eric Vogt on April 12, at Queen of the World Church in St. Marys, Pennsylvania.

Father Vogt, 72, died Saturday, April 8. He was a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey, a Benedictine monastery in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, for more than 50 years.

He also served in the Diocese of Richmond, as well as at parishes in Pennsylvania in the dioceses of Greensburg, Erie and Altoona-Johnstown.

Father Vogt was ordained a priest in Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica in 1979.

He served twice at Saint Gregory the Great Parish, Virginia Beach: as parochial vicar from 1982-86, and then as pastor from 2017-22.

Father Vogt served in various roles at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, including campus minister, baseball coach, and assistant producer of the Saint Vincent Summer Theatre.

He was also chaplain of the St. Marys Police Department and various Knights of Columbus councils.

Father Vogt was the oldest of 12 children, born to the late Robert Vogt Sr. and Joyce (Wehler) Vogt. He was preceded in death by his sister, Cheryl Herzing, and his brother, Robert Vogt.

He is survived by his other nine siblings, numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews, as well as his three aunts.

## IN MEMORIAM

### CDR Martin F. Kuhneman, USN (Ret.)



A funeral Mass was celebrated for CDR Martin F. Kuhneman on April 13, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Norfolk. Mr. Kuhneman is the father of Father Timothy Kuhneman, Vicar for Clergy for the Diocese of Richmond.

Mr. Kuhneman, 90, died peacefully on Good Friday, April 7. He was born in Ontario, Canada and grew up in Southside Chicago, graduating from St. Ignatius High School.

Mr. Kuhneman enlisted in the United States Navy in 1952, during the height of the Korean War, and was stationed that year in Norfolk as a Quartermaster on the USS Midway. He entered the United States Naval Academy and graduated as an officer in 1958.

Mr. Kuhneman would go on to earn his wings as a Naval Aviator, flying helicopters for squadrons along the east coast. He also served as Commanding Officer of Naval Air Facility Midway Island, among other positions, before retiring in 1984.

In 1973, Mr. Kuhneman met his future wife, Gail. They lived most of their married life in Virginia Beach and were active members of Ascension Catholic Church.

In 2011, the Kuhnemans moved to Norfolk and joined Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Mrs. Gail Kuhneman passed away in 2016. Mr. Kuhneman was the only child of the late Martin and Alice (Fleming) Kuhneman. They are survived by their only son, Father Kuhneman.

# A 'burst of hope' in Haiti

## St. Bede continues twinning effort in memory of Msgr. Joe Lehman

**WENDY KLESCH**  
Special to The Catholic Virginian

A little more of the light of Christ is shining in the world in the form of a new church, gleaming white under the sun, in Thomonde, Haiti.

The parish of St. Joseph consecrated its new church on the Feast of St. Joseph, Sunday, March 19.

It was a day of celebration for the parish, as well as for a parish 1,300 miles away — its twin, St. Bede, Williamsburg.

St. Bede offered its support throughout the construction, as well as a donation of \$150,000 — a bequest left by an anonymous parishioner with the wish that the funds be used for the benefit of St. Joseph.

"There is still a little work to be done," Chris McFarland of St. Bede's Haiti ministry said, "but we adjusted our priorities so that the church could be ready on time. We were so excited when we saw the photos."

During the weekend of April 23, St. Bede's Haiti ministry is holding its annual collection with the hope



**Msgr. Joe Lehman**

of continuing its support of the parish — particularly of two regional schools — thus keeping the light of the newly rekindled ministry burning throughout the coming year.

### Light of Christ

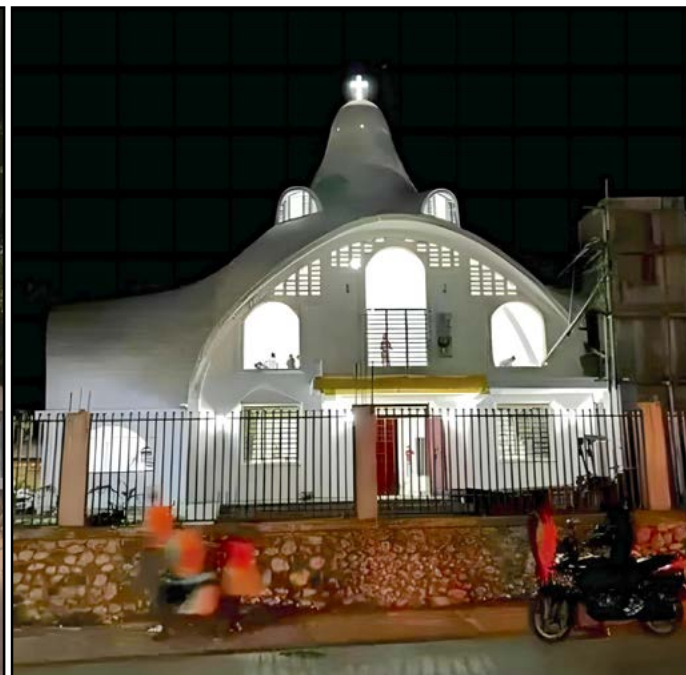
St. Bede began its twinning relationship with St. Joseph in 1999, volunteer Paul Dauphinais said, but its roots in the Haiti ministry go back to the very beginning of the diocesan program.

"Parishioners from St. Bede were there on some of those first trips to Haiti, back in the 1980s," he said.

Dauphinais said he was drawn to the ministry from his experience of having lived in Haiti from 1976 to 1979.

"I went back to Haiti in 2005," he said, "and, to my surprise, I found that the situation there was worse."

"But when I got to Thomonde,"



**A new church for St. Joseph Parish was consecrated on the parish's feast day, March 19, in Thomonde, Haiti.**

(Photos/St. Joseph Parish, Thomonde, Haiti)

he said, "I saw this cute, neat little town. There was a nice little square, and — right smack-dab in the middle — was this large, old church that was crumbling. And I had this feeling that this was like the light of Christ in the darkness in the world."

Interest in St. Bede's Haiti ministry waned in the 2010s, and there were challenges along the way, Dauphinais said, but, from that point on, it became the hope of the ministry to help St. Joseph build a new parish home.

### Moving mountains

During the celebration of St. Joseph's feast day on March 19, 2018, Bishop Désinord Jean, bishop of the Diocese of Hinche, noted the extent of the disrepair of the old church and ordered it condemned, Dauphinais said. The church was razed, replaced with a temporary lean-to structure for the celebration of the liturgy.

Despite a faltering economy, the parishioners of St. Joseph raised \$12,000 by the end of 2019.

That same year, a new pastor, Father Bertrand DesForges, arrived at St. Joseph. He was determined to make the new church a reality.

"Father Bertrand moves mountains; it was amazing what he was able to accomplish," Tom Mahoney, chair of St. Bede's Haiti ministry, said.

Meanwhile, St. Bede also received a new pastor: Msgr. Joseph P. Lehman III. In his previous assignment as pastor of Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke, he supported the parish's vibrant Haiti ministry.

"At that time, our ministry had plateaued," McFarland said. "When Father Joe came, he started asking around, raising awareness. He is the one who really brought it to life again."

### Help pours in

Once the people of St. Joseph began to raise money for a new

church, help arrived.

St. Margaret Mary Parish in Neenah, Wisconsin, a second parish twinned with St. Joseph, contributed funds to lay an earthquake-resistant foundation and supports.

Father DesForges obtained a grant of \$115,000, which sped up construction immensely, Dauphinais said.

"But then," McFarland said, "there came COVID, followed by political unrest. It became very difficult to get building supplies."

Beginning in mid-2020, Msgr. Lehman sent \$75,000 — half of an anonymous bequest — to Thomonde, enabling the completion of the support structures and most of the roof. A second donation of \$75,000, along with donations made by Haitians living in the United States, was enough to complete the main structure.

"We hung in there through thick and thin," Dauphinais said, "until we were able — by the grace of God and the joint efforts of many — to help St. Joseph meet its biggest need: the construction of a new church."

### In Msgr. Lehman's memory

After Msgr. Lehman's unexpected death on Dec. 13, 2022, parishioners redoubled their efforts in his memory.

"It was all Father Joe's doing, getting us going. He was an amazing force of the Holy Spirit. He was an amazing shepherd," Mahoney said.

In January, St. Bede held a Haitian dinner, hoping to raise awareness of the ministry. Cyndy Unwin, a volunteer from Our Lady of Nazareth, traveled to Williamsburg to speak to those gathered about the importance of the Haiti ministry to the faith community of her parish and to Msgr. Lehman.

"I tried to share that he would really want the ministry to continue

and not subside with his passing," Unwin said. "It was an honor to do so. It was an honor to remember something positive while we are still grieving."

"The fact that they have managed to get this church built in the middle of everything that's going on is a miracle," she said. "It's a beautiful building. People need hope in Haiti right now, and I think that this will be a burst of hope for them."

### Real effects of the ministry

There is some work to be done on the church, such as installing the pews and the railing for the mezzanine, Mahoney said, but for now the priority of the ministry — and the aim of the weekend collection — is to support two Thomonde schools.

St. Bede, along with its partner twin, St. Margaret Mary, assists two schools in the region — Our Lady of Lourdes at Gonave, a rural school attended by 200 children, and Le Petit Papillon (The Little Butterfly), a preschool.

"On top of the books and the teachers' salaries, the funds also provide meals for the children," Mahoney said. "So, we make the schools the top priority."

It is these things — lunches for a child, a donation of a ring for a couple wishing to marry — McFarland said, that make the biggest differences in people's lives.

"That's where we see the real effects of the ministry," he said.

"We aren't called to try to build a new political system or a new economy," Dauphinais said. "We are called to be the hands and feet of Christ. This is how Christ works in the world, how his presence spreads — it comes in under the radar."

"Even if you aren't successful, even if there are hardships, the fact that you are allowing his presence to continue in the world is a very good thing," he said.

## IMPACT

*Continued from Page 1*

Performing Arts Center. There, more than 1,000 voices formed a chorus appealing for access to early childhood education, affordable housing, and sustainable transportation.

IMPACT began in 2006 after leaders of local congregations joined forces to fight against the social injustices they witnessed. While most congregations had their own outreach programs, they realized they had a better chance of affecting lasting change by coming together as one.

Janie Pudhorodsky, who is a parishioner of Church of the Incarnation, Charlottesville, has been involved in IMPACT since its inception.

“Congregations had food banks, soup kitchens, clothing closets, and financial assistance programs. But the clergy and lay leaders realized they were not fixing the root causes of the problems,” she said.

“So they started meeting and asking what they could do to address the systemic change that was needed. That led to IMPACT,” Pudhorodsky explained.

### Inspired by Nehemiah

Their annual Nehemiah Action assembly got its name from the Nehemiah found in the Bible, who helped rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. While there, he witnessed great injustices within society. Instead of trying to fight these wrongdoings alone, he gathered a large group of like-minded people who demanded change, and eventually received it.

Despite having religious roots, IMPACT’s website states, “Although our membership is drawn from faith-based institutions, our mission is not to push religious doctrine; IMPACT is a vehicle for people of faith to act on their call to do justice. Faith is our motivation, not our mission.”

Four-hundred Catholics attended the assembly, as well as hundreds of others from different faiths. Suzanne Bailey, parishioner of Charlottesville’s Holy Comforter Catholic Church and member of IMPACT since 2006, is comforted not only by her fellow Catholics supporting the cause, but by her fellow citizens.

The Nehemiah Action assembly is a culmination of several smaller interfaith gatherings held during the year. IMPACT meets with members of the community who tell them of their struggles. IMPACT then works to find realistic solutions by meeting with experts, as well as attending county board and city council meetings.

“Jesus taught us to love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves. I think Catholics recognize that loving our neighbor requires that we stick our necks out for justice,” said Bailey.

### Improving the statistics

According to IMPACT, the cost of living in Charlottesville is 110% of the national average, and 25% of residents live below the poverty line; hundreds of children and adults are homeless; 15% of students will not graduate high school; and many of the city’s youngest children do not have access to early childhood education.

Thanks in part to IMPACT, Charlottesville now offers a free dental clinic as part of the Charlottesville Free Clinic. Before the clinic was established, many in the community did not have access or could not afford dental care. Since its opening, the free dental clinic has helped thousands of patients.

Another victory for IMPACT was a women’s treatment center for those who struggle with substance abuse. The nearest treatment center was 70 miles away and the waitlist was exceedingly long. Even if beds were available, some women could not afford care, or were not able to bring



More than 1,000 people showed up for a Nehemiah Action assembly in 2019 to talk about social injustices in Charlottesville’s communities. (Photo/IMPACT Charlottesville)

their young children, making it impossible for them to get help they needed.

The Women’s Center at Moore’s Creek opened in 2018 and allows women to bring their preschool-aged children. More than 100 families have been helped through this center.

### Goals for the future

IMPACT would like Charlottesville to improve public transportation by lowering its carbon emissions. City councilors have agreed to work toward this goal over time. The hope is the Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT) bus line will hire a significant number of additional bus drivers to increase the efficiency of the service; this might lead to more people opting to travel by bus than by car.

Affordable housing has been an ongoing goal of IMPACT for many years. While previous efforts have resulted in hundreds of additional homes built, IMPACT is continuing to push for more.

Judy Zacharias, who has worked with IMPACT for 14 years and is a member of St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish, Charlottesville, explained that members of IMPACT met with the county housing policy manager, the city housing authority and Habitat for Humanity to gain insight into how to best create more affordable housing.

IMPACT proposes at least 3,000 new affordable homes be provided by 2030. IMPACT believes this goal can be reached if the city, county, and University of Virginia pool resources, and support the creation of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

At the Nehemiah Action assembly, city councilors agreed to direct more funding to building new homes, and county supervisors signaled their support for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Representatives from IMPACT will continue to meet with these leaders to ensure these funds are granted and homes are built.

IMPACT will also continue to think globally and act locally.

“Start small,” said Bailey. “Instead of worrying about what you can’t do, find something you can do. Something as simple as showing up for a Nehemiah Action can make a difference in showing our public officials that the issues we present have broad support in the community.”

“By being one of many who show up, we can support our public officials in making the right choices for the common good,” she added.

*Editor’s note: Read this story at [catholicvirginian.org](http://catholicvirginian.org) to find links to IMPACT and RISC.*

## A RISC for Richmond

Richmonders Involved to Strengthen our Communities (RISC) held its own Nehemiah Action assembly on March 28 at St. Paul’s Baptist Church.

Much like IMPACT, RISC invites people from all backgrounds to join together to create change in the community. Hundreds attended the assembly and addressed local officials, asking for affordable housing, improved living conditions in mobile homes, and a decrease in gun violence.

“For nearly a decade, RISC has sought to improve the availability for everyone in Richmond to have a home because we understand that when people do not have a home or do not have secured housing, they live in constant fear of eviction,” explained Lance Nation, a RISC team leader.

“Their health and ability to participate in society diminishes. When people cannot pay rent, every aspect of their lives suffers,” he said.

Nation is a parishioner of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in the Manchester area of Richmond. The small Jesuit parish is attended by many immigrants; some have purchased dilapidated trailers because they were the only homes they could afford.

Some of these homeowners attended the Nehemiah Action assembly to tell their stories directly to public officials in a public setting.

After hearing of the deplorable living conditions, council members pledged to release the \$300,000 that had already been allotted to the program last year, but which was never actually disbursed. RISC plans on meeting with these officials to make sure they stay true to their word.

RISC is also hopeful that Richmond will implement a Gun Violence Intervention (GVI) program that has proven successful in other Virginia cities, such as Hopewell.

For this assembly, several police officers from Hopewell attended and spoke of the lives saved thanks to this initiative. While RISC received no promise of GVI implementation, they will continue pushing for the program.

Nation explained that RISC doesn’t represent any one person or one faith, but one Richmond, made up of various religious, socioeconomic, political, and ethnic backgrounds, but all sharing a common goal.

“The more I experience the faith of others, the stronger my faith becomes. I learn of our shared hope, and the visions, my hope, of his kingdom here become strikingly more beautiful,” he said.

— Kristen L. Byrd

# Holy Week at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart



(Above) At Palm Sunday Mass, April 2, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, Bishop Barry C. Knestout said in his homily that no matter how offensive our sins, we should never hesitate to draw close to God, and seek his forgiveness through the sacraments.



(Above) At the Chrism Mass, April 3, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, Bishop Barry C. Knestout (Left) blesses the Oil of the Catechumens, the Oil of the Sick, and consecrates the Sacred Chrism, to be used at all churches in the diocese throughout the year. The Chrism Mass also celebrates the unity of the priesthood. (All Photos/Michael Mickle)



On Good Friday, April 7, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, Bishop Barry C. Knestout elevates the Holy Cross for the faithful to adore.



After Holy Thursday Mass, April 6, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, the faithful adore the Blessed Sacrament at the Altar of Repose. Holy Thursday commemorates the institution of the priesthood and the Holy Eucharist.

(Below) At Easter Vigil, April 8, at the Cathedral of the Sacred heart, Richmond, Bishop Barry C. Knestout initiates new Christians through baptism, confirmation and the Holy Eucharist.



## Walter Reed contract canceled

GINA CHRISTIAN  
OSV News

The end of a long-running Catholic pastoral care contract at a U.S. military medical center highlights broader concerns about the federal contracting process for such services, according to the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services.

On March 31, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, issued a “cease and desist” order to Holy Name College Friary, a community of Franciscan priests and brothers who have served the center’s service members and veterans for close to two decades, the military archdiocese revealed in an April 7 news release.

The contract was instead awarded to a secular for-profit firm whose ability to provide priestly ministry to the center’s patients was questioned by both Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, who leads the military archdiocese, and several lawmakers.

The entire process of bidding out Catholic pastoral care at military chapels and facilities is problematic, Elizabeth Tomlin, the military archdiocese’s general counsel, told OSV News.

“The government cannot supervise a Catholic priest’s ministry, so by extension, the government cannot hire a secular firm to do what the government cannot do,” she said.

“We’ve just turned ministry on its head. You have a secular firm with no interest in actually doing ministry (now handling) the contract,” she added.

Rep. Mike Lawler, R-N.Y., called on Walter Reed to change course, and OSV News the incident could result in “certain people not being able to exercise their faith.”

# How your legislators voted in the General Assembly session

LILY NGUYEN DUNKLE  
The Catholic Virginian

The Virginia Catholic Conference (VCC) released its report April 3 outlining how state senators and delegates voted during the 2023 Virginia General Assembly session.

State legislators cast key votes on critical issues impacting human life, dignity and the common good, said Jeff Caruso, executive director of the VCC.

Virginia's Catholic bishops founded the VCC in 2004 to represent the dioceses of Arlington and Richmond and advocate for public policy reflecting Catholic beliefs.

This year's report includes three charts:

■ A "Senate" chart showing how your senator voted

■ A "House" chart showing how your delegate voted

■ A "Senate Education & Health Committee" chart with key votes on abortion

The third chart was included because of the high number of VCC-supported pro-life bills that the Senate Education & Health Committee rejected, thereby blocking those bills from receiving full Senate consideration.

That last chart outlines how each state senator voted on four proposals related to abortion:

■ **Protecting Life at Conception:** Senate committee rejected this measure which would affirm

that life begins at conception, prohibiting abortion except in cases of danger to the life of the mother, rape or incest.

■ **Protecting Pain-Capable Unborn:** Currently, Virginia allows abortions at all stages of pregnancy. Senate committee rejected this bill which would have prevented most abortions when unborn children are able to feel pain.

■ **Protecting Babies Born Alive:** This measure to protect babies born alive after an attempted abortion passed the House but was defeated in a Senate committee.

■ **Strengthening Informed Consent:** Legislation which would require physicians to provide pregnant women who are considering abortion information about alternatives and available resources passed the House but was defeated in a Senate committee.

The VCC report also includes information about votes on four other proposals related to abortion, as well as legislation to legalize assisted suicide. The nine measures were categorized under "Life."

The report includes bills under three other categories: Religious Freedom, Families & Children, and Social & Economic Concerns.

The VCC focused on two measures under Religious Freedom, opposing legislation that would re-



quire health plans to cover all drugs the FDA defines as contraceptives, including some that can cause abortions. It also supported a bill that would strengthen Virginia law, improving patient access to clergy at hospitals.

Legislation categorized under Families & Children included an effort to remove a provision from Virginia's constitution defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman. There was also a push to strengthen school choice

by improving the Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits program. Two other measures in the category involved opposing commercialization of marijuana and banning edible products with THC – the VCC citing the severe risks to children.

Under the Social & Economic Concerns, the VCC zeroed in on three proposals: restoring voting rights, limiting isolated confinement, and reducing drug costs.

The VCC report includes a description of each piece of legislation, and the outcomes of the votes. The General Assembly was in session from Jan. 11 to Feb. 25.

*Editor's note: Look for this story at catholicvirginian.org to find links to the Virginia Catholic Conference's full report and to find out how to contact your legislators.*

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As a community, we strive to support survivors of child sexual abuse on their journey toward healing and wholeness.

For those who have suffered abuse by clergy residing in the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, we invite you to join virtually on May 17th at 7:00pm. Spouses and affected community members are also welcome. These gatherings, led by an independent facilitator, will offer a safe environment for participants to connect, share experiences, support, and heal.

If you would like more information, or the virtual meeting link, please call the Victim Assistance Coordinator at (877) 887-9603 or email [dana@atreeplanted.org](mailto:dana@atreeplanted.org)

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April 29 April 30

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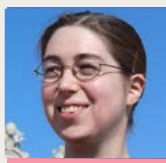
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# Why is the Easter candle only lit at certain times?



**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**  
 JENNA MARIE COOPER  
 OSV NEWS

**Q. Why is the Easter candle not always lit? (Los Angeles)**

**A.** The Easter, or paschal, candle is a large wax candle that is blessed during the Easter vigil. Throughout the Easter season, it is kept in a prominent place in the church sanctuary and is lit during Mass and other liturgies from Easter until Pentecost.

The paschal candle represents the light of Christ, especially Christ risen from the dead. As we hear at the conclusion of the “Exsultet” – the ancient and beautiful chant intoned by the deacon as the candle is processed into the worship space during the vigil:

*Therefore, O Lord,  
 we pray you that this candle,  
 hallowed to the honor of your name,  
 may persevere undimmed,  
 to overcome the darkness of this night.  
 May this flame be found still burning  
 by the Morning Star:  
 the one Morning Star who never sets,  
 Christ your Son,  
 who, coming back from death's domain,  
 has shed his peaceful light on humanity,  
 and lives and reigns for ever and ever.*

The paschal candle also has a close association with baptism, not only because catechumens are traditionally baptized and received

into the Church at the Easter vigil, but more foundationally because baptism is our own personal sharing in Christ's death and resurrection. As St. Paul writes in his letter to the Romans: “We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life” (6:4). Thus, outside of the Easter season the paschal candle is kept near the baptismal font, and it is lit whenever baptisms are celebrated.

The paschal candle is also lit during funeral Masses as a reminder of the deceased's baptism, and as an expression of our Christian hope in the resurrection of the dead.

Church norms on the paschal candle focus more on when to light the candle, as opposed to reasons why the candle is not lit the rest of the time. But making an educated inference, I suspect that by reserving it for those times and occasions that are specifically focused on Christ's resurrection, we preserve the candle's value as a symbol.

The Church has many customs and symbols that are limited to sacred times and particular seasons. For example, we only receive ashes on Ash Wednesday, even though of course we are supposed to repent from our sins every day of the year. The paschal candle is meant to be an especially striking reminder of Christ's resurrection, which is why we only see it lit at those times when we are meant to recall this mystery in a special way.

**Q. Why do Orthodox Christians confirm their infants at baptism and permit babies to receive the Eucharist, and why do Catholics wait? (Deer Park, NY)**

**A.** Thank you for your interesting question! First, it's not only Orthodox Christians who confer all three sacraments of initiation at the time of baptism – Eastern Catholics do this as well.

For some background, the universal Catholic Church includes not only the Latin (a.k.a. “Roman”) Catholic Church to which most of us Catholics in the United States belong, but also a number of smaller Eastern Catholic churches. Eastern Catholics are fully Catholic and fully in union with the pope, but they follow a slightly different form of canon law, and they are organized into their own dioceses led by their own bishops.

Often, individual Eastern Catholic churches are connected to a particular geographical area and culture. (For example, Byzantine Catholics are generally of Slavic descent, and the Syro-Malabar Church has its roots in India.) Because of cultural and historic reasons, Eastern Catholics have distinctive liturgical traditions and customs.

The difference in customs regarding the Christian initiation of infants amounts to a difference in emphasis between the broad liturgical traditions of Christian East and West.

In the Church's early days, when

most Christians were adult converts, it was standard practice for the local bishop to baptize each new Christian personally, conferring confirmation in the same ceremony as the baptism. As Christians grew more numerous and as more Christian parents brought their children to be baptized, it became impractical for the bishop to baptize and confirm every new Catholic. Eventually, it became clear that other clergy would need to celebrate most baptisms.

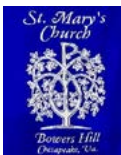
In the Christian East, there was a great emphasis on the fundamental theological unity of the sacraments of initiation, which is why Eastern priests confirm and give the Eucharist to the babies they baptize.

In the Latin Catholic West, there was a greater sense of the importance of maintaining a direct connection with the diocesan bishop as the father of the local diocesan Church. For Latin Catholics, the sacrament of confirmation came to be celebrated at a separate, later ceremony – the idea being that even if a simple parish priest celebrated an infant's baptism, the child could still be confirmed by the bishop himself.

For Latin Catholics, the history of our practices surrounding first Communion is long and rather complicated, as customs varied across the centuries. But our modern practice of children receiving their first Communion around the age of seven – the canonical “age of reason” – was established by Pope Pius X in 1910 with his decree “Quam Singulari.”



## Chesapeake Polish Festival



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**DINNER ITEMS:**

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- Pierogis
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- Potato Pancakes
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- Frozen Food available for Sale



**EVENT ITEMS:**

- Polish Music
- Dancing
- Polish Pottery
- Silent Auction
- Children Games
- Church Tours
- Flower/Plant Sale
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# Why Jesus' wounds are precious



**I**t happened one day that the devil appeared to St. Teresa of Avila disguised as Christ. Not deceived for a moment, the saint responded quickly by denouncing him in the name of Jesus. However, before leaving, the devil asked St. Teresa how she was able to recognize him. Her answer? "You don't have wounds; Christ always has wounds."

In taking on our human nature, God blessed the human process of growth and development, including physical death. More than an end, Jesus' death ushered in a new beginning, which explains why he chose to retain imprints of the nails in his hands and feet and the wound in his side after rising from the dead.

In his glorified state, Jesus' wounds were also glorified. No longer the gaping, bleeding wounds that were his as he hung on the cross, they remain a remembrance of the sorrowful passion and death that preceded his resurrection. They remind us not only of the price the Son of God paid to redeem us, but that the road to salvation is paved with suffering.

When people ask why God allows good people to suffer, we need only look at Jesus' wounds for reassurance and to know that Christ is never absent from our suffering. Even in his glorified state, he re-

tained this most sacred sign of his humanity, a sign that he continues to hold the wounds of the world in his heart.

When Thomas refused to believe that the Master had risen from the dead, Jesus appeared, telling Thomas to place his fingers in the wounds in his hands and side. When Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, the wounds in his hands and feet were visible, even as his wounded heart was burning with love.

Jesus' wounds are a sign of God's mercy that flows from his heart to all who repent and return to him. There is no sin that Jesus will not forgive. When Jesus forgave his executioners from the cross, his words were meant for every person because we all are responsible for his death. The unlimited mercy of Jesus was evident when he promised the good thief that he would be in Paradise with him that day.

Still, many hearts remain hardened, foolishly believing that they

can go through life without God. Yet even indifference does not cause God to give up on us. His request to St. Faustina that the Sunday after Easter be designated Divine Mercy Sunday is one more invitation by Jesus to place our trust in him.

With the ravages of war inflicting unbelievable suffering and sorrow on the people in Ukraine, and the threat of nuclear weapons increasing on a daily basis, we seem to have lost our way. Christians are being persecuted for their faith in numbers greater than during the early years of Christianity.

These may seem strange words to write during the Easter season when "Alleluias" remind us that Christ has risen, but without Good Friday, there would be no Easter Sunday. We cannot turn a blind eye to the price that Jesus paid before he rose from the dead.

Jesus' wounds are a sign of his love. They are precious to him and

they should be precious to us, for our world is desperately in need of healing. People suffer and die on Easter Sunday just as they do every day, but not a tear is shed that God does not see. Just as Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus and at the wall overlooking Jerusalem, he suffers with us today so that one day we can rejoice with him.

The "Anima Christi," a prayer many Catholics say after receiving Eucharist, can be pondered and prayed anytime, any day because by his wounds we are healed. So let us pray:

*Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O Good Jesus, hear me.  
Within your wounds hide me.  
Permit me not to be separated from you.  
From the wicked foe, defend me. At the hour of my death, call me and bid me come to you  
That with your saints I may praise you forever and ever.  
Amen.*

During the Easter Season, we might add: "Alleluia, Jesus lives!"

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



Saint Pius X  
Catholic Church  
Norfolk, Virginia

## LUNCH & LEARN SERIES

# Liturgical Spirituality: Living the Liturgy

### Sunday, April 30, 2023 12:15 - 2:00 PM



### Dr. James Starke

Assistant Professor of Systematics  
Director of Liturgy  
St. Mary's Seminary & University

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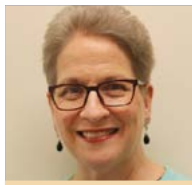
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# How the Risen Christ gives us courage



**BELIEVE AS YOU PRAY**  
MELANIE CODDINGTON

For the seven Sundays of Easter, accounts from the Acts of the Apostles replace the Old Testament stories in the first reading at Mass. This gets a bit confusing since these episodes in Acts happen *after* the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Gospel readings during the Easter season spend seven weeks catching up, recounting the resurrection appearances of Jesus and the slow dawn of Easter faith experienced by his disciples.

The verses of Psalm 16, selected for this Third Sunday of Easter, connect to the first reading. In preaching to the vast crowd immediately after the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, Peter quotes Psalm 16 as a kind of proof text.

The author of Acts places the Greek version of the psalm on his lips, bringing forth “you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption” as a prophetic reference to the resurrection of Jesus.

Rendered in the original Hebrew, this text speaks to the life situation of the psalmist threatened by illness or calamity. Another translation, “For you will not abandon me to Sheol, nor let your servant see the pit,” comes closer to the Hebrew original and

expresses an expectation of rescue from death, not necessarily life after it.

At the time of Jesus, resurrection from the dead was a controversial concept: The Pharisees accepted it; the Sadducees did not. At the time of the psalm’s composition, centuries before, the ideas of resurrection and afterlife had not dawned on Jewish religious sensibility. *Sheol*, and its parallel noun, *pit*, simply meant the place of the dead, where the breath of God no longer animated the bodies placed there.

Acts, written in Greek by St. Luke, a fluent and artful speaker of the language, naturally rests on the Greek translation of the Old Testament. In the case of Psalm 16, this later rendering of the text in translation shows subtle evidence of a shift in the understanding of resurrection.

In the familiar tale of the road to Emmaus, we recognize the eucharistic pattern embedded in the story – the gathering of persons, breaking open of Scripture, blessing and breaking of bread, real presence revealed. Most often, our sense of its meaning comes to rest right there. In this time of

ever-increasing fear and threat, other aspects of the story resonate more profoundly.

The Emmaus-bound disciples leave Jerusalem, seven miles from the hotspot of the Easter Sunday events. They have already heard about

the empty tomb and the testimony of angelic messengers, but they cannot grasp it. Dashed hopes, overwhelming grief, and fear for their own lives have rendered them deaf to the good news of resurrection. Then, something happens; the Risen One joins them on their journey.

Jesus meets them amid their fear and flight from danger. He listens; he speaks. Wanting to hear more, they invite him to stay. He accepts their hospitality and returns it, playing host at their table, even as the lights of evening are

kindled against the growing darkness outside. Finally, they recognize him, and he vanishes.

Now they realize that he has been with them all along. They remember the warmth they felt in their hearts as he spoke to them and opened the Scriptures. Immediately, they set off, IN THE DARK, headed back to the community of his disciples. Fear and grief are overcome by the loving, forgiving, consoling presence of the Risen Christ.

In the language of Psalm 16, Christ has counseled them, spoken to their hearts, shown them the path of life, and set them on the return journey with abounding joy in his presence.

Christ’s presence abides with us, right here, right now. May his Spirit give us courage on our own journeys through the dark.



## Third Sunday of Easter

**Acts 2:14, 22-33**

**Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11**

**1 Pt 1:17-21**

**Lk 24:13-35**

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

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"HOW CAN I MAKE A RETURN TO THE LORD FOR ALL THE GOOD HE HAS DONE FOR ME?" PSALM 116:12

1923-2023

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Immaculate Conception, Buckner, and St. Jude, Mineral,** are seeking the professional services of an organist/pianist for these two churches for their Saturday evening and Sunday Masses. We wish to find someone who can lead the hymns, service music and choirs of both churches on the weekends. For information about compensation and other details of the position please call: 540-894-4266 or email us at [office@louisacatholics.org](mailto:office@louisacatholics.org). View our full listing at <https://www.agohq.org/oncard-login/>; note, you will need to create an account to view it.

**The Church of St. Therese, Gloucester,** seeks a faithful and passionate Catholic for full-time Coordinator of Evangelization and Youth Ministry, on-site and satellite hours available. The successful candidate will strive to lead a life of personal holiness with a shepherd's heart to search out and lead teens closer to Christ. Must have energy to build a youth program, as well as the skills and creativity to design and maintain an exciting parish website. A bachelor's degree in a related field and experience in youth ministry required. The position oversees the middle school and high school programs with vision, including sacramental preparation for confirmation, with special attention given to empowering lay leadership among adults and teens. Position begins Saturday, July 1. Salary and benefits consistent with diocesan guidelines. Send cover letter, résumé, and Richmond diocesan application <https://bit.ly/36ndEsX> by Wednesday, May 17, to Anne Patullo, at [adpatullo@gmail.com](mailto:adpatullo@gmail.com). For more information, call Father Gregory Kandt, at 804-693-9043.

## SHORTTAKES

**Trinity Organ Concert:** Join us for the final concert of the 2022-2023 season for a program presented by the Tidewater Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. We welcome back Kevin Kwan, Organist and Director of Music at Christ & St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Norfolk, joined by Virginia Symphony Trumpet Player, Jeremy Garnett, in what is sure to be a dazzling partnership of spectacular sound. This free concert will be held Wednesday, May 3, 12 p.m., at St. Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg, and livestreamed at [www.facebook.com/MusicofSaintBede](http://www.facebook.com/MusicofSaintBede). For more information, call 757-229-3631, or visit [www.bedeva.org/concerts](http://www.bedeva.org/concerts).

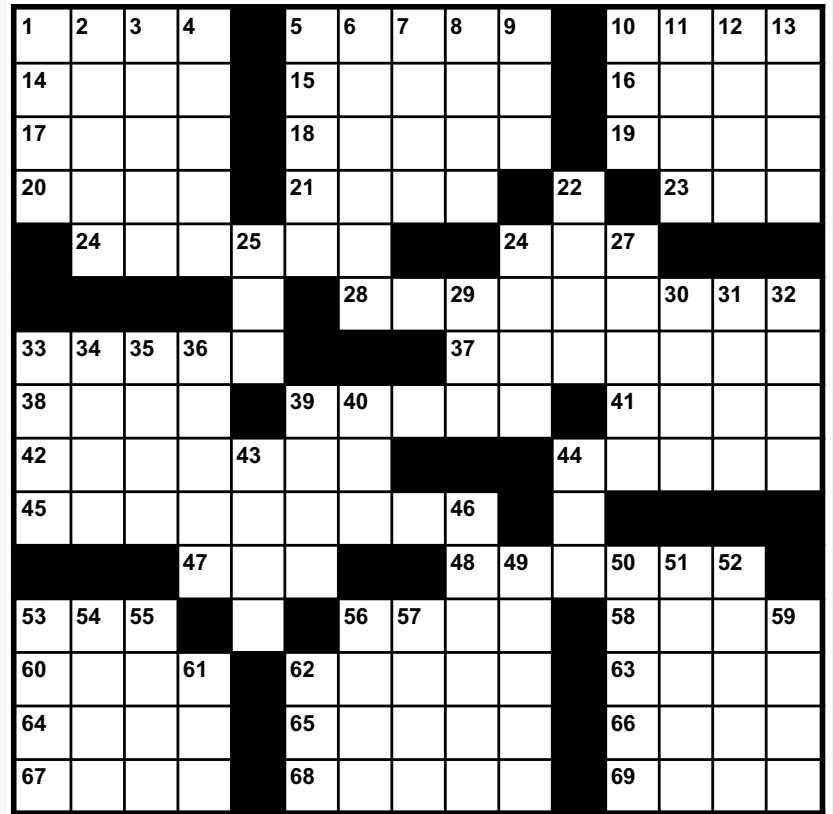
**Charity Golf Tournament,** Friday, May 5, Virginia Beach: All are invit-

ed to the second annual Knights of Columbus Virginia Open. All proceeds to benefit charities, as well as the Diocese of Richmond. Register to golf as an individual or a team and learn about sponsorships at <https://abbatekofc.com/golf>.

**Polish Dinner Fundraiser, Saturday, May 13, 6 p.m.,** St. Clare of Assisi Retreat Center, 620 Buckroe Ave., Hampton. Sit-down dinner and entertainment for \$50 per person. Take-out meals are available for pickup between 5 and 5:45 p.m. for \$35 a meal. The retreat center fully relies on volunteers and donations. For more information or questions email Lisa at [Lhran75@aol.com](mailto:Lhran75@aol.com) or register <https://form.jotform.com/230585630553052>.

**Join Father Gregory Kandt of the Church of St. Therese, Gloucester,** for a rich and inspiring journey to Greece, Oct. 17-27. Itinerary includes stops at some of the more significant Pauline sites from the earliest days of Christianity, including Thessaloniki, Philippi, Corinth, Athens and Ephesus. We will have the chance to explore impressive monuments at these sites and ponder the world of the first generation of Christians. Program includes a four-night cruise through the Aegean, stopping in Mykonos, Santorini, Rhodes and Crete. We will enjoy land excursions at Kusadasi (Ephesus), Patmos (sites associated with St. John), Rhodes (the crusader-era palace), and Crete (the Palace of Knossos and evidence of the historic Minoan civilization). Throughout, we will have access to local expert guides, a tour manager, breakfast/dinner daily (plus lunch during the cruise). Father Gregory will celebrate liturgy with us at select historic venues each day. Priority registration is open now. For detailed information about the program, price and itinerary, visit: [www.travelillum.com/trc/kna](http://www.travelillum.com/trc/kna).

**Catholics from across the Diocese of Richmond** are invited to join Bishop Barry C. Knestout on Saturday, Oct. 21, for a pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. In support of the National Eucharistic Revival, pilgrims from our diocese will uniquely encounter Christ in the Eucharist during this day-long journey of faith. More information will be published soon. Please contact the Office for Evangelization at [evangelization@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:evangelization@richmonddiocese.org) with questions.



[www.wordgamesforcatholics.com](http://www.wordgamesforcatholics.com)

### ACROSS

- 1 Catholic bandleader, Lawrence \_\_\_\_
- 5 Discontinue
- 10 Latin 101 word
- 14 Animals frequently mentioned in the Bible
- 15 Catholic comedian married to Burns
- 16 College in New Rochelle, NY
- 17 Actress Russo
- 18 Measures
- 19 There was none at the inn
- 20 Individual facts
- 21 Designer Piccone
- 23 Vane reading
- 24 Unsteady gait
- 26 Beverage made with beaten eggs
- 28 Jesus told him he must be born again of the Spirit
- 33 Chief minister of the Persian king in the Book of Esther
- 37 Seaport in New Jersey
- 38 Pitcher
- 39 Month of the feast of St. Patrick
- 41 "Just \_\_\_\_"
- 42 St. John \_\_\_\_ (Basilica)
- 44 Opposite of height
- 45 The newest are the Luminous
- 47 Squeal
- 48 Set on fire
- 53 Marian month
- 56 "Star Trek" navigator
- 58 Without value
- 60 Aid and \_\_\_\_
- 62 Number of years the papacy was vacant between the death of Clement IV and election of Gregory X
- 63 556, to Nero
- 64 Equipment
- 65 Groans' partner
- 66 Kind of tchr.
- 67 "Casablanca" role
- 68 Young horses
- 69 Dry (comb.)

### DOWN

- 1 "...and the \_\_\_\_ was God" (Jn 1:1)
- 2 Letter by which a priest is released from one diocese and accepted into another
- 3 Slow, musically
- 4 Mix dough
- 5 Biblical animal of transport
- 6 Number of apostles after Judas died
- 7 The Archdiocese of Edmonton is in this province (abbr.)
- 8 "What eye has not \_\_\_\_..." (1 Cor 2:9)
- 9 USNA grad
- 10 According to I Thessalonians, we will meet the Lord in this (with "the")
- 11 Celestial body used in dating Easter
- 12 Ever and \_\_\_\_
- 13 Identical
- 22 \_\_\_\_ of Christ
- 25 "...but you are making it a \_\_\_\_ of thieves." (Mt 21:13)
- 26 Genesis skipper
- 27 Hollow rock
- 29 Toronto media (abbr.)
- 30 Alphabet string
- 31 Discrete part
- 32 Brother of Cain
- 33 Captain's post
- 34 "\_\_\_\_ in a manger..."
- 35 1986 World Series winners
- 36 Mountain ridge
- 39 An evangelist
- 40 Tropical cuckoo
- 43 The soldiers put this in Jesus' right hand
- 44 OT prophetic book
- 46 "\_\_\_\_ Night"
- 49 Surmise
- 50 The \_\_\_\_ of Forbidden Books
- 51 Silk fabric
- 52 Young eel
- 53 Gift bearers
- 54 See 32D
- 55 Some votes
- 56 "Skedaddle!"
- 57 Mountain range
- 59 Luxury car, briefly
- 61 Lilt syllable
- 62 HBO competitor

Answers page 12

Local, national, global Catholic news  
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# La “Doctrina del descubrimiento” nunca fue católica

La “Nota” conjunta de los Dicasterios para la Cultura y el Desarrollo Humano Integral: “Muchos cristianos han cometido actos malvados contra los pueblos indígenas”. Las bulas papales del siglo XV que concedieron a los gobernantes colonizadores los bienes de los pueblos originarios son documentos políticos, instrumentalizados para actos inmorales. Ya en 1537 Pablo III declaró solemnemente que los indígenas no debían ser esclavizados ni despojados de sus propiedades

## CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

Gracias a la ayuda de los pueblos indígenas, “la Iglesia ha tomado mayor conciencia de sus sufrimientos, pasados y presentes, provocados por la expropiación de sus tierras”, y “las políticas de asimilación forzada, promovidas por las autoridades de gobierno de la época, que buscaban eliminar sus culturas indígenas.” Así se afirma en la “Nota conjunta sobre la Doctrina del descubrimiento” de los Dicasterios para la Cultura y la Educación y para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral, publicada este jueves 30 de marzo.

En el documento se afirma que la “Doctrine of Discovery”, teoría que sirvió para justificar la expropiación de los indígenas por parte de los soberanos colonizadores, “no forma parte de la enseñanza de la Iglesia católica” y que las bulas papales por las que se hacían concesiones a los soberanos colonizadores nunca llegaron a ser magisterio.

Se trata de un texto importante que, ocho meses después del viaje del Papa Francisco a Canadá, reafirma claramente el rechazo de la Iglesia católica a la mentalidad colonizadora. A lo largo de la historia – se recuerda – “los Papas han condenado los actos de violencia, opresión, injusticia social y esclavitud, entre ellos los cometidos contra las poblaciones indígenas”. Y que también han sido numerosos los “ejemplos de obispos, sacerdotes, religiosos, religiosas y fieles laicos que han dado su vida en defensa de la dignidad de esos pueblos”.

Pero la Nota tampoco omite recordar que “muchos cristianos han cometido actos de maldad contra las poblaciones indígenas, por los cuales los Papas recientes han pedido perdón en numerosas ocasiones”.

En cuanto a la doctrina del descubrimiento – se afirma que – el “concepto jurídico de ‘descubrimiento’ ha sido debatido por las potencias coloniales desde el siglo XVI y ha encontrado una expresión particular en la jurisprudencia del siglo XIX, en los tribunales de diferentes países, según la cual el descubrimiento de tierras por parte de los colonos concedía el derecho exclusivo de extinguir, mediante la compra o la conquista, el



Papa con la gente indígena de Canada. (Foto: Ciudad del Vaticano) (ANSA)

título o la posesión de dichas tierras por parte de las poblaciones indígenas.”

Según algunos estudiosos, esta “doctrina” encontró su fundamento en diversos documentos papales, en particular las Bulas de Nicolás V “Dum Diversas” (1452) y “Romanus Pontifex” (1455), y en la de Alejandro VI “Inter Caetera” (1493). Se trata de actos con los cuales estos dos Pontífices autorizaban a los soberanos portugués y español a apoderarse de las propiedades en las tierras colonizadas sometiendo a las poblaciones originarias.

“La investigación histórica demuestra claramente – se afirma en la Nota – que los documentos papales en cuestión, escritos en un período histórico específico y relacionados a cuestiones políticas, nunca han sido considerados expresiones de la fe católica”.

Al mismo tiempo, la Iglesia “reconoce que estas bulas papales no reflejaban adecuadamente la igual dignidad y los derechos de los pueblos indígenas”. Y añade que “el contenido de estos documentos ha sido manipulado para fines políticos por las potencias coloniales que competían entre sí, para justificar actos inmorales contra las poblaciones indígenas, realizados algunas veces sin oposición de las autoridades eclesiásticas”. Por lo tanto, es justo, afirman los dos Dicasterios de la Santa Sede, “reconocer estos errores, reconocer los terribles efectos de las políticas de asimilación y el dolor experimentado por las poblaciones indígenas, así como pedir perdón”.

A continuación, se citan las palabras del Papa Francisco: “Que la comunidad cristiana no se deje contaminar nunca más por la idea

de que existe una cultura superior a otras y que es legítimo usar medios de coacción contra los demás”. Y se recuerda que “en términos inequívocos”, el magisterio de la Iglesia defiende el respeto debido a todo ser humano y la Iglesia, por lo tanto, “repudia los conceptos que no reconocen los derechos humanos intrínsecos de los pueblos indígenas, comprendida la que se ha dado a conocer legal y políticamente como “doctrina del descubrimiento”.

Finalmente, la Nota cita las “numerosas y reiteradas” declaraciones de la Iglesia y de los Papas a favor de los derechos de los pueblos indígenas, comenzando por la contenida en la Bula “Sublimis Deus” de Pablo III (1537), quien escribió: “Determinamos y declaramos [...] que dichos Indios, y todas las gentes que en el futuro los cristianos llegasen a conocer, aunque vivan fuera de la fe cristiana, pueden usar, poseer y gozar libre y lícitamente de su libertad y del dominio de sus propiedades, que no deben ser reducidos a servidumbre y que todo lo que se hubiese hecho de otro modo es nulo y sin valor”.

Más recientemente, la solidaridad de la Iglesia con los pueblos indígenas ha dado origen “al apoyo decidido de la Santa Sede a los principios contenidos en la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas”. “La implementación de tales principios mejoraría las condiciones de vida y ayudaría a proteger los derechos de los pueblos indígenas, además de facilitar su desarrollo en un modo que respete su identidad, lengua y cultura”.

## Nota del director del Ministerio Hispano: Daniel Villar



En la Carta a los Esmirnotas en el año 110 después de Cristo, San Ignacio de Antioquia usó la palabra “católico” por primera vez. La palabra del griego *katholikos* significa “en conjunto”, “de acuerdo con el todo”, o “en general” sobre todo. En esta carta San Ignacio impulsa a todos los cristianos que mantengan unidad estrecha con el obispo indicando, “Dondequiera que aparezca el obispo, que también esté la multitud; así como,

dondequiera que este Jesucristo, allí está la Iglesia católica” Que bellas palabras nos da este Padre de la Iglesia. Afirmando la universalidad de nuestra Iglesia también afirma que la “Doctrina del descubrimiento” en verdad no era católica. Va en contra de los principios fundamentales de la Iglesia de Cristo y el alcance del Espíritu Santo en todas partes del mundo. ¡Que Jesús y la Santísima Virgen María, hermano y madre espiritual de nosotros los cristianos, nos ayude a acercar y apreciar a todos en este camino de vida hacia la santificación!

# Students serve Jesus by serving the community

## Peninsula Catholic High School's Service Day

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

Albert Einstein said, "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile."

The message was driven home to students at Peninsula Catholic High School (PCHS), Newport News, as they volunteered at their school and 15 sites in the community during the school's annual Service Day, March 31.

"That's one of the things I love about PC, that they encourage you to do service and then they have Service Day where you get to go out and get to help the community, and I think that's just awesome," said senior Alex Hansin, who helped LINK of Hampton Roads, which provides emergency resources for the homeless and at risk.

"It definitely makes me appreciate the things I have more, and it makes me want to help others a lot more," Hansin added.

While the eighth-graders served at their school, freshmen through seniors volunteered in Newport News and nearby cities.

"I think it's important for the kids to get out of themselves. I think as human beings, to think outside of ourselves and to think of other people, to be kind to one another, is so important, and to understand that there are people out there in worse situations makes them (the students) grateful for what they have, the blessings that they enjoy, but it also gives them an understanding of the need to help others," explained campus minister Mari Tere Adinaro (known as MT).

"It's Matthew 25: It's 'whatever you do for the least of my people, you have done for me,'" she explained.

English teacher Angelia Muha said she hopes Service Day shows the students "that they truly are the body of Christ," exposes the need for service in the community, reveals "the feeling inside when we're helping somebody else" and "ignites that fire of wanting to do service."

Students seemed to have received the message.

"I would definitely say it's made me more open to doing things when you're not required to. It kind of gives you that motivation to do it when you're older and to keep trying to help people even when it's not convenient to you," said senior Guru-Taara Khalsa, who volunteered at LINK.

Likewise, senior Jenna Ajello, who also volunteered at LINK, said, "I learned how much the community just really needs help, and I learned about the impact that volunteering can have on the community. It can make me more compassionate and understanding and appreciative."

Each of the approximately 260 pupils at PCHS is required to do 10 hours of community service each year, but Service Day gives them the opportunity to serve together.

"There was a lot of teamwork built into it in order to get everything done," said sophomore Samantha Daugherty who helped organize donations at Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia's Newport News office.

Service Day introduces most students to places they have not previously served, perhaps to places they did not even know existed, MT said.

Some of the tasks the eighth-graders did were collecting trash on the grounds, cleaning the school's whiteboards and trays, and rolling bags for THRIVE Peninsula, a Newport News non-profit organization which describes itself as assisting "those most in need."

The students also packed and delivered baby items the student body had collected during Lent which coincided with the Forty Days for Life spring campaign. The donations, which included



Above: Jack Rusak (left) and Connor Woodruff do yardwork at a veterans' home in Newport News during Peninsula Catholic High School's Service Day on Friday, March 31.



Above right: PCHS senior Nhi Nhi Do sorts clothing at LINK's Newport News office during the school's Service Day on March 31.



Right: Jacob Stewart (left) and Ethan Wallace clear weeds from flower beds at a veterans' home during Peninsula Catholic High School's Service Day on Friday, March 31. (Photos/Jennifer Neville)

clothing, formula, diapers and other baby items, were given to the pregnancy outreach ministry at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish (OLMC), Newport News.

Freshmen did yardwork at two local veterans' homes, the nearby Asbury Wesleyan Church and OLMC.

In addition to volunteering at Catholic Charities, sophomores did grounds cleanup at the Mariners' Museum and Park, Newport News, and Edmarc, Portsmouth, which provides home health and hospice for children with life-threatening illnesses.

Juniors did clerical work for Avalon Center, Williamsburg, which addresses domestic violence; did yardwork at St. Clare of Assisi Retreat Center, Hampton, and the emergency homeless shelter Menchville House, Newport News; and organized donations and helped clean Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter, Newport News.

Seniors organized donations and packed personal hygiene and food bags at LINK's Newport News office, and also did yardwork at St. Jerome Catholic Church, Newport News, the senior living community The Chesapeake, Newport News, and St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Church, Tabb.

David Williams, a PCHS teacher supervising students at one of the veterans' home sites, said during Service Day that the students were learning "it's not just about what they can do for themselves; it's about what they can do for their neighbor, for their community."

"Allowing us to do good is the point of being a well-integrated person in society," he said.

Many students found the experience rewarding and were grateful for the opportunity.

"Doing good for others makes them happy and makes God happy," said senior Megan Massingill, who volunteered at LINK. "You're not just serving others. You're serving Jesus and that's what he wanted us to do."

"I feel like we're blessed enough to be able to go out and help others who haven't been as blessed as we are and bring a smile to someone else's face. I feel good to know that you're doing that," added Erica Gillian, also serving LINK.

"I think Service Day is important because as Catholics we are supposed to serve the community," said junior Audrey Weinhoff who volunteered at the retreat center. "It kind of inspired me to help people more. I feel like those people we serve grow closer to Christ knowing that children of God are there to help them."

