First mobile food pantry hosted in Brookville

David Cooley
Messenger Contributor

Catholic Charities – Diocese of Covington hosted its first mobile food pantry, Aug. 28, at St. James Parish, Brookville. Due to the circumstances of COVID-19, the pantry began as a drive-thru pantry so that social distancing guidelines could be met and the guests and volunteers could remain as safe as possible.

The new “Food for Friends” program at Catholic Charities aspires to mirror the love and actions of Jesus Christ by giving food to the hungry.

In this first phase of the program, the monthly mobile food pantry will provide low-income residents of Bracken County anywhere from 20 to 40 food items at no cost on the fourth Friday of every month. These food items, provided by The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), will vary among canned goods, rice, pasta, meat and fresh produce, depending on availability. Many volunteers from St. Augustine Parish, Augusta, and St. James Parish, Brookville, along with others from Catholic Charities and other parishes in Northern Kentucky put food packages together, kept things organized and packed the guests’ cars as they pulled up.

In addition to Bracken, “Food for Friends” has plans to open pantries in the following counties: Mason, Pendleton, Grant, Owen and Gallatin Counties.

“Sixty percent of the households in these counties have an income of less than $50,000 a year,” said John Hehman, Mobile Pantry coordinator, “and that figure predates the coronavirus. We know that the need is even greater now.”

Mr. Hehman said that the people he has met with so far seem very happy that the diocese will be present in this way, particularly beyond the three northern counties that have large populations.

“At the beginning, I looked at the counties where we were planning on ministering. I chose Bracken County to start with because my aunt is a Notre Dame Sister at St. Augustine Parish, Augusta. So, I thought, it was a good place to start because I at least knew someone there,” Mr. Hehman said.

Mr. Hehman said that they have based this new program on a similar existing program that is operated by Catholic Charities of Southwestern Ohio.

“When I was first hired I went and worked at some of the Southwestern Ohio pantries and talked to the coordinator to see how everything was done,” he said. “By that time, two out of the three had been converted to drive-thru pantries because of the coronavirus.”

It was a good showing for the first month. In total, 50 households were served.

“I was very pleased with the way everything went,” said Mr. Hehman. “I couldn’t have been happier with the volunteers, most of whom were from St. Augustine and St. James parishes, but there were also some volunteers from Northern Kentucky. They all worked well together and kept things moving.”

One of the volunteers was Mr. Hehman’s aunt, Notre Dame Sister Nance Marie Hehman. Halfway through the day she said the experience had been wonderful.

“I have been able to talk with almost everyone who has come through,” she said. “Everyone is very friendly and they have been very open about their needs and their troubles.”

Sister Nance said that the people had been very grateful.

“My hope is that we are positive influences on these people and that they come back. We are opening up communications between the people and the Church. Maybe when they get back on their feet they’ll pay it forward or come back and help, you just never know.”

Another volunteer was Marjie Hargett, a parishioner at St. Augustine and St. James Parish, Brookville. (above) Volunteers and parishioners of St. James Parish, Brookville, cheerfully load boxes and bags of food into the cars of those in need who visit the pantry.

(Continued on page 2)
Schools and parents adapting to protocols as in-person instruction continues

**Messenger Staff Report**

As week three began for schools in the Diocese of Covington, seven active COVID-19 cases have been reported. This includes one active case each at Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria; Holy Cross District High School, Latonia; St. Henry School, Elmere and St. Mary School, Alexandria and three active cases at St. Paul School, Florence. Two cases at St. Joseph School, Cold Spring, have recovered and returned to school.

Additionally, 31 students returned to school after self-quarantine including 17 of the 20 fourth-graders at St. Paul School.

Instruction continues

As the Labor Day weekend was approaching, Mrs. McGuire sent a letter to school parents encouraging them to be vigilant in their commitment to sustained in-person instruction for their children and in keeping school communities safe by not traveling or attending family gatherings.

"In several of the cases that we are reporting, the student either contracted or was exposed to the coronavirus at a family gathering," said Mrs. McGuire. "These gatherings are especially vulnerable to the spread of the virus because often we let our guard down when we are with family. Conversely when we are with the people love we should be most vigilant."

Families who do choose to attend small gatherings are reminded to wear a mask and keep a safe social distance of six feet from others.

Students who do travel may have to quarantine for 14 days upon returning and begin at-home instruction. Considerations for quarantine include the location, trip activities and the mode of travel. At any time, a principal may require a 14-day quarantine for a student due to travel in order to safeguard the health of the school community.

On Sept. 10, Bishop Roger Foy will meet with the three bishops of Kentucky to evaluate each diocese’s experiences with the protocols and in-person instruction at schools and will make any necessary changes.

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**Coronavirus Report**

**(as of Monday, August 31)**

**Positive Cases**

| Active positive cases: 7 | Recovered positive cases: 2 |

**Self-quarantining**

| Symptoms/pending testing: 20 | Contacts: 4 |

Close Contacts: 100 (includes 29 at HCDHS; 25 at St. Mary – 6th grade class; 23 at St. Paul – 2nd grade class)

Returned to class: 53 (including the 17 of the 20 4th graders at St. Paul)

Schools reporting:

23 of 39 schools

Bishop Brossart High School
Blessed Sacrament
Covington Catholic High School
Holy Cross District High School
Holy Farley
Newport Central Catholic High School
St. Henry District High School
St. Agnes
St. Augustine, Covington
St. Cecilia
St. Edvard
St. Hetty
St. Joseph, Cold Spring
St. Joseph, Crescent Springs
St. Mary
St. Patrick
St. Paul
St. Pius
St. Theresa
St. Thomas
St. Timothy
Sts. Peter and Paul
Villa Madonna Academy

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**Bishop’s Schedule**

4 September
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

5 September
Final Profession of vows, Franciscan Daughters of Mary, 10 a.m., Cathedral Basilica, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

6 September
Installation of pastor, Father Joseph Shelton, St. Augustine Church, Augusta and St. James Parish, Brooksville, 10 a.m.

7 September
Labor Day, diocesan curia offices closed

8 September
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

4 September
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

10 September
Individual meeting, 9 a.m.

10 September
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

11 September
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

12 September
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

13 September
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.

9 September
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

11 September
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

12 September
Mass, Cathedral Basilica Basílica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.

13 September

due to COVID-19 protocols, attendance is by ticket admittance only. The general public is invited to virtually join the ceremony via live-stream from the Diocesan website, www.covdol.org.

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**His Excellency**

The Most Rev. Roger J. Foy, D.D. and the Diocese of Covington cordially invite you to attend Solemn Vespers celebrating The Bestowal of Pontifical Honors on Sunday, 27 September, 2 p.m. at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington

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**For more information, questions about eligibil-**

ity or volunteer opportunities, contact Mobile Pantry Coordinator, John Helman, at (859) 501-8974, ext. 124, or e-mail helman@covingtonchari- ties.org.
New pastor for St. Charles Borromeo and St. Rose of Lima Parishes

Bishop Roger Foye, assisted by Father Michael Norton, vocations promoter, Father Jordan Hainsley and Deacon Henry Hudson, installed Father Philip DeVus as 18th pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Flemingsburg, and 15th pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish, Mays Lick, at the 11 a.m. Mass at St. Charles Church Aug. 30. As part of the pastor installation, (above) Father DeVus renewed his priestly vows and (top) addressed the Parish Council members of both parishes who were present for his installation.

Sisters of Notre Dame provinces unite into one SND USA province

The Sisters of Notre Dame (SND) reunited their four North American provinces, or administrative units, on July 5, 2020. The new national province includes sisters from Thousand Oaks, California; Covington, Kentucky; Chardon, Ohio and Toledo, Ohio. Chardon, Ohio will serve as the national headquarters for SND USA.

The congregation’s 500-plus sisters nationwide are combining resources and personnel to focus on three broad ministry initiatives:

- Education and healthcare institutions founded by the sisters in each geographic area.
- Ministries serving new needs of people on margins.
- Young adult and vocations ministry.

The SND USA Leadership Team includes Sister Margaret Gorman, provincial, from Covington, Ky; Sister Regina Marie Fisher, council member, from Toledo, Ohio; Sister Patricia Mary Garahan, council member; from Chardon, Ohio; and Sister Mary Rebekah Kennedy, council member, from Thousand Oaks, Cal.

With the ease of communication and travel in the 21st century, it became dramatically apparent that SND-sponsored institutions and ministries could be strengthened if we combined our efforts and resources nationwide into one SND USA province,” explains Sister Margaret, who now serves as the congregation’s provincial throughout one SND USA province,” explains Sister Margaret, who now serves as the congregation’s provincial throughout.

"While sisters in each geographic area will continue their local ministries, the addition of an SND USA model brings renewed enthusiasm, collaboration and outreach opportunities not only with our sisters but also with our lay partners.”

In the Diocese of Covington the Sisters of Notre Dame sponsor: Julie Learning Center, a preschool located in St. Joseph Heights; Notre Dame Academy, the SND’s flagship, all-female high school; the Notre Dame Urban Education Center, tutoring, after-care, summer and family enrichment programs serving urban families; and St. Charles Community, an eldercare facility serving senior adults, including an adult day care program, 62 cottages and 71 apartments for seniors, a therapy department, personal care suites, home care and private duty nursing.

Sister Mary Shauna said that local operations and residences in the Diocese of Covington “will not see any immediate large-scale impact.” While the sisters had initially planned to travel more frequently between the former provincial regions, because of the COVID-19 pandemic they will make these visits virtual for the time being. The Covington sisters are deeply tied to the individuals where they live and serve here, and they want to maintain those relationships.

Sister Mary Shauna said the sisters will continue offering ESL lessons, teaching and tutoring at local schools, serving on various boards and providing pastoral outreach to inmates. While some local sisters may travel to another state or country to minister in the future, “they do not intend to overlook the needs within the Diocese,” said Sister Mary Shauna. “We may see Notre Dame sisters, volunteers and associates from other dioceses traveling to the SND USA model brings renewed enthusiasm, collaboration and outreach opportunities not only with our sisters but also with our lay partners.”

For more information on the Rite of Installing a Pastor, see page 6 for this week’s “Did you know.”
IN EXILE
Father Ron Rolheiser

The Book of Exodus and why coming back to Mass matters

In connection with an academic project of mine, I’ve recently been poring over the book of Exodus and numerous commentaries thereupon. The second most famous book of the Old Testament is concerned primarily with the manner in which God shapes his people to become a radiant beacon, a city set on a hill. On the biblical reading, Israel is indeed chosen, but it is never chosen for its own sake, but rather for all the nations of the world.

I would say that this formation takes place through the Ten Commandments and their attendant praise. The lesson in trust happens, of course, through God’s.icence and, I believe, names both the issue and the challenge.

As Shakespeare would say, “Ah, there’s the rub!” For me, this question touches a sensitive moral nerve. Had I been in one of his classes I would no doubt have been one of those to ask that question: but how do I challenge racism without upsetting people? Here’s my problem: I want to speak out prophetically but I don’t want to upset others, I want to chal- lenge the white privilege which we’re so congenitally blind to, but I don’t want to alienate the generous, good hearted people who support our school; I want to speak out more strenuously against injustice in my writing, but I don’t want multiple newspapers drop my column as a result; I want to speak out more sharply against injustice, but don’t want to live with the hatred that ensues; and I want to publicly name injustices and name names, but don’t want to alienate myself from those very people. So this leaves me still play- ing for the courage needed for prophecy.

Several years ago, a visiting professor at our school, an Afro-American man, was sharing with our faculty some of the near daily injustices he experiences simply because of the color of his skin. At one point I asked him: “If I, as a white man, came to you like Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and asked you what I should do, what would you tell me?” His answer: Jesus didn’t let Nicodemus off easily just because he confessed his fears. Nicodemus had to do a public act to bring his faith into the light, he had to claim Jesus’ dead body. Hence, his challenge to me — I need to do a public act. He’s right; but I’m still praying for the prophetic courage to do that. And aren’t we all?

Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author; is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas.

WORD ON FIRE
Bishop Robert Barron

Now, there is no question that the book of Exodus and the Bible in general agree that morality is essential to the proper formation of the people of God. Those who would seek to low the Lord, who is justice and love, must be confirmed to justice and love. And this is precisely why we find, in the great Sinai covenant, Israel is not permitted to commit adul- tery, not to covet, not to kill, etc. So far, so Kantian.

But what probably surprises most contemporary readers of the book of Exodus is that, immediately following the lay- ing out of the moral commandments, the author spends prac- tically the rest of the test, chapters 25 through 40, delineating the liturgical prescriptions that the people are to follow. For example, we find a lengthy section on the construction of the ark of the covenant is, in fact, to be made of acacia wood, it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you shall overlay it. And as an aper- ture on the top of the ark, “You shall make two cherubim of gold. — Make one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other. The cherub shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat. Next, we find instructions regarding the elaborately furnished inside of the tabernacle, including a lampstand, a table for the so-called “bread of the presence” and how thoroughly the ceremonial instructions of Exodus consider, not just the liturgical prescriptions, but the liturgical practices. Israel, brought in line with God, ordered to him. The moral law directs our wills to the divine goodness, but the liturgical law directs our minds, our hearts, our emo- tions, and even our bodies to the divine splendor. Notice how thoroughly the ceremonial instructions of Exodus involve color, sound and smell (there is an aural aunt about incense) and how they conduct toward the production of beauty.

I said above that Exodus’ stress on the liturgical and cere- monial has a profound relevance to our time, and here’s why. For very good reasons, we abstained completely from public worship, and even now our ability to worship together is very limited. In most dioceses in our country the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is, again for valid reasons, suspended. My fear is that when the propitious moment arrives, when we are again able to return to Mass, many Catholics will stay away, since they’ve grown accustomed to absenting them- selves from worship. And my concern takes a more specifica- lity in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Article originally published at WordOnFire.org.

The invitation to courage

Courage isn’t one of my strong points, at least not one particular kind of courage. Scripture tells us that as John the Baptist grew up and he “became strong in spirit.” My growing up was somewhat dif- ferent. Unlike John the Baptist, as I grew up I became accommodating in spirit. This had its reasons. I was born with what Ruth Burrows would describe as a “ter- tured sensitivity,” an over- sensitive personality, and had never been able to develop a tough skin. That’s not the stuff of which prophets are made.

When you’re a child on the playground you better have the raw physical strength to challenge a situa- tion that’s unfair or you better develop a tough skin. That’s not the stuff of which prophets are made.

As Shakespeare would say, “Ah, there’s the rub!” For me, this question touches a sensitive moral nerve. Had I been in one of his classes I would no doubt have been one of those to ask that question: but how do I challenge racism without upsetting people? Here’s my problem: I want to speak out prophetically but I don’t want to upset others, I want to chal- lenge the white privilege which we’re so congenitally blind to, but I don’t want to alienate the generous, good hearted people who support our school; I want to speak out more strenuously against injustice in my writing, but I don’t want multiple newspapers drop my column as a result; I want to speak out more sharply against injustice, but don’t want to live with the hatred that ensues; and I want to publicly name injustices and name names, but don’t want to alienate myself from those very people. So this leaves me still play- ing for the courage needed for prophecy.

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Bishop Robert Barron, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author; is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas.
We are our brother’s keeper

The readings for the twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle A are: Ezekiel 33:7-9; Romans 13:8-10 and Matthew 18:15-20.

"Am I my brother’s keeper?" says Cain to God in the Book of Genesis. As I reflected on the Gospel today from the 18th chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel, this passage came to mind. Why? Because the answer is yes!

As human beings we have been made in the image and likeness of the Almighty, and as Catholics we have come to understand God through Revelation as Trinity in the Godhead of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we see a communion (community) of persons. It is from this communion of the Trinity that the Church — throughout the ages — has taught of the social nature of the human person. I need you, and you need me, and we need each other in order to get to heaven.

The greatest commandment of the Lord is to “love God.” The second is like it, to “love each other.” St. Thomas Aquinas defines love as “seeking/willing the good of the other as other.” To love another person without strings attached can be difficult, but this is how God loves us, and we are called to emulate him in all things.

It is an act of love to correct the fault of another, to bring them back to the path that leads to heaven — so long as it is done in authentic charity.

St. Augustine reminds us that “the measure of love, is to love without measure.” St. Teresa of Calcutta says: “To love without measure.” St. Teresa of Calcutta says: “To love another person as well as God.” The second is like it, to “love each other.”

We have heard the famous phrase “nothing in this world is certain, except death and taxes,” but as people of faith, we know there is so much more to our lives — including being our brothers and sisters’ keepers when unforeseen challenges shake the world in which we live.

Pope Francis reminded us once again before praying the Angelus Aug. 2 how our vocations as disciples of Christ must include true compassion and “courageous sharing” when we see others in need.

Our faith teaches us that God operates according to “the logic of taking responsibility for others ... the logic of not looking the other way,” the Holy Father said.

According to a Catholic News Service story, the pope said telling others “to fend for themselves,” should not be a part of a Christian’s vocabulary. We knew of the poverty war, human trafficking and other societal challenges that so many faced before COVID-19 became an international illness that has affected millions and has killed nearly 700,000 this far.

But what we didn’t foresee was how all this would be exacerbated by a global pandemic.

During his catechesis before the Angelus, Pope Francis reflected on Jesus’ miracle of the multiplication of the loaves (Mt 14:13-21). In that Gospel encounter, Jesus multiplies five loaves and two fish to feed about 5,000 men. We read: “They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over — twelve wicker baskets full” (Mt 14:20).

“With this gesture, Jesus demonstrates his power; not in a spectacular way, but as a sign of charity, of God the Father’s generosity toward his weary and troubled children,” the pope said.

We see Jesus fully “immersed in the life of his people. He understands their fatigue and their limitations, but he does not allow anyone to be lost, or to lose out. He nourishes them with his word and provides food in plenty for sustenance,” the Holy Father said.

Like the crowd of thousands in the Gospel, as Catholics, we are nurtured and draw strength each time we listen to God’s word and receive the Eucharist.

And now more than ever, our brethren must see a comparison that is not “sentimentality but rather the concrete manifestation of the love that cares for the people’s needs,” the pope said. We must have the ability to suffer with others, and “to take others’ sorrows on ourselves.”

“Perhaps it would do us good today to ask ourselves: ‘Do I feel compassion toward the people who are close to me? Am I capable of suffering with them, or do I look the other way (or say) they can fend for themselves?’”

Times like these are a reminder that our faith must be at the heart of all we do.

And like Jesus, we must show the same compassion and tenderness to our brothers and sisters in need — now, more than ever.

May we always remember the weary and needy in our prayers and our acts of charity.

Sports can change the world

Nelson Mandela once said, “Sports can change the world.” Never has that statement been more accurate. We recently witnessed professional basketball, baseball and hockey teams, as well as individual players, refuse to compete in games — some play off games — as they strove to bring awareness to what they perceived as racial injustices in our country.

I often talk to coaches about the positive impact they can have on their athletes, making them better people in our great country, which in turn benefits society. However, we are witnessing something even more unique than that in sports right now. We are witnessing athletes themselves have a direct societal impact.

Yes, we have seen individual or small groups of athletes over the course of history break barriers or make a difference. In the 1960s, Jackie Robinson battled racism on his way to becoming the first black Major League Baseball player in the United States. Tommie Smith and John Carlos protested racial inequality during their medal ceremony at the 1968 Olympic Games.

Billy Jean King led the battle for equality among sexes and even defeated male tennis player Bobby Riggs in a “Battle of the Sexes” tennis match in 1973 — the year after Title IX was enacted — which had a significant impact on equality in education-based athletics. In the 1990s, Janet Guthrie became the first woman to race in both the Daytona 500 and Indianapolis 500.

But never have we seen as widespread of an effort as we see across sports as we do currently. One of my favorite authors, Simon Sinek, penned the best-seller “Start with Why.”Hooked on his “golden circle,” how leaders should inspire others from the inside-out. The inside of the circle is a leader’s “why” — I think what we are seeing is athletes mirroring from their “why” — being focused on playing for the joy of the sport and competition; to a “why” that is focused on playing for the joy and to make an impact on society with the platform they have.

In the messiness of our world and our country right now, I think we see people in sports who do good regardless of these circumstances. I think about LeBron James. James has been both criticized and praised for speaking out about systemic racism and has vast contributions to society. A couple years ago a member of the media suggested that he should just, “Shut up and dribble.” Like him or not, LeBron James has used his platform and influence to make the world better. His “I Promise Program” has served more than 1,400 Akron students and offered each of them a four-year college scholarship if they meet certain academic and community requirements. Good for James for not just “shutting up and dribbling.”

I also think about one of my favorite baseball players, Chicago Cub Anthony Rizzo. Consider Rizzo the first base man who caught the throw that gave the Cubs the greatest victory in the history of their franchise, a game 7 World Series win in 2016.

Rizzo’s role with the Cubs throughout his career on the field has been unique enough. His first year with the team in...
The rite of installing a pastor
Every summer after the bishop of a diocese's official priest assignment list goes out, some pastors move to new parishes and others receive parish assignments for the first time. While this year, these ceremonies are comparatively short and have taken place at the front of the sanctuary normally they are more complex. What does the rite of installation involve and why do we do it? The Messenger asked Father Ryan Stenger, tribunal judge for the Diocese of Covington, to explain.

A newly appointed pastor must “take possession” of his new parish (c. 527 §1), according to the 1980 Code of Canon Law. The new pastor is placed in possession by the bishop or one of his vicars or by a priest delegated by him by observing the method established by law and custom (c. 527 §2). In the Diocese of Covington, the bishop himself typically places the pastor in possession of his parish during a Sunday Mass according to the rite prescribed in the “Ceremonial of Bishops.” These liturgical celebrations are an opportunity for the parish to worship God and pray for his blessing upon the parish and the new pastor’s ministry. At the same time, they are also a learning opportunity because the ritual signs and symbols of the pastor installation Mass teach about the nature of the pastor’s ministry in his parish.

The pastor of a parish exercises “the pastoral care of the community committed to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share, so that for the same community be carried out the functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing” (c. 539). These elements of the pastor’s ministry are all given ritual expression throughout the installation Mass. Typically, the bishop and pastor process with the ministers to various sites within the church that are connected to the pastor’s ministry. This year, in light of concerns about maintaining social distancing, some of this process has been replaced with a presentation to the new pastor of various symbols representing the sites that would ordinarily be visited by the procession.

One office of the pastor is as a minister of the Word of God. He fulfills this teaching function primarily by preaching, especially by giving a homily on Sundays and holy days of obligation. He also provides catechetical instruction and fosters work in the spirit of the Gospel, sees to the Catholic education of the youth and works to bring the Gospel even to those who do not practice the faith. The Diocese of Covington.

During the installation rite, the bishop leads the pastor to the ambo or presents him with a Bible, emphasizing the pastor’s commitment to the Gospel and that he is called to share in Christ’s mission of converting sinners to repentance. The deacon ordination rite: “Believe what you read in this Book, and you will accomplish it. Lead them by your words and above all by your example.” He must proclaim the Gospel just as clearly and consistently as he must proclaim the Gospel.

Finally, the pastor is a minister of governance. During the installation rite, the bishop leads the pastor to the baptismal font (or presents him with a baptismal shell used for pouring the water), hands him a violet stole that is worn by the priest when hearing confessions and finally brings him to the tabernacle, where the pastor kneels to incense the Blessed Sacrament. He is called to promote the devout celebration of the sacraments, to lead the faithful to prayer and to active participation in the sacred liturgy, and to direct the celebration of the liturgy within his parish and safeguard it from abuse (c. 538 §2).

The Mass for the Installation of a Pastor is always an important moment in the life of the parish and in the life of the pastor himself. The rich symbolism of the liturgical rite can help to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the pastor’s identity and mission within the parish entrusted to his care. Most importantly, it teaches that the pastor’s ministry must always begin in and lead to the Mass when the pastor stands before the bishop to renew the promises of his ordination and to make the Oath of Fidelity.

Father Ryan L. Stenger, J.C.L., J.V. is tribunal judge for the Diocese of Covington.
Californians ‘on edge’ as historic wildfires rage

Rhina Guidos
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Some of the few Masses available for Californians in California’s hay area come to a halt the weekend of Aug. 22 as bishops urged parishioners to pray for one another, for firefighters, and to stay home as air quality diminished in some parts of the state because of some of the largest wildfires in California history.

‘People are just stunned, with the pandemic and the downturn in the economy and the racial issues and then on top of that, the wildfires,’ said Bishop Oscar Cantú, head of the Diocese of San Jose in an Aug. 24 interview with Catholic News Service. ‘It makes you wonder, what else’? All we need is an earthquake.’

Evacuation orders have affected more than 250,000 Californians, including many Catholics in the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the dioceses of San Jose, Sacramento and Monterey. All except Monterey are on a list of cities trending at the national level for fast-rising COVID-19 rates.

More than a million acres in the area burned in the span of a week, The Associated Press reported, causing seven deaths as of Aug. 24. The Blazes, which began Aug. 14, are believed to have been caused by lightning strikes and made worse by drought conditions.

Because of the rising rate of contagion, some dioceses in California have only had the option of holding Mass outdoors and like fellow parishes from nearby dioceses, Bishop Cantú said he gave pastors the option of canceling them since being outdoors could be harmful to the health of those attending.

The fires have affected parishioners at more than half a dozen of the diocese’s 52 parishes, he said. Many others are under threat.

U.S. bishops to meet virtually, not in person

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. bishops will conduct their annual fall general meeting virtually in November rather than meet in person as has been the bishops’ practice.

The move was brought about by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. ‘The bishops had canceled a spring meeting set for Detroit in June due to the pandemic. The cancellation was the first time since the formation of the bishops’ conference in 1917 that a meeting of all bishops had been called off.

Bishops voted 219-5, with one abstention, to change the format of the meeting from in-person to virtual. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops also consulted with the Vatican prior to making the decision.

The USCCB’s Administrative Committee, which governs the activities of the bishops’ conference between meetings of the full body of bishops, will continue its practice of setting the agenda for the November meeting when the committee meets in mid-September.

The original dates for the fall meeting, which would have been held in Baltimore, were Nov. 9-12. No dates were announced in the Aug. 20 press release informing the public about the virtual meeting.

USCCB bylaws require a plenary assembly to be convened at least once a year, and so the November meeting in virtual format will meet this requirement.

People and Events

St. Henry Families for Life invite you to join them on Saturday, Sept. 12, the National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children, at the 8 a.m. Mass to pray for aborted children. The Mass will be followed by praying the rosary for all those affected by abortion, especially the baby, parents and families of the aborted child. Social distancing and masks required.

All college-aged students in school or the work force are invited to join The Catholic Newman Center at Northern Kentucky University for virtual Bible Study, Tuesdays, at 7 p.m.; Book Study at 8 p.m.; and in person Mass, Thursdays, at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church, Cold Spring. Email Donna Heim, campus minister, at heimd2@nku.edu to receive weekly Newman information.

Even with all the chaos, people have stripped up to help others, he said. The diocese has given pastors information to share with their parishioners, connecting those who have lost their homes to resources available in the area and also issuing information about what to prepare ahead of time should they be evacuated “and to be ready to go at a moment’s notice,” Bishop Cantú said.

“We’re sharing that information, as well, and our Catholic Charities continues to distribute food, which they’ve been doing (because) of the pandemic,” he said. “And so, especially now, they’re collecting funds to support those families who have lost their homes during the fires.”

In an Aug. 23 video message posted on Facebook, Monterey’s Bishop Daniel E. Garcia said the fires “in our diocese alone” had caused “profound damage” for hundreds of families.

He called on Catholics to “come together as the body of Christ to pray for one another,” even if they couldn’t physically gather to do so and asked them to be mindful that pastors could cancel outdoor Masses because of poor air quality.

Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto, too, asked Catholics in a letter to stay home as much as possible and said he had asked pastors to livestream Masses “for the benefit of those who have vulnerable health conditions.”

The fires come at a trying time for Californians, said Bishop Cantú, and have taken away the only respite some had.

“You know, the one piece of joy that that people have (during the pandemic) is to go outside and take a walk or take a jog,” he said. “We can’t do that now because the air quality is so bad. We’re keenly aware of the fires because we can smell the smoke for the past-eight days or so and it’s been very thick, and it’s gotten so bad.”

Catholic schools in San Jose had just resumed classes online and the fires now have added a layer of stress, he said.

‘Parents are exhausted because, those that are able to work from home, they’re multitasking, supervising their children and trying to work from home amid all of the distractions and then, on top of that, to worry about fires,” he said.

“It’s been one thing after another; but there’s something about our faith in the message of our God. He’s with us especially in difficult moments.”

If you look at Scripture, at the lives of the saints,” it’s especially in the darkest moments that we are reminded constantly that God does not abandon us, and that’s what our message has been to our parishioners,” he said.

“Our God is the God who walks with us and Jesus did not back away from crisis, from difficult moments,” Bishop Cantú said. “In fact, he walked right into them because he knew what people experience in their lives, and he is with us. So, I think that the Christian’s message is encouraging, especially in these historic moments.

But it’s important to recognize that it’s a stressful time for everyone, ‘For our priests, for our leaders, for our families, for children,’ he said. And it has been especially stressful for exhausted firefighters trying to get under control some of the largest blazes in California history.

“Government agencies in California have reached out to Canada and to Australia to get help in firefighting because our firefighters are completely tapped out,” he said. ‘They’re working 24/7 and they’re running thin, they’re exhausted because we’ve never had these fires all at one time. So, it’s a national and our resources.

Those who want to help can donate to Catholic Charities, he said, and asked all others to “pray for California.”

A firefighter from Chula Vista, Calif., monitors the LNU Lightning Complex Fire in Lake County Aug. 25, 2020.

After a long day of fighting fires, a firefighter from Chula Vista, Calif., monitors the LNU Lightning Complex Fire in Lake County Aug. 25, 2020.


Anniversary couple: 70 years and still things to talk about

Allegra Thatcher
Assistant Editor

The annual diocesan Anniversary Vow Shakers, sched-
uled for Sept. 27, has been cancelled due to COVID-19. The event
honors couples celebrating significant anniversaries this year,
such as one year, 25 years, 30 years or Stipulus. Those couples will
still receive a congratulatory certificate signed by Bishop Roger
Foy. Certificates will be sent to parish office in September and
the names of the couples will be published in the Messenger in
late September.

In lieu of celebrating in person, the Messenger reached out
to three anniversary couples to hear how their love has perse-
vived over the years and flourished through lives of faith. They
will be published in installments over the next three weeks.

High school sweethearts Ralph and Gloria Kunkemoeller
share the story of their elopement with the excitement of young lovers — and 70 years later, maybe it's still the best story they'll ever tell.

They met on the bus to the Rosedale Swimming Pool, when she was 15 and he was 16. Since they lived in the same neighborhood, she told him where she lived and he started showing up at her door on his bicycle. Five years later, they planned a big wedding with family and friends. One problem remained, however — he was Catholic and she Methodist. In those days, mixed marriages just weren't supposed to hap-
pen.

The tension between the families got so bad that Ralph and Gloria decided to just cancel their plans and get married a week early, to the surprise of everyone.

"In the beginning, they said it would never last because Ralph and I ran away and got married," said Mrs. Kunkemoeller. "We got a special dispensation from the bish-
op of Covington at the time and we went and got married at St. Lawrence church in Lawrenceburg, Indiana." Mrs. Kunkemoeller had a job where she had to work on Satur-
days, so the couple was split from the beginning. The wedding was in Cincinnati to pick up the marriage license. They planned to go home and change into their wedding clothes, but they were running late and the weather was so nasty that they decided to drive straight to Lawrenceburg.

"We were married in the rectory dining room," Mrs. Kunkemoeller recalled. "The witnesses were another priest and the housekeeper — and the priest had to run out to hear mass because the priest had to go to work in downtown Cincinnati. We ended up never taking a vacation without taking her with us. ... We made a good foursome when we went on vacation or whatever we did." The Kunkemoellers had one other daughter, who died shortly after birth.

As a Catholic and a Methodist, Ralph and Gloria have always been involved in two church communities. Ralph started going to Mother of God Parish, Covington, 60 years ago "by accident." Early in their marriage, their elderly neighbors needed transportation there, and Ralph volun-
teered to take them to fulfill his Sunday Mass obligation. Eventually the Kunkemoellers lived across the street from the parish and Mr. Kunkemoeller spent 15 years there follow-
ing his retirement as parish office manager. Mrs. Kunkemoeller, though not a Catholic, was always part of the community.

"I love Mother of God church like it was my own," she said. "In fact, I did a lot of stone removal and cleaning of the steps every Sunday before Mass. That’s what we did for years," she said. "It was always a delight to be involved in the parties and get together at Mother of God." Mrs. Kunkemoeller is a member of Trinity Episcopal Church. After being raised Methodist, she went to a Lutheran church in Park Hills for some years. Mr. Kunkemoeller often came with her, and people thought of him as a parishioner, just as she was involved in Mother of God.

"We each kept our religion and we respect each other's beliefs, that's how we got by," said Mrs. Kunkemoeller. "Our faith is very staunch." Mr. and Mrs. Kunkemoeller said there’s no magical for-
ula that fits everyone for making marriages last as long as theirs has. They do have some basic principles, however.

"You’ve got to learn to take the good things with the bad things, and there’s always going to be bad things," said Mrs. Kunkemoeller. "People say never quarrel — I’m sure every-
one quarrels. They say don’t go to bed angry — there will be disagreements and it’s always fun to make up." They also advised that going home to parents isn’t a solu-
tion. "You can’t always go home. People have to learn that it’s yours. You married him or her, you’ve got to make it go," they said.

"They’ve outfitted most everyone in their immediate fami-
lies and friend circles, but their daughter and son-in-law (Lisa and Karl) have been a constant support. The 70-year couple came to live at Madonna Manor a little over a year ago after being ill in the hospital at the same time. Mrs. Kunkemoller is in a wheelchair and suffers from arthritis, but they’re happy as long as they have a place together. While they haven’t been able to touch or hug Lisa and Karl since March, visitors like Lisa can come on the porch and see them through the screen on their sun porch.

"We’re so fortunate that we’re both in relatively good health, enough to enjoy life, and we have a nice place to live with good friends here," said Mr. Kunkemoeller.

When asked about how they’ve managed to stay together for so long, Mr. Kunkemoeller said, "All I can say about 70 years of marriage is that it seems a much shorter time than that, it does. We’ve had some wonderful neighbors, wonder-
ful friends. ... We talk all the time about this, how blessed we are to have 70 years together and we still talk to each other and we love each other.

"We still say goodnight and most of the time we kiss good-
night," said Mrs. Kunkemoeller. "The most important thing is to stay with it, work the problems out."
2012 he played for a team that lost 100 games. The team won us? ing down racial barriers.” Are we seeing this play out before us? added, “(Sport) is more powerful than government in break- the betterment of society . That he and countless other athletes use their platforms for shooting. Maybe Rizzo would like to be known as just a base- Stoneman Douglas, when 17 people were killed in a school pandem- and a country in unrest because of racial inequal- of MLB is playing in empty stadiums during a global pandemic. Currently, his team and the rest of MLB is playing in empty stadiums during a global pandemic and a country in unrest because of racial inequality. And in between all of that, he had to leave spring train- ing in 2018 so he could support his high school alma mater , Notre Dame Sister Margene Koester went peacefully home to God Aug. 26, 2020. She was born Judith Ann Koester on March 6, 1943, to Irene and Albert Koester in Covington, Ky. Judy attended St. Augustine School, Covington, and graduated from Notre Dame Academy in 1961. Shortly after graduating, she entered the Sisters of Notre Dame where she made her profession of vows on August 14, 1964. Sister Margene graduated from Our Lady of Cincinnati/Edgewood College, then earned a master’s degree in education at Xavier University In subsequent years, she attained certification in religious education and in liturgical studies. Sister’s ministry included teaching elementary school in the dioceses of Covington and Lexington, Ky and Cincinnati, Ohio. Sister Margene’s ministry also involved serving as a direc- tor of religious education in the Diocese of Covington for 11 years and in Lexington for four years. In addition, she taught religion and English classes at Notre Dame Academy. In 2002 she joined Mother of God Parish, Covington, as the pastoral associate. Here she felt most at home. Her role included being parish sacristan, visiting the homebound and helping with sacramental preparation. In 2012 Sister became the sacristan at St. Joseph Heights, while also volunteering at Notre Dame Academy. She later retired to Lourdes Hall in the apostolate of prayer. Sister Margene felt in some ways she was a “pathway to the Lord,” trying to lead people to God. She felt her personal calling was to sow the seed of God’s word and goodness in the hearts and minds of those she touched. Sister Margene is preceded in death by her par- ents and her sister Deborah Macht. She is survived by her brother, William and her sister, Susan Vetter. Sister also leaves behind her beloved nieces and nephews. Due to the current health-care restrictions on gatherings, a private Catholic Mass took place at St. Joseph Heights chapel, followed by burial in the con- cemetery. A celebration of Sister Margene’s Life will be held for family and friends at a later date. Middendorf Funeral Home in Ft. Wright is handling the arrangements. Memorials are suggested to the Sisters of Notre Dame, 1601 Dixie Highway Covington, KY 41011.

OObits

Notre Dame Sister Margene Koester, S.N.D.

O The Sisters of Notre Dame are looking for individuals to fill the following positions, serving for religious sisters in our long-term care and assisted living.

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We’re hiring for long-term care facilities in need of experienced nurses. Positions start at $25/hr. Our PHN team offers flexible shifts with up to 60 hours available. Skills are offered for 2 weeks and up to 4 weeks.

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If interested in these opportunities, please and send your resume to Sisters of Notre Dame, 1601 Dixie Highway, Covington, KY 41011. Questions: Sr. Doreen Middendorf, Phyllis.rhodes@ndn.org, or call 859-392-6000 and speak with Doreen Rhodes.

www.ndn.org/careers

FULL-TIME CAFETERIA MANAGER

Holy Cross Elementary School has an immediate need for a full-time cafeteria manager. The manager’s primary responsibilities involve overall supervision of the respective school’s program; managing employees of the program; ordering, receiving, and managing inventory; preparing and serving meals; operating a point-of-sale system; and interacting with school staff, students, and their parents. Interested individuals can contact Jackie Kaiser at jkaiser@covdio.org, or call her at 859/392-1536.

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Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Notre Dame Sister Margene Koester, S.N.D.
With millions deprived of basic needs, Christians must act, pope says

Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Christians cannot stand idly by and watch as millions of people are deprived of their basic needs because of others’ greed, Pope Francis said.

“When the obsession to possess and dominate excludes millions deprived of basic needs, Christians must act, pope says

We are stewards of goods, not masters” or lords keeping them “solly for yourself,” he added.

The pope said the catechism also says, “political authority has the right and duty to regulate the legitimate exercise of the right to ownership for the sake of the common good.”

This “subordination of private property to the universal destination of goods,” he said, “is a golden rule of social conduct and the first principle of the whole ethical and social order.”

Property and money are meant to be instruments that serve development, he said.

However, people easily turn property and money into ends in themselves, he added.

When that happens, he said, the human being, who was made in the image and likeness of God, “becomes deformed” and becomes individualistic, calculating and dominating, instead of social, creative, cooperative and charitable “with an immense capacity to love.”

Social inequality and environmental degradation go hand in hand, he said, and have the same root cause: “the sin of wanting to possess and dominate one’s brothers and sisters, nature and God himself,” which was not God’s plan for creation.

The inequalities in the world “reveal a social illness; it is a virus that comes from a sick economy,” which is the result of unfair economic growth that disregards fundamental human values and leaves just a handful of people with more wealth than the rest of the world, he said.

“If we care take of the goods that the creator gives us, if we put what we possess in common in such a way that no one would be lacking, then we would truly inspire hope for creation to regenerate a more healthy and equal world,” he said.
Christians, others warn Turkey is
Messenger
Syrian Democratic Council, which oversees the autonomous
recent years are reportedly again under attack by mainly
Christians and Yazidis have practiced religious freedom in
Cultural Diversity and Outreach and the archdiocesan
organized by the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of
and old, people of every racial and ethnic background are
that day," Archbishop Gregory said. "Men and women, young
57th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King's historic
"It's hard."
because they start talking to me and I ignore them because
she said. "If the full mask were clear then that might help or be
needed for that full use of language and facial expressions,"
unstable food supply. Participants at the prayer service reflect-
19 pandemic. The explosion destroyed the government's three-
19,000 and displaced as many as 90,000 others from their homes. The disaster was the latest
killed at least 180 people, wounded 6,000 and displaced as many
prayer to restore peace and civility to the region. On Aug. 4, a
masks," said Susan Rangel, after Mass Aug. 16 at Chicago's St.
with COVID, especially trying to understand people with
damaged dozens of churches, eight members of a priests' sup-
relief to parishes in need
Pope: Jubilee for the Earth a time for restoring bond with God, creation
VATICAN CITY — The exploitation and plundering of the Earth's resources at the expense of the poor and vulnerable
cry out for justice and the forgiveness of debts, Pope Francis said.
In his message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation Sept. 1 and the Season of Creation, which runs
through Oct. 4, the pope said the observance is a time to review, repair and restore humanity's broken relationship with God
and his creation. "It is a time for restorative justice. In this con-
text, I repeat my call for the cancellation of the debt of the most vulnerable countries, in recognition of the severe
impacts of the medical, social and economic crises they face as a result of COVID-19," he wrote. Since 2020 included the 50th
anniversary of Earth Day, the ecumenical team organizing the Season of Creation chose "Aikido for the Earth" as this year's theme.
Louisiana priests provide hurricane relief to parishes in need
NEW ORLEANS — Louisiana priests that support each other with ongoing camaraderie and spiritual nourishment are now
also providing very essential hurricane relief to priests and the parishes they serve in areas that were devastated by recent storm damage. Just days after Hurricane Laura pounded the Diocese of Lake Charles in southwest Louisiana and
damaged dozens of churches, eight members of a priests' support group banded together to aid their fellow brothers.
Father Jeffrey Starkovich of St. Pius X Church in Ragley. On Aug. 31, priests from the Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Dioceses of Houma-Thibodaux, Lafayette and Baton Rouge arrived in Ragley, just north of Lake Charles, driving U-Hauls packed with donated water, food, soft drinks, paper goods, flaps,
canned goods, ice and gasoline. The relief help also included 1,000 cans of beans and rice from St. Pius Church and a
courtyard of the Apostolic Palace. Attendance "will be open to the general public," the prefecture said in a note Aug. 26 that members of the faithful could attend the Wednesday audience talks starting Sept. 2. Norms for curbing the spread of the coronavirus will be followed, the prefecture said in a written communiqué, and for the month of September, the audience will be held in the large San Damaso courtyard of the Apostolic Palace. Attendees "will be open to anyone who wishes to participate, and no tickets are needed, it said.
Ecumenical clergy gather in New York to pray for Lebanon
BROOKLYN, N.Y. — More than 35 clergy representing the Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic faith traditions of Lebanon
met in Brooklyn to pray for victims of a deadly explosion in Beirut and for an end to the decades of violence and instability in that country. Ordained and lay participants taking part in the Aug. 25 gathering at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Cathedral implanted the church's patroness in song, chant and prayer to restore peace and civility to the region. On Aug. 4, a massive explosion of fertilizer stored at the port of Beirut killed at least 180 people, wounded 6,000 and displaced as many as 90,000 others from their homes. The disaster was the latest in a series of devastating challenges to the political, financial, religious, and humanitarian institutions of the country. During the past 45 years, the Lebanese people have experienced civil war, government instability, financial collapse, joblessness, challenges to the practice of religion and the crippling COVID-19 pandemic. The massive two-month emergency supply of grain and threatened an already unstable food supply. Participants at the prayer service reflected on their shared connection to Lebanon, the importance of working together and relying on divine guidance to persevere. In their homily, Archbishop Joseph Zaitz, Metropolitan of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, said the Church was not confined to Beirut but felt by Lebanon all over the world.
Pope gets first copy of Italian Missal translation
VATICAN CITY — The Italian bishops finally have printed their new Missal, and they gave the symbolic first copy to Pope Francis, who usually celebrates Mass in Italian. The Italian bishops' conference worked for almost 20 years translating the texts of all the prayers used at Mass by the celebrants and the faithful and then discussing proposed changes with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments. The use of the new Missal is obligatory throughout Italy as of Easter, April 4, 2021, but priests can begin using the translation as soon as they get a copy of the Missal. Local bishop can set an earlier date for its mandated use in their dioceses. With the presentation to the pope, the headlines in Italian were about the signed translations of the Lord's Prayer and of the Gloria, both of which now match the Bible translation the bishops approved in 2002 for use in the liturgy. The
Our Father, matching the translation of Matthew 6:9-11, now includes the line: "Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil."
Hurricane destroys Louisiana churches, closes schools, displaces priests

Catholic News Service
LAKE CHARLES, La. — Hurricane Laura destroyed six churches in the Diocese of Lake Charles, left a dozen others “highly compromised” and did heavy damage to chancery offices.

The diocese, in a report posted on its website, said that only one of six Catholic schools reopened Aug. 31, while the others needed at least some repairs before classes could resume.

The storm, which slammed southern Louisiana with winds of up to 150 mph in the early hours of Aug. 27, also left a diocesan rectory housing 20 priests, a third of them in active ministry, uninhabitable.

Some of the priests were able to relocate to rectories that sustained little or no damage, while others moved into Vianney House, a diocesan residence for people discerning a vocation, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in central Lake Charles and private homes.

Utilities, including power and water, in much of the region remained out Aug. 31.

The devastation was widespread, according to Bishop Glen J. Provost, bishop of the Lake Charles Diocese.

“The roof of the chancery collapsed during the storm, leaving the building unusable, and a diocesan building across the street from the chancery sustained minor damage with broken windows from the fierce winds,” Provost said.

“The city is a disaster. No houses, no business is left untouched. The chancery will be unusable in the foreseeable future. We have 38 parishes and seven missions. All suffered some damage,” Bishop Provost said.

Hurricane Laura was the most powerful hurricane to strike southwest Louisiana, surpassing the devastation of Hurricane Rita in 2005 and Hurricane Audrey in 1957, the diocese said.

Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana began providing emergency relief within hours after the storm passed.

“Our are here, we are open and we trying to meet the needs of the community” the diocesan report quoted Mercy Sister Miriam MacLean, the agency’s director, saying.

“The Lord preserved Catholic Charities from any major damage for sure so that we can be up and operational,” she said. “We have a little bit of leakage in the roof and a couple of roll-up doors got a little damage, but we are blessed. We have a generator and the Religious Sisters of Mercy are running the office.”

The diocese reported that one of its newly ordained priests, Father Joseph Caraway, parochial vicar at St. Henry of the Apostle in Hackberry, was roving out the storm at a parish in the northern part of the diocese.

“It is extremely important for me to live in my house in the diocese so I can be available to the priests and to the faithful,” said Bishop Provost, who has headed the diocese since 2007.

Some gentlemen from the cathedral parish bulldozed my driveway so that I could get to my house. Every tree in my yard, except maybe three or four, were downed. You can barely see my house from Lake Street because of all the downed trees.”

He reached out and offered prayers to all diocesan churches hours after the storm swept through the area.

The six destroyed churches are Our Lady of the Assumption in Johnson Bayou; Our Lady of the Lake in Lake Charles; Our Lady of the Sea in Cameron; Sacred Heart of Jesus in Creole; St. Eugene in Grand Chenier; and St. Peter the Apostle in Hackberry.

“Most of what I have witnessed so far has been wind damage,” Bishop Provost said.

He said Mass will continue to be celebrated when possible throughout the diocese.

“We appreciate everyone’s prayers. Bishops in other dioceses have sent word of assistance to us, so we appreciate the fellowship of the other Catholic dioceses throughout the nation. I have heard from bishops on the East and West coasts and especially in Texas and Louisiana,” he said.

As for the schools, only Our Lady Immaculate in Jennings was prepared to reopen Aug. 31. The diocese reported that Father Keith Pellerin, pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians Church in Jennings, said that classes would resume at the school.

St. Louis Catholic High School in Lake Charles sustained severe damage during the storm’s onslaught.

“Father (Nathan) Long, rector of the school, reported that the roof of the administration building is, for the most part, blown off. Windows in various classrooms are blown in and there is roof damage at the gym,” Father Pellerin said.

Bishop Provost spoke with Principal Trevor Kondell of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic School in Lake Charles, who reported minor damage to the building. However, the adjacent parish church sustained “substantial” damage.

The parish rectory’s roof was significantly damaged, making it uninhabitable.

Volunteers were on hand Aug. 30 to clear trees and debris from the parish property.

Bishop Provost plans to visit as many parishes as possible to survey the storm’s impact firsthand.

Catholic Charities planned to distribute food, water and tarps to families in need. Sister MacLean said the dioceses of Beaumont, Texas, and Lafayette, Louisiana, will store donated supplies because her agency’s facility does not have enough storage space.

Bishop David L. Tonns of Beaumont, Texas, helped deliver bottled water and also prepared meals to Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana despite having to assess storm damage in his diocese to the west. He said the damage in Beaumont was much less severe than in Lake Charles.

Sister MacLean also said people who were evacuated to hotels will need vouchers to remain there until other housing arrangements can be made. Long-term shelter will become a major need for people left homeless by Hurricane Laura, she said.

Lex Lindell, center, of New Orleans, hands out food and supplies to Hurricane Laura evacuees from Lake Charles, La., outside of the Marriot Hotel in New Orleans Aug. 30, 2020.

Photo: Courtesy of Louisiana Catholic Conference