Allegra Thatcher  
Assistant Editor

Respect Life month normally brings the faithful of the Diocese of Covington in October together to celebrate a diocesan-wide Mass in honor of the dignity of human life. Like most events, it’s looking a little different this year — and possibly reaching a different and wider audience.

The Pro-Life Mass is not only being celebrated at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington on Oct. 13, but also at each of the parishes in the diocese at the same time.

Bishop Roger Foys will celebrate Mass in the Cathedral Basilica at 7 p.m. with representatives from each parish present. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mass is not open to all those who would normally attend. However, every parish will be simultaneously celebrating a Mass at 7 p.m. and the faithful are invited to join at their parish to pray in union with the entire diocese.

Faye Roch, director of the Pro-Life Office, said the diocese has come together as a community every October since 1996 to kick off Respect Life month. “While our gathering to celebrate is different this year, my prayer is that these beautiful celebrations of the sanctity and dignity of life at our diocesan parishes will touch hearts and convert minds,” she said.

The opportunity to celebrate Mass closer to home and with a greater seating capacity than usual is one high point amid the changing times, and the Pro-Life Office hopes that more lives may be altered for the better by this year’s changes.

**Annual pro-life Mass extended to parishes due to limited in-person capacity at the Cathedral**

**Fall Diocesan Pastoral Planning meeting focuses on completing previous goals**

Allegra Thatcher  
Assistant Editor

The first of three annual Deanery Pastoral Council meetings was held Sept. 17 in the Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium. The meeting consisted of diocesan department directors instead of the entire Curia staff due to COVID-19.

Jamie Schroeder, chancellor, opened the meeting by explaining this year’s process. Normally, the directors would discuss the 2021-2022 objectives for each department — goals for improving the productivity so as to continue to further the Gospel. They also planned to evaluate the success of the 2019-2020 objectives. Instead of developing new objectives, departments looked at the previous five years to identify objectives that were “incomplete or delayed.” Looking forward, they hope to bring about those projects which may have been put to the side over those years.

Bishop Roger Foys thanked everyone for their dedication and help in being flexible during this unpredictable year. “I want to thank you for your service to the Church and especially for your ministry alongside me,” he said.

He also prepared staff members for the possibility that their objectives might be changed with the arrival of a new bishop for the diocese, since in July he had submitted his retirement letter to Pope Francis. He urged the staff to be open to (Continued on page 12)

(above) Bishop Foys addresses the directors, thanking them for their hard work. (below) Mike Clines, superintendent of Catholic Schools, and Alan Pickett, director of Catholic Charities, take notes on the plans for upcoming department projects.

**Moving? Wrong address?**

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September 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Peter’s Pence Collection, conducted throughout the Diocese of Covington on the weekend of October 3 and 4, is an opportunity for the Church around the world to stand in solidarity with victims of war, natural disaster and oppression in their time of need. In September and October 2018, violent earthquakes and a tsunami in Indonesia killed 1,500 and injured thousands more. On the island of Sulawesi, the Mount Soputan volcano erupted hours after the earthquake, further endangering people already affected by the first disaster.

Your generosity to the Peter’s Pence Collection facilitated much-needed support for victims of the Indonesian catastrophes. Pope Francis responded with a contribution of $100,000 to be distributed to those in areas most affected by the disaster, with a prayer that “the Lord comfort them and support those working in the rescue efforts” (Angelus, September 30, 2018). Your contributions help Pope Francis fulfill his prayer that the Church will reach out with acts of mercy.

Please prayerfully consider supporting this year’s collection as an act of mercy and charity. Join with our brothers and sisters in faith from around the globe to help Pope Francis reach the most marginalized in our world. For more information about the collection, please visit www.usccb.org/peters-pence.

Thank you, and may God bless you abundantly. Please, pray for me.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D.
Bishop of Covington

“The Christian exists to serve, not to be served.”
— Pope Francis, homily of the Mass at Santa Marta, April 26, 2018

For more information, visit www.usccb.org/peters-pence.

Coronavirus Report
(as of Monday, Sept. 21)

Positive Cases
Active positive cases: 9
Recovered positive cases: 14
Total ever positive cases: 23

Self-quarantined
Contacts: 22
Close Contacts: 85

Returned to class after quarantine/self-quarantine:
From Sept. 15– Sept. 21:
44 students (including 20 from St. Thomas School)
Total ever: 263 students

Schools reporting quarantines and self-quarantines: (25 of 39 schools)
Bishop Brossart High School
Blessed Sacrament
Covington Catholic High School
Holy Cross
Holy Cross District High School
Holy Family
Newport Central Catholic High School
Notre Dame Academy
St. Henry District High School
St. Agnes
St. Augustine, Covington
St. Cecilia
St. Edward
St. Henry
St. Joseph, Cold Spring
St. Joseph, Crescent Springs
St. Mary
St. Patrick
St. Paul
St. Pius X
St. Therese
Sts. Peter and Paul
Villa Madonna Academy

(Schools without students in quarantine or self-quarantine do not need to report.)

His Excellency
the Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, 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

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.covdio.org.
St. Vincent de Paul Society thanks dedicated volunteers for service

The St. Vincent de Paul Society of Northern Kentucky held its annual feast day Mass and commitment ceremony Sept. 19 at St. Augustine Parish, Covington. Members gathered to celebrate the Eucharist and be honored for their years of service, as well as renew their commitment to helping those in need.

The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Roger Foys and concelebrated by Father Daniel Schomaker, vicar general and pastor, St. Augustine, Father Ryan Maher, vicar general and Father Michael Gnan, parochial vicar. Deacons Mike Lyman and John Leardon served the Mass.

After Mass, Bishop Foys installed George DeJaco for 25 years of service and Deacon Bill Theis for 30 years. Outgoing board members Maria Eichberger, former secretary and Eastern District vice president, and Laurie Iglesias, former treasurer, were recognized for their service as well.

The Norbert F. DeJaco Vincentian Service Award, recognizing a Vincentian who has consistently gone above and beyond in their service to neighbors in need, went to Dawn Groneck of the St. Thomas Conference. A surprise award was given to Dennis Coyne, second vice president and former board president, to recognize him for his continued dedicated servant leadership to the Society as he continues to work tirelessly for those in need.

Bishop Foys concluded the Mass and service with a blessing of the participants with a relic of St. Vincent de Paul.

“I am very grateful to all the members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for what they do for God’s people both spiritually and materially,” said Bishop Foys. “They have always been a great help to those in need but never more than now during the pandemic. They give great witness to the Gospel message and give a good example for all of us to follow.”

New pastor

Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, celebrated Sept. 19, the installation of their 12th pastor — Father Eric Boelscher. During the installation ceremony Bishop Roger Foys presented the new pastor with symbols of the sacred stations of the church. As Bishop Foys handed Father Boelscher the Gospels, he said, “Father Boelscher, at this church’s ambo you will proclaim Christ the way, the truth and the life, in this way feeding the faithful of Christ from the table of His word. Believe what you read here, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.”

Before the final blessing, Father Boelscher thanked Bishop Foys for asking him to consider a priestly vocation, nurturing that vocation throughout seminary studies, ordaining him to the priesthood and now installing him to his first pastorate.
Truth and the ‘contents of democracy’ — Pope Benedict XVI

On April 18, 2005 Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, dean of the College of Cardinals, preached the homily on the opening day of the conclave that was convened after the death of Pope John Paul II. When the conclave closed, Cardinal Ratzinger had been elected successor to Pope John Paul II and chose the name Benedict XVI.


The noted Catholic writer and journalist understands then Cardinal Ratzinger’s concept of a “dictatorship of relativism” as “… a carefully chosen expression of his own theological legacy.”


During the decades after Vatican II, the now Pope Emeritus became pastorally and principally engaged with the rise of secularism and modern political and religious conditions. In particular, his thought has focused on the place of Christianity in modern democratic societies of the West. It specifically targeted “the breakdown of society in Europe as it collapses into the black hole created by the denial of the Absolute in public life.”

Thus, his theological scholarship over the decades addressed “the pervasive moral relativism that undermines human well-being and erodes human communities” as a corrective to the political and cultural pluralism developing in a post-Christian era.


In this regard, Weigel’s exegesis clearly unpacks the meaning of a “dictatorship of relativism”: “If there is only ‘your truth’ and ‘my truth’ and nothing we can understand and share as the truth, then how are we to defend the civilizational accomplishment of the West, particularly in its public expressions? …”

Weigel sums up key factors essential to public expressions of Western civilization, namely, “the rule of law and equality before the law; tolerance and civility; religious freedom and the legitimate rights of conscience; and the method of persuasion in politics and self-government.”

Undoubtedly, in recent decades, Pope Benedict XVI has become a prominent voice in the defense of religious and ethical values as the foundation of democracy.

In 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger participated with Jürgen Habermas in a 2004 academic dialogue which explored the implications of secularization and the role of reason in modern life entitled “That Which Holds the World Together,” a treatment of the theme of “the pre-political moral foundations of a free state.”

The enactment of unjust laws by “majority principle” or “majority rule” is problematic. Unjust laws trigger questions of reason and faith. His paper was entitled “That Which Holds the Contents of Democracy.”

Earlier, in “What is Truth? The Significance of Religious and Ethical Values in a Pluralistic Society” published in 1995, the then Cardinal Ratzinger had observed in an in-built modernity in “society between freedom as the existential form of democracy and the contents of democracy (i.e., law and the good)...” “The ensuing efforts to ‘discover the right form of democracy’ and indeed of political life as a whole, are struggles to find the right balance in this tension.”

As a result, the concept of “truth” de facto has “moved into the zone of anti-democratic intolerance.” The implications of that shift are profound, for the “public good” is reduced to a private matter and the identification of the good of some groups is “not the truth of society as a whole.”

The fact that the democratic society is wedded to “a relativism” that guarantees civil liberties (especially religious freedom) has been a historically positive development in the political sphere. Nevertheless, a significant question about the substance of liberty still remains unresolved: “Must there not be a nonrelativistic kernel in democracy too?”

After all, democracy has the responsibility to uphold the inviolable human rights of its citizens, rights that constitute “the very substance of tolerance and freedom.”

Ethical truth must be an essential component of democratic life. In effect, the rule of the tension between a legitimate relativism needed for democratic coexistence and “the contents of democracy” revolves around setting limits to tolerance.

Cardinal Ratzinger concluded that the purpose of government is not to establish “a freedom without contents.” Rather, if a state is to sustain viability and good order, there must exist “a minimum of truth, of knowledge of the good, that cannot be manipulated.”

In this regard, an insightful of St. Augustine is invoked, namely, that a society which lacks the foundation of substantive truth at its core “will sink to the level of a smoothly functioning band of robbers.” Without such a core, the political community would be defined on purely functional terms, “not on the basis of that justice which is good for everyone.”

In a similar vein of thought, Cardinal Ratzinger’s theological vision uploaded by the Holy Father is an authentic democratic freedom and ethical values in other chapters of his 2006 “Values in a Time of Upheaval” — “Freedom, Law, and the Good: Moral Principles in Democratic Societies” and “ ‘Do Change or to Preserve?’ Political Vision and Political Practice.”

On Oct. 5, 2007, Pope Benedict XVI addressed the Vatican’s International Theological Commission at its annual plenary meeting. The natural moral law is an area of Church teaching to be studied by the ITC.

His speech, “The Primacy of the Natural Moral Law,” stressed the significant implications of the natural moral law for the civil and social order. Legal positivism denies accountability “to a higher law,” it is an ideology which equates morality with the civil law.

Advocates of this positivist conception of law propose that the community of society or itself the majority of citizens is becoming the ultimate source of civil law.” The search for power, then, tends to displace the search for the moral good.

Pope Benedict XVI traced the roots of this political and legal trend to “ethics relativism, which some see as one of the principal conditions for democracy since relativism is supposed to guarantee tolerance of a mutual respect for people.”

If such were the case, “the majority of the moment would become the ultimate source of law.”

On the contrary, Pope Benedict XVI firmly stated the necessity for grounding civil law and policy in the moral law: “When the fundamental requirements of human dignity, of human life, of the family institution, of a fair social order; in other words, basic human rights, are at stake no law devised by human beings can substitute the law that the Creator engendered in the human heart without the indispensable foundations of society itself being dramatically affected.”

Without the moral law as a foundation of rights, respect for the inherent dignity of men and women cannot be adequately defended against “all ideological manipulation and every kind of arbitrary or abuse by the strong.”

The thought of Pope Benedict XVI stands in continuity with the teaching of his predecessor Pope John Paul II who declared in “Centesimus Annus” (“On the Hundredth Anniversary of ‘Rerum Novarum,’ 1919):” “As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism.”

Over a decade ago, the Catholic bishops of Kentucky published “Religious Liberty: A Need for a Heart That Sees.”

That October 2007 pastoral letter on the right to life opens with the comments of Pope Benedict XVI delivered on the occasion of his September 2007 visit to Austria.

His address, “The Fundamental Human Right,” criticized the widespread ethical blindness to the evil of abortion as “a deep wound in society.” In a prophetic defense of the fundamental right to life, the Holy Father states: “I am acting as an advocate for a profoundly human need, speaking out on behalf of unborn children who have no voice. I do not close my eyes to the difficulties and conflicts that many women are experiencing, and I realize that the credibility of what we say also depends on what the Church is doing to help women in trouble.”

In that address to diplomats and government leaders, the Holy Father also identified threats against human life in movements which advocate abortion (euthanasia). At the same time, as the pastoral letter points out, the Holy Father in his closing remarks acknowledged “an ecclesial task of service to the needs of women and their children as well as the pursuit of justice in the political order—a justice inspired by charity.”

In this context, “Reverence for Life: A Need for ‘A Heart That Sees’” set forth the distinctive teaching of Pope Benedict XVI on the mission of the Church in the socio-political order. In his inaugural encyclical, “ Deus Caritas Est” (“God is Love,” 2005), Benedict XVI conceives the Church’s ecclesial mission to promote a just ordering of society not as an emphasis of the state, but is, as he puts it, “an understanding of the requirements of justice” and the political embodiment of those moral demands by means of “the purification of reason and through ethical formation.”

[Note: George Weigel’s current book “The Irony of Modern Catholic History” (2019), synthesizes Pope Benedict’s theme of the “dictatorship of relativism” as the Church’s challenge to modernity in the third millennium: a call “to live up to its highest aspirations by strengthening its moral and cultural foundations, which were beginning to crumble.”] — [pp. 614-624]

Msgr. Ronald Ketteler is a doctor of ecumenics, episcopal liaison to the Messenger and professor of theology at Thomas More University

Msgr. Ronald Ketteler

Commentary

MISSOURI CATHOLIC WEEKLY

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Obedience is THE ... unpopular way

Very few people are willing to consider that the “unpopu-
lar way” — and thus the multitudes currently not prac-
ticing Catholicism finished as a force in human affairs. More
result, many of  Europe’s great and good thought

George Weigel

The providential demise of the Papal States

Evelyn Waugh’s Catholic traditionalism was so deep,
broad and intense that some identified “traditional
Catholics” today might seem, in comparison, like the edi-
torial staff of  the National Catholic Reporter. Yet the
greatest of 20th century English prose stylists held what
some Catholic traditionalists (notably “the new integral-
ists”) would regard as
unsound views on the
dominance of  the Papal States
— a lengthy historical
drama on which the cur-
tain rang down 150 years ago this month.
In the third volume of
Waugh’s “Sword of  Honor”
trilogy, the novels’ protago-
nist, Guy Crouchback, makes Italy’s surrender in
World War II and King
Victor Emmanuel III’s
flight from Rome the occa-
sion to lament, to his
father, the papacy’s acqui-
escence to its loss of  the Papal States: “[This] looks like
the end of  the Pope’s power. A courtesan seized the
keys. It isn’t the end. A courtesan is just a courtesan.

Ray Smith

Father Phillip DeVous

The first son brusquely refuses to do as his father com-
mands, but later repents and gets to work. Whatever his
weaknesses, clearly this man believes in doing what is right
in the vineyard as his father commanded and his people-
plesing sibling who lies for the purposes of  vainglory.

Somewhere along the way, I ran across a fascinating
story about a marine, a courtesan seized the

Mr. William Grey. His son was killed in Iraq today and I
was sent to inform him. What was this gentleman’s name?

Mr. William Grey. ‘Then why didn’t you say something
sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her.

We were holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what
the Marine was oblivious of  her and refused. Whenever the nurse
there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man’s
hand and offering him words of  love and strength.

If  there is a moral to this remarkable story, try this on
for size. The next time someone needs you — just be there.

Stay.

Because he has sinned and his people which he taught as es-
result, many of  Europe’s great and good thought

The providential demise of the Papal States

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Stay.
Be a Witness of Charity

Support the works of the Holy Father through the Peter’s Pence Collection

In your parish October 3 and October 4

www.usccb.org/peters-pence
Vatican refurms, clarifies Church teachings on end-of-life care

Carol Glazier
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — With the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia in many countries, and questions concerning what is morally permissible regarding end-of-life care, the Vatican’s doctrinal office released a 25-page letter offering “a moral and practical clarification” on the care of vulnerable patients.

“The Church is convinced of the necessity to reaffirm as definitive teaching that euthanasia is a crime against human life because, in this act, one chooses directly to cause the death of another innocent human being,” the document said.

Titled “Samaritanus bonus,” on the Care of Persons in the Critical and Terminal Phases of Life,” the letter by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was approved by Pope Francis in June, and released to the public Sept. 22.

A new “systematic pronouncement by the Holy See” was deemed necessary given a growing, global trend in legalizing euthanasia and assisted suicide, and changing attitudes and rules that harm the dignity of vulnerable patients, Cardinal Luis Ladaria, congregation prefect, said at a Vatican news conference Sept. 22.

It was also necessary to reaffirm Church teaching regarding the administration of the sacraments to and pastoral care of patients who expressly request a medical end to their life, he said.

“In order to receive absolution in the sacrament of penance, as well as with the anointing of the sick and the vaticanum,” he said, the patients must demonstrate their intention to reverse their decision to end their life and to cancel their agreement with any group appointed to grant their desire for euthanasia or assisted suicide.

In the letter’s section on “Pastoral discernment toward those who request euthanasia or assisted suicide,” it said a “priest could administer the sacraments to an unconscious person ‘sub conditione’ if, on the basis of some signal given by the patient beforehand, he can presume his or her request.

The Church’s ministers can still accompany patients who have made these end-of-life directives, it added, by showing “a willingness to listen and to help, together with a deeper explanation of the nature of the sacrament, in order to provide the opportunity to discern and choose the sacrament up to the last moment.”

It is important to carefully look for “adequate signs of conversion, so that the faithful can reasonably ask for the reception of the sacrament of absolution,” it said. If a patient requests the sacrament, the Church intends not to condemn, but to lead the sinner to conversion, it said.

However, it added, “those who spiritually assist these persons should avoid any gesture, such as remaining until the euthanasia is performed, that could be interpreted as approval of this action.”

Chaplains, too, must show care “in the health care systems where euthanasia is practiced, for they must not give scandal by behaving in a manner that makes them complicit in the termination of human life,” the letter said.

On the other hand, in some health care settings, concerns have recently arisen about the widely reported abuse of such protocols viewed in a eucharistic perspective with the result that neither patients nor families are consulted in final decisions about care,” it said.

“This happens above all in the countries where, with the legalisation of euthanasia, wide margins of ambiguity are left open in end-of-life law regarding the meaning of obligations to provide care.”

The Church, however, “is obliged to intervene in order to exclude once again all ambiguity in the teaching of the magisterium concerning euthanasia and assisted suicide, even where these practices have been legalized,” it said.

Euthanasia involves “an action or an omission which of itself or by intention causes death, in order that all pain may in this way be eliminated.”

It defined depends on “the intention of the will and in the methods used,” it added.

The letter reaffirmed that “any formal or immediate material cooperation in such an act is a grave sin against human life,” making euthanasia “an act of homicide that no end can justify and that does not tolerate any form of complicity or active or passive collaboration.”

For that reason, “those who approve laws of euthanasia and assisted suicide, therefore, become accomplices of a grave sin that others will execute. They are also guilty of scandal because by such laws they contribute to the distortion of conscience, even among the faithful.”

The letter also underlined a patient’s right to decline aggressive medical treatment and “does not consider the possibility of any moral or possible serious and with one’s proper human and Christian dignity intact” when approaching the natural end of life.

The remuneration of treatments that are contrary to the moral good discerned by conscience.

However, it also underlined the rights of physicians as never being “a mere executor of the will of patients or their legal representatives, but remains the right and obligation to withdraw, in full conscience, a precarious and painful prolongation of life can also mean respect for the will of the dying person as expressed in advanced directives for treatment, excluding however any act of a euthanastic or suicidal nature,” it said.

Another warning in the letter regarded medical end-of-life protocols, such as “do not resuscitate orders” or “physician orders for life sustaining treatment” and any of their variations.

These protocols “were initially thought of as instruments to avoid aggressive medical treatment in the terminal phases of life. Today these protocols cause serious problems regarding the duty to protect the life of patients in the most critical stages of sickness,” it said.

On the one hand, it said, “medical staff feel increasingly bound by the self-determination expressed in patient declarations that deprive physicians of their freedom and duty to safeguard life even where they could do so.”

“Faith outreach “probably played a big role in why Biden is the nominee to begin with,” said Jack Jenkins, a national reporter for Religion News Service. After hiring an outreach director specifically to address Black Protestants, “it’s why he won resoundingly” in the South Carolina primary, which made him the presumptive nominee long before the Democratic National Convention.

Biden “is a person who is likely to be ‘Trumpish’ until Election Day he predicted.

“We’ve never had a presidential race quite like this presidential race when it came to his own personal faith journey,” Jenkins said. “This is a guy who said he doesn’t forgive his ex-wives. He said that recently at the National Prayer Breakfast. Think about that for a minute.”

The Republicans, as a result, aren’t trying to portray Trump as a man of faith, but rather are saying to evangelicals and conservative Catholics, “he’s your champion,” Jenkins said. “From evangelicals, he added, you could conclude that 90 percent of people made their decision based on abortion, and we know that’s not true.”

“I would argue that character, perhaps, is one of the biggest issues on the ballot right now,” Scott said.
New cleaning machines to provide safe environment to learn

Allegria Thatcher
Assistant Editor

Diocesan schools are taking extra measures to ensure confidence in sanitization this year, with a little help from the Horizon Community Fund (HCF) and cleaning machines to provide a safe and healthy environment for students.

The Vatican "endangers its moral authority" by considering an extension of its 2018 agreement with China on the nomination of bishops. Vatican diplomats are meeting this month with their Chinese Communist Party counterpart to negotiate the renewal of a two-year-old provisional agreement between the Holy See and China. The term of that pact has never been publicly disclosed; but the church's hope was that it would improve the condition of Catholics in China by reaching an agreement with the Chinese regime on the appointment of bishops, the traditional stewards of the faith in local communities, Pompeo wrote in the article.

"This agreement is the fruit of 30 years' work; we're not going to just rip it up," another Vatican official said, asking that his name not be used. The Vatican's position is that the agreement is "just rhetoric," citing Pompeo's allegations of the forced sterilization of Muslims in Xinjiang, a region where there are few Catholics, so the Vatican has no direct information.

The Vatican official who spoke to CNS said the Vatican "is not the approach most diplomats would take" when setting an agenda for a high-level meeting. Calling Pompeo's article and tweet "megaphone diplomacy," he said that it was not completely unusual for the Trump Administration.

At the same time, he said, the Vatican does not believe it is "just rhetoric," citing Pompeo's allegations of the forced sterilization of Muslims in Xinjiang, a region where there are few Catholics, so the Vatican has no direct information. Many observers in the Italian press saw Pompeo's tweet and article as more partisan politics than diplomacy.

"We're extremely thankful to Horizon for their providing the grant and their support of our school, helping keep us safe," he said. "We're also very grateful for our school board, which is made up of parents, and Karen Schultz and her efforts with our grant writing... keeping our students and staff as safe as possible."

The Vatican, which tried repeatedly over decades to begin an official dialogue with China, has never pretended the country had a long history of openness.

"With China, our current interest is to normalize the life of the church as much as possible and to show the church can live a normal life, which for the Catholic Church means also having relations with the Holy See and the pope," Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, told reporters Sept. 14.

Although the Vatican also is concerned with issues such as "peaceful coexistence and overcoming tensions," the current agreement is focused on the "ecclesiastical issue" of bishop appointments, the cardinal said.

"Dialogue — that's the only tool at our disposal," he said, contrasting the Vatican's position with that of nations who can use weapons or financial deals to sway another country. "The Vatican negotiators do "raise the various human rights issues that impact the Catholic Church," including the mistreatment or detainment of priests and bishops but have not had great success in that area, he said. However, the agreement about bishops was built over decades and the Vatican plans to persist, even if the going is slow.

In the pretense to a 2019 book on the agreement, Cardinal Parolin quoted retired Pope Benedict XVI's 2007 letter to Chinese Catholics: "The solution to existing problems can not be pursued via an ongoing conflict with the legitimate civil authorities; at the same time, though, compliance with those authorities is not acceptable when they interfere unduly in matters regarding the faith and discipline of the church."

"This is the path followed today as well in relations with the People's Republic of China," Cardinal Parolin wrote. The Vatican has maintained "pastoral processes" as a "way not immediately to bring the desired results," but it knows "the definitive solution to complex problems requires time and trust."
‘You are my beauty’ gardener tells seniors

Allegre Thatcher
Assistant Editor

Eight flower arrangements and a cardboard sign — it wasn’t your average nursing home delivery.

Bonnie Rust, a cultivator of exquisite flowers, enters flower displays every year in the Alexandria Kentucky Fair. She enters all the categories and has a wonderful time bringing joy to others by her hard work gardening.

Mrs. Rust, who attends St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, knew she’d have to do something different this year since she couldn’t enter them in the fair. So she gathered up eight flower arrangements and took them to her friends at Highlandspring Nursing Home, Ft. Thomas.

It wasn’t simply an act of goodwill to strangers — Mrs. Rust knows all the residents and workers because she has been visiting the home once or twice a week since her sister-in-law came to live there. She lets them know what’s going on in the world, brings her flowers to them and tells them gardening stories.

“I told them everything I do in the outside world,” said Mrs. Rust. “I bring the stories in because they’re confined there most of the time. They love the stories.”

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States in March, Mrs. Rust hasn’t seen most of them. She has done a few of the window visits, but even then it’s hard for her to pick whom to see because she loves them all. She’s called to say hello, but she always feels bad walking away without sharing anything with them.

“I was really depressed this year, missing those people and missing the fair,” she said. So she brought her fair flowers to the home, accompanied by a sign that read: “Flower Exhibit, Brought to you by Bonnie Rust. To all my friends that work and live at the Ft. Thomas CareSpring Nursing Home. Look for the beauty — you are my beauty!”

“It about broke my heart, they put the sign up and all the flowers on display in the activity room,” she said. “After I left there, I thought ‘If there’s nothing else I do good in my life, at least I enjoyed that.’”

Mrs. Rust’s flowers are much more than a hobby to her. She said there’s so much more involved in growing the flower than the flower it produces, because “behind every flower is a story and behind everything that comes out of the earth is a story.”

“Sharing these stories with these people… someone could have given me a million dollars and the stories that we share… I could never get out of money what I get from them,” she said.

Mrs. Rust makes it her mission to touch the hearts of others by the work of her hands in the garden, and she’s doing that one bouquet at a time. “The beauty of these flowers, I want to give them to the world,” she said.

The mystery of the interesting weed

Bonnie Rust

Mrs. Rust grows a large garden of flowers every year and enters them in the Alexandria Kentucky Fair. She tells stories like this one to the residents of Highlandspring Nursing Home, Ft. Thomas every week to give them an idea of what gardening is like.

Weed, I found you in my garden as a seedling in early spring. I thought you could be an interesting wild flower so I transferred you to a pot and began caring for you. I covered your roots with the best soil, watered you and gave you plant food. When the sun would get too hot, I moved your pot under the shade of my old oak. I enjoyed watching you grow and thought depending on what flower you turn into, I could enter you into the Alexandria Kentucky Fair.

In an effort to figure out what kind of plant you were, I took you to the Campbell County Extension Garden Center. They referred me to horticulturist Dr. Maggie Whitson from Northern Kentucky University, and she identified you as a Mugwort plant. With some research, she and I (along with my son) discovered your rich but diverse and unique history. Perhaps an herb, or maybe a weed, or maybe a little of both. In Roman times you were planted near roadways and worn in the shoes of weary travelers for long journeys. St. John the Baptist was even renowned to have worn you during his life.

For your long journey, I covered your roots with the best soil, watered you and gave you plant food. When the sun would get too hot, I moved your pot under the shade of my oak. I enjoyed watching you grow and thought depending on what flower you turn into, I could enter you into the Alexandria Kentucky Fair.

To discover the beauty in those nooks and crannies of the garden and share it. You might appear as boring compared to the flowers, but you and I both know that beauty is within and it’s what’s inside that we hold dear. It’s our job to look for and uncover beauty that exists in the world, to find something interesting and moving.

For the memory of the Muigwrot plant. What’s in store for you now that the fair is over? I guess we’ll take you home and plant you under the oak tree and see what we can find next spring.

(above and below) Bonnie Rust grows flowers to create bouquets for others to share the joy of their beauty. (left) Mrs. Rust at the Alexandria Kentucky Fair in 2019.
HER EYES SAID, “I’M RIGHT HERE.”

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The October prayer intention for evangelization, as recommended by Pope Francis, is for the laity’s mission in the Church— that by the virtue of baptism, the laity, especially women, may participate more in areas of responsibility in the Church.

St. Elizabeth annual Infant Memorial Service, Sept. 27, 2 p.m., will be a virtual event this year. For information or to register for the virtual event, visit stelizabeth.com/infantloss or call St. Elizabeth Pastoral Care, (859) 301-2095.

Youth Rosary Day, Oct. 3, Our Lady’s Farm, Falmouth. Rosary at 11 a.m., Mass follows. 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. E-mail Donna Heim, campus minister, at heimd2@nku.edu to receive weekly information.

Seventy recent graduates from diocesan high schools have been named Senator Jeff Green Scholars by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA). To earn this honor, a student must achieve a 4.0 grade point average each year of high school and score at least a 28 composite on the ACT. These students have also earned Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) awards, which they can use to continue their education beyond high school.

Students who earned this honor were:
- Bishop Brossart High School: Abby Cook, Lily Cropenbaker, Maggie Finn, Michelle Goderwis, Hannah Phirman, Kalista Smiley, Trey Spoonamore, Jacob Wolfe.
- Covington Catholic High School: Matthew Allison, Paul Allison, Anthony Cao, William Clark, Nicholas Collins, Christopher Fitz, John Garvey, Nolan Kamer, Joseph Kielty, Truman Piereson, Jacob Schulte, Hunter Sommerkamp.
- Newport Central Catholic High School: Grace Kessen, Jonah Krebs, Olivia Whitehead.
- St. Henry District High School: Maria Blasingame, Brady Cline, Zoe Epplein, Katherine Evans, Sophia Launderjiay, Emma Neelhuisel, Zachary Owen.
- St. Patrick High School: Anna Porter.
- Villa Madonna Academy: Neema Adley, Yamaan Ahmad, Corrina Borchers, Madeline Dickman, Lyla Graf, Katelyn Moore, Michael Schlueter, Audrey Smith.

Holy Cross High School: Allison Ehman, Emma Lehmkuhl, Evah-Marie Lemma, Grace Martin.
Newport Central Catholic High School: Grace Kessen, Jonah Krebs, Olivia Whitehead.
St. Henry District High School: Maria Blasingame, Brady Cline, Zoe Epplein, Katherine Evans, Sophia Launderjiay, Emma Neelhuisel, Zachary Owen.
St. Patrick High School: Anna Porter.
Villa Madonna Academy: Neema Adley, Yamaan Ahmad, Corrina Borchers, Madeline Dickman, Lyla Graf, Katelyn Moore, Michael Schlueter, Audrey Smith.

A student at St. Patrick School, Maysville, decided to turn something he could have seen as a negative into a positive. He cut his hair to shirt collar length, a requirement of the dress code at St. Patrick, and is donating the hair to the Locks of Love Foundation, which accepts donations of human hair to make wigs for Canadian and American children in need due to medical conditions, such alopecia or cancer, that have caused them to permanently lose their hair.

History speaks
The students at St Edward School, Cynthiana enjoyed their visit to Cynthiana’s Old Cemetery. They are studying family history and primary sources. Tombstone rubbings provided first-hand information for some of the town’s earliest citizens.

Newsworthy
The students at St Edward School, Cynthiana enjoyed their visit to Cynthiana’s Old Cemetery. They are studying family history and primary sources. Tombstone rubbings provided first-hand information for some of the town’s earliest citizens.

Locks of love
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Happy birthday Mary
Third grade students in Mrs. Bohl’s class celebrated the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sept. 8, by creating paper Mary statues, persuaded writing the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, enjoyed a birthday treat and sang Happy Birthday.

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bics era and preparing to dress and go home after a strenu-
ous workout, I noticed minor bleeding while in the rest-
room. Since that era had also introduced me to nagging
kidney stones, I concluded that a teeny-tiny stone was prob-
able to have caused the slight bleeding.

After about a month of occasional, not so noticeable
bleeding, I told my urologist, who immediately scheduled a
bladder scope. The scope and biopsy of material “no bigger
than a match head,” my doctor said, confirmed that it was
malignant and the verdict was bladder cancer. He also said
the vigorous exercise caused the lesion to bleed the first
time. The normal protocol for that malady is a scope of
the whole bladder every three months for two years, then
every six months for three years. Then, if all is clear, yearly
scopies may be done on a regular basis until a “cancer free” decision is ren-
dered. In my case, a recurrence of bladder cancer was
detected in my last scope at the end of the fifth year, so the
two-year and three-year routine had to be resumed
for another five years. In 2016, after 21 years of scopes, I
received my doctor’s “cancer free” confirmation. Yearly
scopies continue as a precaution.

Now, the ironic tie-in between me, the nurse, the old
man and the marine. During one of my bladder scopes, my
former urologist detected a kidney stone fragment in my
urethra, which, if not removed, would create a painful
blockage. Normally done with anesthesia, but not possible
to administer for a few days, my doctor expressed a willing-
ness to try to push the fragment into the bladder and “fish”
it out — a long shot. One week later, a first-time nurse had
been present throughout the routine part of the scope. Aware of my con-
cerns and tenaciousness as the “fishing” expedition got under-
way she took my right hand and arm in her hands and
spoke gentle words of encouragement throughout the testy
procedure. I relaxed and stayed calm until the fragment
was finally removed from my urethra and the normal blad-
der scope completed. I won’t let myself think about how
things might have gone if that wonderful nurse had not
stayed. “Sometimes things happen that just make you won-
der.”

Ray Smith is a commissioned Lay Pastoral Minister for
the Diocese of Covington.

Fall planning meeting

(Continued from page 1)

new ideas and priorities from the new bishop, who will be
appointed sometime in the near future. “Support him,
he’ll need a lot of support, and be encouraging to carry out
his vision,” he said.

Each department had presented some past initiatives
that had not been completed and proposed ways to implement
them. All departments also reported successes from the
2019-2020 year. Catholic Charities, for example, implement-
ed their Mobile Food Pantry in one southern county in
spite of a late start and many adjustments due to the pa-
demic. The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization chose
new textbooks and had them approved, one of their many
goals of the last year.

Some of the department objectives include better filing
systems or greater collaboration between departments to
further access to resources.

The next meeting will take place in January, when
department directors will present their proposals and
objectives to the Deanery Pastoral Council, who can raise
concerns, ask questions and provide support from the
parishes.

‘Just be there’

(Continued from page 3)

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CAFETERIA STAFF

Holy Family Elementary School (www.holyfamilyoga.com) has an immediate need for a full-
time manager. This is a five hour a day, five
days a week position during the school year. Primary
responsibilities involve preparing and serving daily
breakfast and lunch, and overall supervision of the
school’s meals program. Other responsibilities
include ordering, receiving, and managing inventory;
operating a point-of-sale system; and, interacting
with school staff, students, and their parents.

Holy Cross School (www.holycrossakron.com) has
an immediate need for a full-time cook. This is a
six hour a day, five days a week position during the
school year. Responsibilities include food preparation,
and may include serving line, cashier, and cleanup,
under other duties.

If you are interested in any of these openings,
contact Jackie Kaiser at jkaiser@covdio.org, or
call her at 859/392-1356.
Pope Francis has granted the title “Monsignor,” or “Chaplain to His Holiness” on four men in the Diocese of Covington. With the bestowal of these pontifical honors, given at a ceremony with “The Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice” awards on Sept. 27, Bishop Roger Foys will give each of the newly appointed monsignors a zuccheto. This hat is part of an ancient tradition of headgear in the Church, which denote the rank of a clergyman. The Messenger asked Father Joseph Shelton, pastor, St. Augustine Parish, Augusta and St. James Parish, Brooksville, to find out more. Below are some helpful descriptions of these hats and by whom they are used.

Zuchetto: Until just a few years ago, a man was admitted into the clerical state through a ceremony called tonsure, where a bishop would cut the hair on the top of the head. During the Middle Ages the cleric would keep this part of his head shaved for his entire life. The zucchetto developed as a hat to cover this spot, but also to serve as a reminder that the man who wore it was set apart for service to God. Its color is a sign of the rank of the one who wears it; black for deacons and priests, black with purple thread for a monsignor, purple for a bishop, red for a cardinal and white for the Holy Father.

Biretta: A biretta is a square hat with three peaks that can be worn by any cleric with a cassock for liturgies. People are likely most familiar with the birettas worn by cardinals—who receive the “red hat” from the Holy Father as a sign of their new role in the Church. It was a common hat during the Middle Ages that the clergy retained as a sign of their rank. Nearly everyone has worn a version of a biretta that has survived in academia, such as the mortarboard graduation cap worn at high school and college graduations. As with the zucchetto, the color is a sign of rank of the wearer.

Mitre: The Mitre is a liturgical hat worn by bishops during the public prayer of the Church. It is made of two parts that rise to a peak and are sewn together on the sides. These peaks are often seen to symbolize the two testaments that the bishop who wears it is called to proclaim. It is also thought of as a type of crown and when the bishop receives it at his consecration he is told “Receive the mitre, and may the splendor of holiness shine forth in you, so that when the chief shepherd appears, you may deserve to receive from him an unfa...”

Saturno: The saturno is a wide-brimmed hat worn by clerics with a cassock. The hat is named for the rings of the planet Saturn and it has no liturgical function. It is always black except for the Holy Father, who wears a red saturno.

Galero: The galero is like a saturno except that it is wider and has tassels that hang down from both sides. It is no longer worn but is used in ecclesiastical heraldry (coats of arms). It is black for deacons and priests, purple for monsignors, green for bishops and archbishops and red for cardinals.

People often question why we would need these hats, what meaning they have, and what purpose they serve. In a world where hats are worn less often by the general population, they can seem arcane and meaningless. However, badges worn by police officers, and hats worn by pilots and white coats that are knee length worn by doctors don’t serve a purpose either. But they do serve as public, unmistakable markers of the one who wears them. And that’s the purpose of these hats — to be a public reminder of the truth that God lives among his people in the person of priests.
Creation must be protected, not exploited, pope says at audience

Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY — Human beings must change their relationship with nature and view it not as an “object for unscrupulous use and abuse” but as a gift they are charged by God to care for and protect, Pope Francis said.

People are called to contemplate creation as a reflection of “God’s infinite wisdom and goodness” and not act as if people are the “center of everything” and the “absolute rulers of all other creatures,” the pope said Sept. 16 during his weekly general audience. “Exploiting creation — this is sin,” he said. “We believe that we are at the center, claiming to occupy God’s place and thus we ruin the harmony of creation, the harmony of God’s design. We become predators, forgetting our vocation as guardians of life.”

The audience was held in the San Damaso courtyard of the Apostolic Palace. While the pope maintained his distance when greeting most of the faithful, he approached several pilgrims to sign autographs, speak directly to them or briefly swap his signature zucchetto for one brought as a gift.

Continuing his series of talks on “healing the world,” the pope reflected on the theme of “caring for the common home and contemplative attitude.”

“Exploiting creation — this is sin,” the pope said. “We believe that we are at the center, claiming to occupy God’s place and thus we ruin the harmony of creation, the harmony of God’s design. We become predators, forgetting our vocation as guardians of life.”

Departing from his prepared remarks, the pope warned that those who are incapable of contemplating nature and creation, are often incapable of contemplating their fellow human beings.

“Those who live to exploit nature, end up exploiting people and treating them like slaves,” the pope said. “This is a universal law: if you do not know how to contemplate nature, it will be very difficult for you to contemplate people, the beauty of people, your brother, your sister.”

Recalling a Spanish proverb, the pope also cautioned that exploiting creation brings costly consequences because “God always forgives; we forgive sometimes; (but) nature never forgives.”

Citing a recent report that the Pine Island and Thwaites glaciers in Antarctica are collapsing due to global warming, Pope Francis said the consequential rising sea levels “will be terrible,” and he called on people to “guard the inheritance God has entrusted to us so that future generations can enjoy it.”

“Each one of us can and must become a guardian of the common home, capable of praising God for his creatures (by) contemplating them and protecting them,” the pope said.
Global biotech company ends use of aborted fetal cell lines for vaccines

WASHINGTON — Catholic pro-life leaders say they are seeing some progress in the development of vaccines with the use of opti- mal animal cell lines instead of cell lines derived from abortions. A case in point is the decision by Sanofi Pasteur to no longer use an aborted fetal cell line in producing its polo vaccines, a move recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Sanofi Pasteur, the largest biotech company in the world devoted entirely to vaccines, requested the agency’s approval for switching from using an aborted fetal cell line called MRC-5 to using an opti- mal animal cell line to produce its polo vaccination vaccines Pentacel and Quadracel. The vaccine division of the French multinational pharmaceutical company Sanofi is one of the com- panies currently developing a COVID-19 vaccine by utilizing “cell lines not connected to unethical procedures and methods,” Invivo and the John Paul II Medical Research Institute are other such companies. Sanofi Pasteur also recently ended production of its stand-alone polo vaccine, IPOL, that is ethical- tured using MRC-5, according to the president of the National Catholic Bioethics Center based in Philadelphia. The corporation will retain another stand-alone polo vaccine, IPOL, that is ethical- produced Joseph Meaney, in a recent statement posted on the centers’ website, www.ncbcenter.org congratulated the company for its recent initiatives. “The NCBC is pleased to see that progress is being made in this area.”

Ruth Bader Ginsburg is remembered as ‘jurist of historic stature’

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who died Sept. 18 at age 87, has been described in countless tributes as a cultural icon and a giant despite her small size. “Our nation who died Sept. 18 at age 87, has been described in countless tributes is being made in this area.”

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Mr. and Mrs. John Snow
Mr. John Philip Sousa IV
Mr. and Mrs. Todd Sova
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Spellman
St. Agnes Parish
Mr. and Mrs. David Tavel
The Butler Foundation
The Richard D. Hannan Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Jason Theobald
Mr. and Mrs. Danielle Theobald
Reverend Robert J. Urlage
Mr. and Mrs. Jan Van Kerk
Mr. Jon and Dr. Shelly Veet
Mr. and Mrs. Gregg Vondra
Mr. and Mrs. John Waltz
Dr. Gregory Weczenblick
Dr. William W. Weidman
Mr. and Mrs. Quinn Wichmann
Steve and Donna Wilmschaff
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Winkmike
Mr. Donald Woeste
Mr. Jeffrey Wolnitzek
Mr. and Mrs. Gary J. Wollack
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Wurtenberger
Christopher Young
Yung Family Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. William Zerk
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony R. Zembrod
Mr. Wilbert Ziegler
Ms. Catherine Zimmer
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Zimmer
Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Zumbiel

Anthem Blue Cross
Blue Shield in Kentucky
Ashley Construction, Inc.
Barclay’s
BB&T
Catholic Mutual Group
Catholic Order of Foresters
CD&I Electric, Inc.
Central Bank of Northern Kentucky
Charles H. Billings Insurance
Charles H. Datler Foundation
Corporation Companies, LLC*

Drees Homes Foundation, Inc.
Gessman, Bienzinger and Lavelle, PSC
DuPont, Inc.
Electric Inspection
Fidelity Foundation
Fourth Street Performance Partners
Heritage Bank
MC Roofing Enterprises, LLC
Meadowbrook
Medical Mutual
Messaer Construction Co.

RECOGNITION IS BASED ON LEADERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACUE OF $1,000 OR MORE RECEIVED FROM JUNE 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020.