Lent is time to grow in faith, hope, love and to share them, pope says

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — As Christians pray, fast and give alms during Lent, they also should consider giving a smile and offering a kind word to people feeling alone or frightened because of the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis said.

“Love rejoices in seeing others grow. Hence it suffers when others are anguished, lonely, sick, homeless, despised or in need,” the pope wrote in his message for Lent 2021. The message, released by the Vatican Feb. 12, focuses on Lent as “a time for renewing faith, hope and love” through the traditional practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. And, by going to confession.

Throughout the message, Pope Francis emphasized how the Lenten practices not only promote individual conversion, but also should have an impact on others.

“For receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others,” he said. “Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain.”

The pope’s message contained several references to his encyclical “Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship.” For example, he prayed that during Lent Catholics would be “increasingly concerned with ‘speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement, and not words that demean, sadden, anger or show scorn,’” a quote from the encyclical.

“In order to give hope to others, it is sometimes enough simply to be kind, to be ‘willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encourage-

ment, to listen amid general indifference,’” he said, again quoting the document.

The Lenten practices of fasting, almsgiving and prayer were preached by Jesus and continue to help believers experience and express conversion, the pope wrote.

“The path of poverty and self-denial” through fasting, “concern and loving care for the poor” through almsgiving and “child-like dialogue with the Father” through prayer, he said, “make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.”

Pope Francis emphasized the importance of fasting “as a form of self-denial” to rediscover one’s total dependence on God and to open one’s heart to the poor.

“Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down — like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false — in order to open the doors of our hearts to the one who comes to us, poor in all things, yet full of grace and truth: the son of God our savior.”

Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, presenting the message at a news conference, also insisted on the importance of “fasting and all forms of abstinence,” for example, by giving up “time watching TV so we can go to church, pray or say a rosary. It is only through self-denial that we discipline ourselves to be able to take the gaze off ourselves and to recognize the other, reckon with his needs and thus create access to benefits and goods for people,” ensuring respect for their dignity and rights.

Msgr. Bruno-Marie Dufour, secretary of the dicastery, said that at a time of “anxiety, doubt and sometimes even despair” because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lent is a time for Christians “to walk the way with Christ toward a new life and a new world, toward a new trust in God and in the future.”

Pope Francis hears the confession of a priest at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome in this March 7, 2019, file photo. In his message for Lent, Pope Francis said the season is “a time for renewing faith, hope and love.”
Crescent Springs’ Year of St. Joseph is prayerful, includes relics and books

Year of St. Joseph around the Diocese of Covington

On Dec. 8, 2020, Pope Francis declared the Year of St. Joseph in the Church. Because St. Joseph is the patron of several parishes and schools in the diocese, the Messenger is reaching out to get their reaction to this special year honoring St. Joseph.

St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs

Father Eric Boelscher, the new pastor at St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, shared that the parish is wholeheartedly embracing the Year of St. Joseph. Each parishioner received a subscription to the site “Formed,” which gives access to a wide berth of Catholic media. The parish is highlighting media related to St. Joseph that families can enjoy.

Father Boelscher also commissioned special vestments for Mass to celebrate its patron. A St. Joseph shrine with a relic of St. Joseph’s mantle along with Vatican authentication has been erected. Father Boelscher said the shrine is venerated at each weekend Mass. Additionally, litanies, novenas and consecrations, that with the relic’s presence offer special graces, will be prayed throughout the year.

“We are also planning a parish consecration to St. Joseph using Father Don Calloway’s devotion— Our Future. The Elderly After the Pandemic,” said Father Boelscher. The book, “Consecration to Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father” has become a popular devotion this year as Catholics seek to know the year’s patron better.

St. Joseph Parish will recognize St. Joseph’s feast days, March 19 and May 1, as best they can depending on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time.

Pandemic shows need for new model of care for elderly, academy says

Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A new attitude and approach toward the elderly are needed in today’s world, especially in the pandemic, the Pontifical Academy for Life said Feb. 9, Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, academy president, said during an online news conference presenting the document titled “The Elderly After the Pandemic,” made available in six languages at academyforlife.va.

It offers a reflection on the importance of the elderly and the challenges the older generation faces and will face, given the World Health Organization’s estimate that by 2050, the world will have 2 billion people over the age of 60, that is, one out of every five people in the world.

The academy also appealed to every facet of society, including families, health care providers, church administrators and local parishes to be more attentive to and inclusive of older people, reviewing and rebuilding the way they are cared for, and, ideally, intergenerational settings.

“Nursing homes should be redeveloped into providing a loving environment. New technologies and advances in telemedicine and artificial intelligence should be used responsibly so the elderly can receive assistance in a home setting. Independent living, assisted living, co-housing and other initiatives should be inspired by an attitude of mutual assistance, making it possible for the elderly to be autonomous in a community, and, ideally, intergenerational setting,” the academy said.

“The ability to take up the challenge of life — its unknowns and its joys — is based, in part, on the inspiration of dialogue between generations” in which they come together and encourage each other, sharing their dreams, wisdom and tenderness, the academy said.

Among the main points in the academy’s document are:

— A duty to create the best conditions for the elderly to live “at home with one’s family if possible and with lifelong friends,” and in one’s own neighborhood with the provision of basic services.

— Housing should be adapted to their changing needs, including removing architectural barriers and providing integrated, skilled home medical care.

— New technologies and advances in telemedicine and artificial intelligence should be used responsibly so the elderly can receive assistance in a home setting.

— Independent living, assisted living, co-housing and other initiatives should be inspired by an attitude of mutual assistance, making it possible for the elderly to be autonomous in a community, and, ideally, intergenerational setting.

— Nursing homes should be redeveloped into providing medical services directly in the homes of the elderly and families should get the support they need so they can care for a loved one at home.

— Dioceses, parishes and church communities should promote “a more caring pastoral relationship with the elderly,” seeing them as a “great resource,” especially in faith formation and as living witnesses of the faith.

“This vision is not an abstract utopia or naive perspective; it can instead bring to life and nourish new and wiser public health policies and original proposals for a welfare system for the elderly” that is more effective and more humane, the note said.

“This requires an ethic of the public good and the principle of respect for the dignity of every individual” and it requires the help of everyone — the whole church, different religions, the world of culture, schools, volunteers, media companies and businesses — to support a “Copernican revolution” that makes it possible for the elderly to remain in the homes they know or in welcoming, living environments.

Coronavirus Report

(as of Friday, Feb. 12)

The information below includes reported cases from the Curia, schools, parishes, organizations and religious houses in the Diocese of Covington. There are over 8,000 students in diocesan schools, not including administrators, faculty and staff and hundreds of priests, employees and volunteers at the Curia and in parishes, organizations and religious houses.

Positive Cases

Active positive cases: 96
Recovered positive cases: 706
Total ever positive cases: 802

Currently Self-quarantined

Close Contacts: 180
Close Contacts with COVID case in household: 124

Students at St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs, have the opportunity to pray daily.
Informed by St. Joseph, 2021 DPAA invites faithful to be guardians of the Church

While doing research on design themes for the 2021 Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal (DPAA), Mike Murray, director of Office of Stewardship and Mission Services, said he was moved by Pope Francis’ focus on ordinary people like St. Joseph, who would always do what is needed to be done for the good of others.

“Pope Francis had written in his apostolic letter ‘<Patris corde,> ‘With a Father’s Heart,’ that St. Joseph had the deep and strong faith to be proactive and to accept life as it is, with all its frustrations and disappointments,”’ said Mr. Murray. “He also wrote that Joseph cannot be other than the Guardian of the Church, and that every poor, needy or suffering person is the child whom Joseph continues to protect.”

The 2021 DPAA, led this year by Randy Rawe, general chair, from St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, and Karen Riegler, leadership gifts chair, from St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, begins next week with the Leadership Gifts Solicitations phase. In the Leadership Gifts Phase, 31 leadership gifts solicitors will be calling the top 250 donors from the 2020 DPAA, inviting them to make a similarly generous gift to this year’s DPAA.

This year’s DPAA goal is $2.6 million. The DPAA helps fund care centers and Parish Kitchen. Again this year, all monies will be live streamed from the Cathedral.

Due to the Rite of Election services, Mr. Murray sees parallels in St. Joseph’s care for the Church and how through the DPAA parishioners demonstrate their care for the Church by supporting the mission and ministries of the DPAA.

The 2021 DPAA plans have grown around pandemic conditions, Mr. Murray said. This year the DPAA will kick off with a mailing to every Catholic household and will rely much more on the work of the parish priests and volunteers. His office will be offering additional resources that can be used in parish bulletins and websites.

Parishes that typically communicate with parishioners through e-mail will also be provided with DPAA messages to send.

Mr. Murray said he’s grateful for those who are lending their time to this year’s DPAA to keep fellow parishioners informed about the annual appeal.

“When the help of the parishes, and the parish team members who have volunteered to help, we’ll be able to reach out to the people about their willingness to support this appeal this coming year,” he said.

“People are trying to make ends meet, to navigate these COVID-19 waters to be able to continue the level of charitable giving that they had done in the past,” he said. “And this annual appeal has always been well-received by the faithful as they continue to support the ministries and programs of the diocese. They understand the importance of having God in the lives of those who are in need, and we’re very confident that our faith community will again respond in 2021, to the Bishop’s message and to the needs of the community in the annual appeal.”

Parishioners can expect their letters in the mail during the first week of March.

2021 DPAA Important dates

March 6–7: Pre-announcement weekend

March 13–14: Announcement weekend – DPAA video shown at parishes

March 20–21: Commitment weekend

April 10–11: Follow-up weekend

‘Blessed be God, who calls you by name, holy and chosen one!’

In two separate ceremonies on Feb. 21, 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, the catechumens and candidates from the parishes and missions across the Diocese of Covington will be presented to Bishop Roger Foys as this year’s elect. Both ceremonies will be live streamed from the Cathedral’s website, www.covcathedral.com.

Catechumen is a unbaptized persons converting to Catholicism. Candidates are Christians who have already been baptized and are seeking full communion with the Church through confirmation or first Communion.

The Rite of Election takes place on the first Sunday of Lent each year. The word “election” refers to the idea of a name being formally announced among God’s chosen people. The elect will enter into full communion with the Church at the Easter Vigil, April 3.

Due to the Rite of Election services, there will be no 5:30 p.m. Mass, Sunday at the Cathedral.

Bishop Roger Foys signs the Book of the Elect for Father Jeffrey VonLehmen, pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill, at the Rite of Election in 2020.

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Bishop Roger Foys signs the Book of the Elect for Father Jeffrey VonLehmen, pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill, at the Rite of Election in 2020.
There is the preeminent issue of how it looked the day Jesus died. If we blow up the world, as happened with Jesus, there is no guarantee that these powers will not eventually turn and crucify us. We may win a battle, but may well lose the war. God promised it, because God promised it, because I wish it, but ultimately God has the last word. God did. God raised him from the dead as a testimony that he was right and the powers of the world were wrong, and that truth and love will always have the last word.

That is the lesson. We too must trust that God will give truth and love the last word, irrespective of what things look like in the world. God’s judgment on the powers of this world does not play out like a Hollywood film where the bad guys get shot in the end by a morally superior muscle and we get to enjoy a catharsis. It works this way: everyone gets judged by the Sermon on the Mount, albeit self-interest generally rejects that judgment and seems to get away with it. However, the Mount is not just about judgment but also about grace: God will always show us a way to get back into his grace. The Mount is not just about judgment but also about grace: God will always show us a way to get back into his grace. That is how it looked the day Jesus died.

Jesus was a great moral teacher and his teachings, if followed, would transform the world. Simply put, if we all lived the Sermon on the Mount, our world would be loving, peaceful and just, but self-interest is often resistant to moral teaching. From the Gospels, we see that it was not Jesus’ teaching that swayed the powers of evil and ultimately revealed the power of God. Not that. The triumph of goodness and the final power of God were revealed instead through his death, by a grain of wheat falling in the ground and dying and so bearing lots of fruit.
Father Stephen Bankeumper

**Believe, Teach, Practice**

Deacon Steven Durkee

**Commentary**

Deacon Steve Durkee is assigned to St. John the Evangelist Parish and St. Ann Mission, Cerrington.

**Lent: an invitation to ministry**

The feast of the Annunciation celebrates Mary’s “yes” to God and the momentous commitment of her whole life to doing God’s will. Luke presents the extraordinary event of the appearance of the angel Gabriel and the ensuing encounter in a way that highlights strong emotions and careful deliberation (Luke 1:26-39). There was fear, assurance, exploration of meaning. In the end, Mary gives herself over despite the lack of clear explanation of the how and why of the request. Many artists through the centuries have captured the appearance of the angel and Mary’s reception of the message. Often Mary is calm and placid, elegantly robed and enthroned as she listens to the divine message that offers lilies. The artistic renditions of the event speak to our attention to Mary and her courageous, faithful response. But, for me, the line that speaks most powerfully is the final one — “...and then the angel left her.” This line enables me to find in Mary a model of how to live out commitments.

And then the angel left her. Can you feel the pain of cold water, the punch in the stomach when you hear it? Do you feel the rug being pulled from under your feet? She is left alone. At the very moment when the commitment begins to govern her life, when decisions need to be made, when life happens, there is no angel, there is no comfort. We are left alone. We are left to our choices, our decisions, our strengths and weaknesses.

**Living out commitment without wings and lilies**

The readings for the first Sunday of Lent are:

- Genesis 9:8-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22 and Mark 1:12-15

- Rev, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.

- “We should enjoy life as much as possible, because the phrase will be over soon. This saying is based on a misunderstanding of verses from the biblical books of Ecclesiastes and Isaiah.” Scripture does not promote this attitude toward life, but condemns it. There is not space in this article to perform a thorough exegesis of the passages referenced above, but let us look at them briefly.

- The Ecclesiastes citation is chapter 8, verse 15: “And I commend enjoyment, for man has no good thing under the sun but to eat and drink and enjoy himself.” In the verses preceding this verse, Qoheleth is commenting on various things, such as the power of a ruler to do as he pleases; the mystery of how evil people seem to reap what the good should receive, and the goodness of God that should come to those who do evil, and the difficulty of becoming wise. His statement is that it is not possible to store up wealth or to store up for things beyond us, but to live each day in the present moment, concerned only about what is before us.

- The Isaiah reference is to chapter 22, verse 13: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” Around 790 B.C. Sennacherib, king of Neo-Assyria, laid siege to Jerusalem, but was unable to capture it. After the siege, the people of Jerusalem, instead of thanking God for delivering them and turning from their sin, returned to their old ways and gave themselves to feasting, saying, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” Isaiah quotes this, not to join with their attitude, but to reproach Israel for it.

- Why do we Christians not subscribe to the motto, “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die”? Is it because we do not think we will die? Of course not. We know very well we will. It is because we know that there is something beyond death — the Resurrection. A line from St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians — where he actually quotes our text from Isaiah — expresses this. He writes, “If the dead are not raised, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’” (1 Cor 15:33) The dead are raised, however, so we live (or should) with eternal life in mind.

- The Church’s celebration of Easter is her preeminent reminder to us of this. Jesus’ resurrection is the defeat of death and sin, and he not only invites us to join him in eternal life, but makes it possible for us to do so, through baptism and a life given over more and more to God.

- To lead us into the kind of life God gives us the “yearly observances of Holy Lent,” as we hear in the Collect for this first Lenten Sunday. We all know the familiar, but often abrupt, use of words emphasizes the solemnity of the moment begins to govern her life, when decisions need to be made, when life happens, there is no angel, there is no comfort. We are left alone. We are left to our choices, our decisions, our strengths and weaknesses.

- Through prayer we stay connected to Jesus, and our relationship with him deepens. Fasting reminds us how fleeting are the things of earth and helps us detach from them; at the same time it reminds us that it is God who sustains us. The Church has always understood these practices to be the premiere way to prepare, not only for Easter, but for everlasting life with God.

- Perhaps this is one way to describe the fundamental difference between the life of the Church and that of the world: the church says, “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die”; the Church says, “Remember, tomorrow we die, so pray, fast, and give alms.”

- As we begin to see the circumstances slowly changing, we pray that we do not need to forget what we have experienced. We need to continue to look out for each other. We also need to examine how we have used and need to continue to use those gifts given to us. An examination of our conscience might show us that we need to be as helpful to others as they have been to us. That is how God is active in our lives. When we help and provide service, we are God’s hands and faces on earth answering God’s people’s prayers. We become a partner with God at that moment.

- So the question becomes, are we using freely all the gifts and blessings God has given us? Have we thought about teaching some of our children or grandchildren or our friend’s children or grandchildren how to cook or bake or cut out and use a dress or pants? Have we given them an example of how critical reading a novel was in our lives? Have we shown the patience to instruct a young child to play with jacks or enjoy a walk in the park? Have we led by example in forgiving someone of the ‘wrong’ they have done us? Have we listened as a child reads to us or “chatters” about their dreams?

- Have we invited someone to go to church with us? Have we offered to teach our grandchildren the “old school” prayers we memorialized in Catholic elementary school? Have we asked a friend to come over for a meal? Have we invited someone to go to church with us? Have we invited someone to go to church with us?

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Matthew’s Gospel invites us to remember that we are responsible for helping all our sisters and brothers, even those who are strangers to us. When we do this, we care for Christ. The season of Lent gives us a wonderful opportunity to reflect and make room in our hearts to welcome the stranger: Through prayer, we encounter Jesus, who is present in the face of every member of our human family. When we fast, we encounter the obstacles that stop us from fully loving God and our neighbor. When we give alms, we share what we have with others. This Lent CRS Rice Bowl takes us to three countries—Madagascar, El Salvador and Timor Leste. Hunger and malnutrition are challenges that too many families face each day. One out of every 10 people worldwide don’t have enough to eat. Sometimes this is caused by natural disasters like floods and droughts. Other times, families don’t have enough money to buy the food they need, or the food they can get doesn’t have all the vitamins and minerals they need to stay healthy. CRS helps communities find solutions to each of these problems. Farming families learn new skills and grow stronger, healthier harvests. Communities train health care workers so children can get regular check-ups and parents can learn new nutritious recipes to make sure their families get a balanced diet. People in vulnerable areas prepare for unpredictable weather that could destroy crops. Jesus calls us to help those in need. Our Lenten prayers, fasting and sacrificial gifts help us answer this call.

This article was originally published at crsricebowl.org. It is printed here with permission.

Shakshouka Recipe – Gaza

- 3 Tbsp. fair trade olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, mixed
- 1 7oz can green chilis
- 1 28oz can diced tomatoes
- 1 Tbsp. ketchup
- 2 tsp. salt
- 4 eggs

Heat oil in a large pan. Sauté onions and garlic. Add chilis including juice and cook until soft. Add tomatoes, ketchup and salt. Cook tomatoes down to a sauce. Make four holes in the sauce with a spoon. Crack the eggs into the holes and cover until the eggs cook. Leave yolks runny.

Makes 4 servings

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Fish in the Diocese of Covington

Like everything else this year, fish frys are going to be different. In order to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, all parish fish frys must be drive-thru or carryout only. There will be NO dine-in fish frys. Workers and guests will need to follow the safety protocols of wearing a mask and practicing safe social distancing of at least six feet apart. For the health and safety of all, everyone is encouraged to make patience and charity a part of their Lenten practices while waiting for your order.

Holy Cross District High School Mulch and Pine Straw Sale. Three kinds of mulch in 2 cubic foot bags for $4.25 per bag and pine straw for $8 per bale. All proceeds benefit Holy Cross District High School. To order, visit bcmulch.com or call 892-0899.

“The Eucharistic Miracles of the World Display.” St. Henry Parish. Eklund’s a display created from the work of Blessed Carlo Acutis available for prayer and meditation through Lent; the church is open daily 9 a.m.–6 p.m.; masks and social distancing required.

#LANDSCAPING# DESIGN# INSTALLATION# MAINTENANCE

Tree Trimming and Removal
Stump Removal — Drainage & Grading
Seeding & Sodding — Retaining Walls
Walks & Patios — Decks

Walks & Patios — Decks

Step 2: Go to www.virtus.org and click on Registration. Follow the prompts to create an account and request a background check. selection.com is a secure site; the background check is posted on your account and you receive a copy if you request it during the registration process. You will sign up for a virtual VIRTUS class during the registration.

Step 3: Join the virtual VIRTUS session. The day before the session, you will receive an e-mail with 4 documents attached to print. On the day of the session you will receive an invitation to join the session. No children, please.

Step 4: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletin: February bulletin posted Sunday, Feb. 7; due Tuesday, March 9.

VIRTUAL VIRTUS Training:
• Tuesday, March 2, 6:30-10 p.m.

How to access Virtual Training:
• Go to www.virtus.org and enter id and password.
• Click on Live Training on left column.
• Click on pre-register for an upcoming institution program block.
• Choose your training.

Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution.

For all employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Covington who in any way provide a safe environment for children.

Step 1: Contact parish/school institution leader to review the Policies and Procedures and fill out the Application and Acceptance Forms.

Shark Tank strategies

(Left) Eighth grade students at St. Agnes School, Ft. Wright, participated in a Shark Tank project in Social Studies. The students designed an invention, created a prototype using a 3D program, printed it on a 3D printer and presented their inventions to the Shark Tank. The students learned about the Industrial Revolution and big business parents, and professionals from the St. Agnes community joined Google Meets to strike deals with the students. They learned how to invent, create and pitch their product along with how to negotiate with the Shark Tank.

Step 3: Join the virtual VIRTUS session.

Step 2: Contact parish/school institution leader to review the Policies and Procedures and fill out the Application and Acceptance Forms.

No children, please.

Step 4: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

The day before the session, you will receive an e-mail with 4 documents attached to print. On the day of the session you will receive an invitation to join the session. No children, please.

Step 4: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

For all employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Covington who in any way provide a safe environment for children.

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Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY (www.covdio.org) is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools. The Assistant Superintendent assists the Superintendent in carrying out the primary Diocesan educational mission of transmitting the Catholic faith through quality Catholic education. The Assistant Superintendent’s role is broad, multi-dimensional, and multi-layered, including such responsibilities as acting as a representative of the Bishop of Covington and being an advocate for Catholic schools in the Diocese; monitoring the quality of the academic programs in schools; maintaining frequent and positive communications with Pastors, principals, and boards (where appropriate); collecting and aggregating specific statistical data for each school; managing Diocese-wide testing at the elementary school level; overseeing, monitoring, and supporting Diocesan professional development activities; and coordinating the Diocesan response to data requests by state and federal agencies. The Assistant Superintendent also assists with the educational administration of the Alliance for Catholic Urban Education (ACUE) schools. Overall, the position encounters a wide diversity of work situations and involves a high degree of complexity with responsibility for advising and decision-making in many areas. Candidates must be practicing Roman Catholics in good standing, able and willing to give witness to the Catholic faith at all times, with a Master’s degree in Education/Administration and previous experience in school administrative leadership. Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest, along with a comprehensive resume or CV, to Stephen Koplyay at skoplyay@covdio.org, 859/392-1589. Candidates should include a letter of interest, a comprehensive resume, and a minimum of five (5) professional references. EOE

Part-time Sitter Wanted—St. Timothy/Union

Part-time baby sitter (student, SAHM or retiree) wanted for 6-month old twins while parents work from home. Currently have student sitters who are unable to fill in some days of the work week. Please text or call 859-866-1141.

Marco Island, FL

Senior walk to beach. 1st floor fully furnished 2BR, 2 bath condo. Contact angela@floridafourseasons.com or (965) 610-6481 for pricing, pictures & availability.

View at RentForsaleFlorida.com

Small Engine Repair

Lawn and garden equipment, ATV’s, Chainsaw Sharpening. We also sell lawn and garden equipment and supplies.

ECHO, TORO. Country Clipper

STEEL’S OUTDOOR POWER 859-415-5277

Cafeteria Staff

Various schools in the Diocese of Covington currently have openings for full-time, part-time and substitute workers. Hours would occur during the school day. Duties include food preparation, serving and general cleanup. Interested individuals may contact Jackie Kaiser at jkaiser@covdio.org, or call her at 859-392-1356.

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Global players join to set vaccine priorities, allocate resources fairly

Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service

Several global institutions are working to find ways to allocate COVID-19 vaccines in ways that are equitable and effective in staunching the acute phase of the pandemic.

Everyone must have access to safe vaccines not only because it is ethical, but also because the infection is global and if vaccines are not available to everyone, the pandemic continues, taking even more lives and bringing more harm to individuals, communities and economies.

But the problem is that COVID-19 vaccines are currently limited, leading to the need to decide how the vaccines and supplies needed to store and administer them could be distributed in ways that are ethical and equitable. It is a question all governments, health care providers and international agencies must grapple with.

With expert input, ready resources and decades of experience, the most coordinated guidance for an equitable global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines has been coming from the World Health Organization. Its global framework for the equitable and fair allocation of COVID-19 products emphasizes global cooperation to maximize fair distribution.

From its value-based framework, the WHO proposed a population-based distribution plan. In phase one, countries would receive vaccines for 3 percent of their population, and phase two would bring the rate up to 20 percent, which is meant to cover prioritized categories.

That priority allocation within each country the WHO suggests, should include health care workers and older adults with country-defined age cutoffs and groups who have regionally defined health conditions that put them at higher risk of severe disease or death.

In addition to its value-based policy recommendations, the WHO is also part of a vast global effort to turn the proposals into a reality for everyone.

While the richest countries could negotiate advance purchase agreements for vaccines with individual drug companies, that left smaller and poorer nations scrambling. At least 75 percent of the world’s people live in low- and middle-income countries.

A global platform was created called the COVAX Facility which pools individual buying power to procure large-scale volumes of COVID-19 vaccines for every nation or economy that wants to participate. The idea is by pooling resources and donations, it can negotiate the best or economy that wants to participate. The idea is by pooling resources and donations, it can negotiate the best

The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), which co-leads the COVAX Facility together with WHO and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, was launched in 2017 to develop vaccines to stop epidemics.

CEPI is investing in and evaluating candidate COVID-19 vaccines, including “next generation” candidates that do not use “cold-chain” management, which is difficult for communities that are poor, remote or facing natural disasters or conflict.

Chinese and Indian researchers have been developing COVID-19 vaccines that can be kept viable at room temperature or are tolerant of high temperatures. And researchers in the United Kingdom are looking at a vaccine that would not be injected but would be in solid-dose form.

Richer governments have a role in ensuring equitable global access by not monopolizing vaccine supplies with governments and other partners to bring the vaccines to the people. UNICEF also is helping prepare the countries by coordinating and supplying transport, logistics and storage.

Already expert at supplying countries with single-use syringes and safety boxes for immunization programs, they plan to buy and deliver “an additional 1 billion syringes for the COVID-19 vaccine in 2021 and then potentially scaling up this amount to about 3.5 billion in 2022,” according to a WHO press release.

Donated funds will supply at least 1.3 billion doses for 92 eligible countries, it added.

UNICEF, which already works in more than 190 countries and territories to help vaccinate children, is working with researchers in the United Kingdom to develop a COVID-19 vaccine that could be kept at room temperature.

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“Judas and the Black Messiah” (Warner Bros.) Compelling fact-based drama, set in the late 1960s, in which a Chicago car thief facing a long prison term agrees to infiltrate the local chapter of the Black Panther Party and supply information to an FBI agent about its activities. Director J. Edgar Hoover, views the Panthers as a grave threat to national security. Having deposed herself of a car or any other form of transport, she must hunt and fish to survive but quickly discovers just how poorly prepared she is for the rigors of life in the wilderness. After a severe crisis, she gains the help and instruction of a local man with whom she gradually forms a healing bond of friendship. Wright’s meditative drama features long silences and sweeping views of a magnificent, unspoiled landscape. Yet witnessing the physical and spiritual purgation her character undergoes, while a valuable experience, is not an easy one. Authentic emotions and humane values in a film of serious intent. Probably acceptable for mature adolescents. A suicide theme, nongraphic marital sex, brief partial nudity, animal gore, at least one use of profanity, a few milder oaths. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG-13.
Kentucky General Assembly update
FRANKFORT — The General Assembly is back from its January recess. HB48, endorsing Education Opportunity Accounts, was moved to the Appropriations and Revenue Committee and then the post-end committee, which means the bill is ready to be heard and voted on. It has also received another sponsor, Andrew Vanderree, associate-director Catholic Conference of Kentucky said he’s heard very positive feedback from those contacting their legislators, and urges Catholics to call and make their voices heard until the bill is passed. They can use the link on CCKY’s webpage and e-mail legislators or call the LRC message center at 1-800-372-181 Monday-Friday.

“This year has really shown how much parents and grandparents or call the LRC message center at 1-800-372-7181 Monday-Friday. associate director, Catholic Conference of Kentucky, said he’s heard moved to the Appropriations and Revenue Committee and then the recognizes what they’re advocating for and passes HB48.”

Local

Franciscans mark 600 years as guardians of Christendom’s most sacred sites
WASHINGTON — Before he became guardian and commissary of the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in Washington in 2013, Franciscan Father Larry Dunham made his first trip to the Holy Land, where his order has cared for the most sacred shrines of Christendom for centuries. The trip brought out the first fervor he had seen among Franciscans as they tilled the soil of the Holy Land.

The Franciscans are the custodians of “the patrimony of our church” and it was “deeply moving,” he said, “to see firsthand how incredibly this work is,” said the 73-year-old friar. “Where Jesus was born, where his order has cared for the most sacred shrines of Christendom for centuries. The trip brought out the first fervor he had seen among Franciscans as they tilled the soil of the Holy Land.

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Spanish lawyers act to prevent removal of crosses by local officials
VALLADOLID, Spain — A group of Spanish lawyers has launched petitions and lawsuits to prevent the removal of crosses by local officials, after a claim that Christian symbols are linked with the country’s former dictatorship “Many towns are being pressured to get rid of public crosses, which local people have spent weeks and months defending,” said Maria Riesco, spokesperson for the Association of Christian Lawyers. “We are checking the documentation and investigating each case, as well as maintaining a dialogue with regional governments in hopes of having them restored.”

Riesco, a Catholic, spoke as the association announced legal proceedings against the mayor of Aguilar de la Frontera, near Cordoba, for ordering the demolition of a concrete cross outside the town’s Carmelite convent. In a Feb. 12 interview with Catholic News Service, she said the 20-foot concrete cross had been taken down illegally amid Catholic protests, in violation of religious freedom. The press office of the Spanish bishops’ conference told CNS Feb. 12 the Association of Christian Lawyers was acting independently of the church. It said the conference would not comment on the removal of public crosses. In a Jan. 7 homily, Bishop Domènec Fernández González of Cordoba warned officials Christians would take note of their actions at election time.

National/World

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CCUSA receives $1 million grant to help fire-devastated communities
CLEVELAND — A $1 million grant will allow Catholic Charities agencies in four wildfire-stricken Western states to provide assistance to people burned out of their homes.

The grant to Catholic Charities USA from the Center for Disaster Philanthropy will enable aid to be delivered over the next 12 to 18 months in Colorado, California, Oregon and Washington. “It was natural for us to go to Catholic Charities given their expertise in disaster case management and their multistate presence as well as their deep, deep understanding of local communities and the individuals in those communities,” Regene Webster, center vice president, told Catholic News Service Feb. 11. Funds will be distributed through Catholic Charities agencies in the dioceses of Fresno, Monterey, Sacramento, Santa Clara, Santa Rosa and Stockton in California, as well as Catholic Charities of Central Colorado in Colorado Springs; Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington in Spokane; Catholic Community Services of Western Washington in Seattle; and Catholic Charities of Oregon in Portland. Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, welcomed the aid, saying the funding will provide for long-term recovery of people who lost their homes and livelihoods in the fires that swept through large portions of the country from August through November.

Judge stops pandemic capacity limits placed on New York synagogues
BROOKLYN, N.Y. — A federal judge in Brooklyn Feb. 9 permanently blocked New York state capacity limits for worship at Orthodox synagogues in areas with high rates of COVID-19 infections. The permanent injunction applies to all of the houses of worship in those areas in the state and is one of the first in the country to stop percentage-of-occupancy limits on worship attendance. Last year, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo placed restrictions on indoor worship services in areas with high COVID-19 rates to 10 people in the most affected areas and 25 people in slightly less affected areas. In her five-page order, U.S. District Judge Kiyo Matsumoto reversed a decision she made last October when she rejected the lawsuit filed by Jewish leaders who claimed the congregation size limits were unconstitutional. In her ruling, she cited a Feb. 5 Supreme Court decision that ordered California to allow indoor worship services to resume during the pandemic. Eric Rassbach, vice president and general counsel at Becket, a religious liberty law firm, said in a Feb. 9 statement that Matsumoto’s order is “good news for the synagogues, churches and other houses of worship of New York.”
VATICAN CITY — Prayer makes every day better, even the most difficult days, Pope Francis said.

Prayer transforms a person’s day “into grace, or better, it transforms us: it appeases anger, sustains love, multiplies joy, instills the strength to forgive,” the pope said Feb. 10 during his weekly general audience.

Prayer is a constant reminder that God is nearby and so, “the problems we face no longer seem to be obstacles to our happiness, but appeals from God, opportunities to encounter him,” Pope Francis said, continuing his series of audience talks about prayer.

“When you start to feel anger, dissatisfaction or something negative, stop and say, ‘Lord, where are you and where am I going?’ The Lord is there,” the pope said. “And he will give you the right word, a piece of advice for moving forward without this bitter, negative taste, because prayer is always — to use a secular word — positive. It moves you forward.”

“When we are accompanied by the Lord, we feel more courageous, freer and also happier,” he said. “So, let’s pray always and for everyone, even our enemies. This is what Jesus advised us, ‘Pray for your enemies.’”

By placing one in touch with God, the pope said, “prayer inclines us toward an overabundant love.”

In addition to praying for one’s family and friends, Pope Francis asked people to “pray above all for people who are sad, for those who weep in solitude and despair that there still might be someone who loves them.”

“Prayer, he said, helps people love others, ‘despite their mistakes and sins. The person is always more important than his or her actions, and Jesus did not judge the world, but he saved it.’”

“Those people who always are judging others have an awful life; they are always condemning, judging,” he said. “It’s a sad, unhappy life. Jesus came to save us. Open your heart, forgive, excuse the others, understand them, be close to them, have compassion and tenderness, like Jesus.”

At the end of the audience, Pope Francis led prayers for all who died or were injured Feb. 7 in northern India when part of a glacier broke off, setting off a major flood that smashed two hydroelectric dams that were under construction. More than 200 people were feared dead.

He also expressed his best wishes to the millions of people in Asia and around the world who will celebrate Lunar New Year Feb. 12.

Pope Francis said he hoped all those celebrating would enjoy a year of “fraternity and solidarity. At this time when there are such strong worries about facing the challenges of the pandemic, which touches not only people’s bodies and souls, but also impacts social relationships, I hope that each person may enjoy the fullness of health and serenity.”