Ministry of Catechist, instituted by Pope Francis as a vocation, requires discernment and education

Laura Keener  
Editor

In his apostolic letter “Antiquum Ministerium,” released May 10, Pope Francis instituted the “ministry of catechist.” This ministry of the Church is available to “those lay men and women who feel called by virtue of their baptism to cooperate in the work of catechesis.”

But don’t we already have catechists? How will the ministry of catechist be different? And how will catechists serve in the Diocese of Covington? The Messenger sat down with Bishop Roger Foys to learn more.

What is different about an instituted ministry of the Church is that the ministry is vocational, it requires extensive education and formation and once instituted the appointment doesn’t expire. Additionally those who are instituted into a ministry of the Church are in service to the entire diocese.

Currently there are two particular ministries available to the lay faithful — the ministry of the instituted acolyte and lector. The ministry of catechist will be a third.

Acolytes serve at the altar and assist the priest and deacon. “It is his place principally to prepare the altar and the sacred vessels and, if necessary, to distribute the Eucharist to the faithful as an extraordinary minister,” (General Instruction of the Roman Missal no. 98).

In the Diocese of Covington several men have been instituted into the ministry of acolyte and are serving at parishes.

Lectors are instituted to proclaim at Mass the readings, the prayer intentions and the Psalm between readings. In the Diocese of Covington, there are many men and women who have been certified to read the readings at Mass, but none have been instituted into the ministry.

“The appointment of a certified lector expires, instituted ministries are a three year program before they can be ordained,” said Bishop Foys.

As to what the ministry of catechist will look like and how ministers will serve has yet to be determined.

“The USCCB and the other bishop conferences have been charged by the Holy Father to come up with a curriculum that those wishing to be instituted catechists will follow,” said Bishop Foys.

“That’s different because it is global rather than parochial, so the catechists (not individual dioceses) have to work on that. We don’t know yet what it’s going to look like.”

In the Diocese of Covington there are many men and women who teach religion in Catholic elementary schools, high schools and parish schools of religion. Lay men and women also teach the faith through parish RCIA programs (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults). These teachers receive ongoing training through the Diocesan Office of Catechesis and Evangelization and are certified to teach the faith until their commissions expire and are typically hired by a particular parish or school.

“We have courses for teachers of religion in our grade schools, high schools and parish schools of religion, but even that is different than an instituted catechist,” said Bishop Foys. “The Holy Father raised the level on this, so someone who has been hired as a teacher of religion, maybe even has a master’s degree in religious education, that doesn’t make them an instituted catechist. This is an instituted ministry of the Church and it requires education and formation.”

The instituted ministries of the Church are a vocation, in that the Lord calls those to ministry. Choosing a vocation requires not only education but also discernment and formation. Once the instituted ministry of catechist is established, it is likely, Bishop Foys said, that pastors will submit names of parishioners that they feel are suited for the ministry. People, themselves, could also apply.

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Like every vocation, those who will be instituted catechists will begin by hearing and answering a call from the Lord.

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“She called every vocation, comes from the Lord,” Bishop Foys said. (See related articles on page 10.)
The sky was blue, the temperature cool and the atmosphere joyous, May 14, for the blessing and dedication of the Bishop Brossart High School Marian Meditation Garden. The garden is the final piece of the BBHS Mustang Athletic Complex.

In addition to a fountain and a statue of Our Lady of Grace, the Meditation Garden includes a memorial plaque to the school’s namesake Bishop Ferdinand Brossart, the fourth bishop of the Diocese of Covington. Bishop Brossart is the only diocesan son to shepherd the diocese as bishop. He was also from Campbell County.

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Msgr. Reinersman, pastor, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring and pastoral administrator for Bishop Brossart High School read the Gospel at the prayer service and Bishop Roger Foys presided at the blessing. Also in attendance were Father Edward Bromback, chaplain, BBHS, Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Schools and Notre Dame Sister Shamina Bankemper.

The meditation garden was gifted to BBHS by the Roger F. Keller family in memory of his wife and mother Peggy Keller.

“My wife was a very humble and meek person,” said Mr. Keller. “She didn’t ask for anything out of life, she just wanted a good family she wanted to raise her kids and to see her grandchildren be born and she got to see all of that... It is a privilege to have this meditation garden for her and the devotion to Mary. My son Rob summed it up in a text last night, ‘I think mom would be proud and a little embarrassed all at the same time.’ But what we have to remember is it’s always about the school and the kids. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

In his closing remarks after the blessing Bishop Foys added his gratitude and congratulations.

“It is great to be here with you today,” Bishop Foys said. “As you know Catholic education has been very important to me my entire life, especially during my life as a bishop. Anything that we can do for and with our Catholic schools is so important, because as Roger said, it is all about the students and their education in the faith — that’s what Catholic schools do, pass on the faith. Congratulations to the entire Brossart family and, Roger, especially congratulations to you and thank you for the witness and example you gave to everybody.”

BBHS Marian Meditation Garden brings Catholic identity to Mustang Athletic Complex

Laura Keener

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Mask-wearing mandate lifted for vaccinated Mass-goers

In an Executive Order, May 13, Gov. Andy Beshear lifted the mask and social distancing mandates for fully vaccinated persons. According to the Centers for Disease Control people are considered fully vaccinated: two weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or a week after the single dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

Anyone not meeting these requirements, regardless of age, are NOT fully vaccinated, according to the CDC. After reviewing Gov. Beshear’s executive order, the following diocesan protocols were updated, May 14, and took effect immediately:

— Fully vaccinated persons may attend Mass and other liturgical services without wearing a mask.

— In accordance with this new order, each pastor may determine how best to accommodate seating so that as many parishioners can safely return to the celebration of Mass.

Anyone wishing to continue to wear a mask for his or her own safety or peace of mind is certainly welcome to do so.

Bishop Foys tells graduates that life is a series of beginnings and the Lord gives the grace always to begin again

Laura Keener
Editor

The 2021 graduation season began May 15 in the Diocese of Covington with Thomas More University’s early morning baccalaureate Mass. Bishop Roger Foys was the celebrant at Mary Seat of Wisdom chapel, with Msgr. Ronald Kettler and Msgr. Gerald Twaddell, both professors at the University, concelebrating.

Bishop Foys began his homily by sharing his love for the Easter season, not only because the Church celebrates the resurrection of Jesus but also because during the Easter season the readings at Mass are taken from the Acts of the Apostles, which is the history of the early Church.

“It shows us how the early Church behaved, and the fire of the Apostles, we read, ‘Look at how these Christians love one another.’ That’s what drew people in, the way they loved. That is remarkable. What the apostles and believers in the early Church had that is lacking today, Bishop Foys, is “fire in their heart.” “They had that love of Christ — for Christ and for each other — that was the signature of the early Church.” Bishop Foys said. “We live in a disjointed world and countryside and even Church. Dissention and protesting and anger and grudges and crime and war — none of that is of the Lord.”

What is of the Lord, Bishop Foys said, is love. “God loves us. We don’t have to earn his love and we can’t lose his love and we are called to imitate his love … In the Acts of the Apostles we read, ‘Look at how these Christians love one another.’ That’s what drew people in, the way they loved one another. We need to get back to that.”

Graduation, Bishop Foys said, is not an end but a beginning. Just like baptism is a new beginning: confirmation is a new beginning and the sacrament of reconciliation is a new beginning.

“Our life is a series of new beginnings and the Lord gives us the grace to begin again — always to begin again,” he said.

Bishop Foys encouraged the graduates to take what they have learned and to live it.

“Remember that God loves you … If you live your life with that in mind you will live a happy and a fulfilling life. It doesn’t mean you won’t have problems. It doesn’t mean you won’t be challenged. It doesn’t mean sometimes you won’t feel like you’re defeated. But you will lead a happy life and a fulfilling life and you will never understand or appreciate the number of lives you will touch and the lives you will change by living that way.”

In accordance with this new order, each pastor may determine how best to accommodate seating so that as many parishioners can safely return to the celebration of Mass.

Currently Self-quarantined

Close Contacts: 0
Close Contacts with COVID case in household: 2

Coronavirus Report

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: 2
Recovered positive cases: 873
Total ever positive cases: 875

Bishop’s Schedule

May 21
COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.
Holy Cross High School graduation, 7 p.m.
May 22
St. Patrick High School graduation, 7 p.m.
May 23
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.
Covington Latin School graduation, 7 p.m.
Mass and adult confirmation, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
Bishop Brossart High School graduation, 2 p.m.
May 24
Diocesan Building Commission meeting, 10 a.m.
St. Patrick Parish, Mayville, confirmation at Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.
May 25
Seminarian summer assignment meeting, Curia, 9:30 a.m.
Deans meeting, 1:30 p.m.
St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill, confirmation at Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.
May 26
COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.
May 27
Covington Latin School Board meeting, 4 p.m.
St. Henry District High School graduation, 7 p.m.
May 28
Villa Madonna Academy graduation, 10:30 a.m.
Notre Dame Academy graduation, 4 p.m.
May 29
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 4:30 p.m.
May 30
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
A place to lay your head

Karen Zengel

I love bedtime. I love the feeling of a hot shower at the end of the day to help me relax. I love the lamp with the light blue shade embellished with a softball next to my bed. I love reading my evening devotional and a few pages of a good book. I know that school shootings, tornadoes, tsunamis that kill hundreds of thousands of people, pandemics, etc. But I must confess that, in another sense, I find this argument from evil utterly unconvincing, and I say this precisely as a Catholic bishop — that, as someone who holds and teaches the doctrine of God that comes from the Bible. For I don’t think that anyone who reads the Scriptures carefully could ever conclude that belief in a loving God is somehow incompatible with suffering. There is no question that God loves Noah, and yet he puts Noah through the unspeakably terrifying ordeal of a flood that wipes out almost all life on the earth. It is without doubt that God loves Abraham, and yet he asks that patriarch to sacrifice, with his own hand, his beloved son Isaac.

Of course, in one sense, I understand the problem. An altogether standard objection to belief in God is human suffering, especially when it is visited upon the innocent. The apologist for atheism or naturalism quite readily asks the believer, “How could you possibly assert the existence of a loving God given the Holocaust, school shootings, tornadoes, that kill hundreds of thousands of people, pandemics, etc.” But I must confess that, in another sense, I find this argument from evil utterly unconvincing, and I say this precisely as a Catholic bishop — that, as someone who holds and teaches the doctrine of God that comes from the Bible. For I don’t think that anyone who reads the Scriptures carefully could ever conclude that belief in a loving God is somehow incompatible with suffering. There is no question that God loves Noah, and yet he

which is concerned with the whole of space and time. Practically the entire burden of the book of Job is to show this. When Job protests against what he takes to be the massive injustice of his sufferings, God responds with a lengthy speech, in fact his longest oration in the Bible, reminding Job of how much of God’s purposes his humble human servant does not know. “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth...”

Once again, whether they half-understood the purpose of suffering or understood it not at all, biblical author was tempted to say that said evil is incompatible with the existence of a loving God. To be sure, they lamented and complained, but the recipient of the lamentation and complaint was none other than the God who, they firmly believed, loved them.

I don’t for a moment that many feel today that suffering poses an insurmountable obstacle to belief in God, but I remain convinced that this feeling is a function of the fact that religious leaders have been rather inept at teaching the biblical doctrine of God. For human suffering undermines your belief in God, then, quite simply you were not believing in the God presented by the Bible.

I want to be clear that none of the above is meant to make light of the awful experience of suffering or cavalierly to dismiss the intellectual tendencies that it produces. But it is indeed my intention to try to speak from deep encounter with the mystery of God. Like Jacob who wrestled all night with the angel, we must not give up on the encounter with the mystery of God. Like Jacob who

Karen Zengel is executive director, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky.
The Ten Commandments—invitations to conversation

I like to look at different translations of Scripture. I find that, sometimes one word can make a big difference. For example, several weeks ago the first sentence of the first reading was “In those days, God delivered all these commandments.” That would have been Exodus 20:1, the story of God presenting the Ten Commandments to Moses. Then, in another translation, I found the same passage: “Then, God spoke all these words.”

It got me thinking about the difference between commands and words. As I see it, a command is essentially a communication that does not require response. I have never served in the military, but I can imagine that if the drill sergeant gives an order and the private replies with anything other than “sir, yes sir” there might be trouble. This is not the time for the private to express himself.

Words, on the other hand, are the foundation of conversations, every bit as much as conversations are the foundation of relationships. When we look at the Commandments as words spoken by God, we realize that in giving these commandments to the Israelites, God was revealing himself to them, showing them another side, hoping to take their relationship to the next level. When we look at the Commandments in this way, we consider the possibility that words spoken by God have always been and continue to be an invitation to establish and deepen our relationship with him.

So then, is our response to the Ten Commandments simply “sir, yes sir” or is this time for us to express ourselves? If we opt for the former, we can imagine God looking down from heaven, watching us, seeing us blindly following these commands, going through all the motions of keeping holy the Lord’s day, honoring our mother and father, not coveting our neighbor’s stuff — living like mindless robots or animals following the orders of our master, “sit, lie down, roll over, beg.”

That might make God sad, because he knows we’re capable of more. What God wants is for us to express ourselves. He is waiting for us to express ourselves.

When we look at the Commandments as an invitation to conversation with him, we realize that this is a conversation that began with the words “Let there be light” and continued throughout all of the Hebrew Scriptures and fundamentally in the fullness of time, culminating with the coming of the Word himself, made flesh living among us.

It is in conversation with God through Jesus that we learn that all of the Commandments, the greatest are, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and Love your neighbor as yourself.”

It is in conversation with God through Jesus that we come to apply these Commandments to our own personal lives and that we recognize them as, what Pope Francis calls “… paths of love!”

The Commandments, commands though they may be, are— like all God’s words— invitations to a relationship with him.

Deacon Timothy Britt is assigned to St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, Ky.

As a saint for our time

“It is not enough today to be merely a saint; we must have a saintliness demanded by the present moment.”

Simone Weil wrote that, and she is right. We need saints demanded by the present moment and I would like to propose someone whom, I believe, fits that description. — Henri Nouwen, the priest and popular spiritual writer who died in 1996.

Simone Weil wrote that, and she is right. We need saints demanded by the present moment and I would like to propose someone whom, I believe, fits that description. — Henri Nouwen, the priest and popular spiritual writer who died in 1996.

What was his saintliness and why is it particularly apropos in terms of the present moment?

Henri Nouwen is arguably the most influential spirituality writer of our generation. However, his spirituality was not born out of an easy temperament or an unstained faith. As Michael Higgins writes in his biography of Nouwen, his was a “genius born of anguish.” Nouwen was a saint wracked with anxiety — an ideal patron for a generation awash with it.

Thus, he could go out on a stage, radiate a powerful energy and then step off the stage and within minutes break down in tears and beg someone to console him. In terms of his spirituality, though he was a vowed celibate who remained faithful to his vows, occasionally he would fall in love so obsessedly with someone that he was able to keep his vows and his sanity only by checking himself into a clinic for professional help.

That is the stuff you normally read in the lives of saints, at least of those who are officially canonized and held up as models of sanctity, but that is not the stuff of saintliness. Soren Kierkegaard, whom Henri idealized, defined a saint this way: “a saint is someone who can will the one thing.”

Not an easy task. Not because the right thing is hard to will, but because we also will many other things. Thomas Aquinas affirmed that every choice is a renunciation. That’s an understatement. Every choice is a series of renunciations, and that makes both choosing and saintliness difficult.

Writing his diaries, Nouwen describes his struggle in this way: “I want to be a great saint, but I also want to experience all the sensations that sinners experience. I want to withdraw into the silence of prayer, but I don’t want to miss anything happening in the world. I want to bury myself in anonymity among the poor, but I also want to write books, be known by others, see places, meet people, and change the world.”

That’s what he wrote tied with, just as we do all, but he managed in the end, to will the one thing.

How did he do it, how did he become a saint despite it?
The beauty of the Marian month of May

Karen Kuhlman
Messenger Correspondent

Catholics begin to learn about Mary, the mother of Jesus, at an early age, and the more we discover about our Blessed Mother, the more we love her. As we watch our children and grandchil-
dren take part in annual parish May Crowning during this Marian
month, the beautiful tradition reminds us of the sweetness of that
love, first discovered in our youth.

The women religious of the Diocese of Covington are among those who
introduced us to Mary in Catholic elementary schools. Now, they offer us
examples of their communities’ prayer lives that might help us grow in faith
through devotion to Mary.

Mother Mary Christina Murray of the
Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker of
Walton, said, “As a community, we have a
great love of our Lady. Especially during
May, the month when we crown our
statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. All
year long, we pray the rosary each day
as a community. But more than that, we
look to the Blessed Virgin Mary as our
model in religious life. Mary balanced
work and family cares with complete
union with God. She is the model for
apostolic communities called to balance
our spiritual life with our work in educa-
tion and health care.”

Benedictine Sister Deborah
Harmeling is the historian for the
Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery, founders of Villa
Madonna Academy and Villa Madonna College (now Thomas
More University). Sister Deborah explains, “When the Benedictines
first came to the United States, the Divine Office was not part of
their daily routine. They were invited to the Diocese of Covington
by Bishop Cardill in 1859 to establish parish schools and an acade-
my. Those tasks left the Benedictines with little time for the daily
prayer of the Church. Instead, the Sisters incorporated the Little
Office of the Blessed Mother into their daily lives, Today, Mary has
become a private devotion of many of the Benedictine Sisters and
is a part of Compline at the close of evening prayer through
hymns such as Ave Regina Caelorum or Salver Regina.”

Passionist Sister Mary Catherine of the Monastery of the Sacred
Passion said, “Our Blessed Mother was always an important part of
my life. When I first felt the call to religious life, she is the first one I
went to, putting it all in her hands. As Passionists, we are especially
drawn to Mary in her sorrowful mysteries. Of course, we don’t for-
get her joys either!

“Different points of our Rule express it well: We seek to imitate
Mary, who devoted herself totally to her Son’s work, serving the
mystery of Redemption. We entrust ourselves to the Holy Spirit,
following Mary, seeking the understanding of this offering from
her at the foot of the Cross. She is the supreme model of compas-
sionate love for Jesus crucified and all who suffer with him. Mary
teaches us to receive the love of the crucified and then bring that
love to others. Mary is special to us because she appeared to St.
Paul of the Cross, our founder, clothed in our religious habit, which
we wear in honor of Jesus crucified. You can see how she will always be an essen-
tial part of our lives.”

Our Lady was an important part of
our lives.”

Sister Fran Moore of the Congregation of Divine Providence
says that devotion to Mary is essential to her community. Founder
St. John Martin Moye recommended that the sisters incorporate
the rosary into daily community life, and the sisters continue to
follow that recommendation privately. And why not? Mary is the
very model of abandonment to providence.

Sister Peggy explains, “Mary’s yes in accepting God’s message
did not end with her initial yes; it brought her little surrenders
every day of her life, in a continual acceptance of God’s will for her.
Her gift was to become a mother, and Mary had the grace to per-
severe, to take each day and live it the best she could. Her yes
brought about our salvation.”

And that is Mary’s example for us — to be faithful to our call-
ing, whatever that might be, to respond to God as Mary did; to live
in imitation of Mary to live our lives the very best we can, in con-
tinual acceptance of God’s will for us. During the Marian month of
May, we revisit the sweetness of that love for our Blessed Mother,
first discovered in our youth.

Be Witnesses

‘Wake up the world!
Be witnesses of
a different way
of doing things,
of acting, of living!’
— Pope Francis
Pope at audience with public present, talks about the power of prayer

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Holding a general audience with visitors and pilgrims present for the first time in more than six months, Pope Francis said he was very pleased to see people “face to face.”

“I’ll tell you something: it’s not nice to talk in front of nothing, just a camera. It’s not nice,” the pope told about 300 people who attended the audience May 12 in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the last general audience open to the public was Oct. 28. After that, the pope returned to livestreaming the audience from the library of the Apostolic Palace.

Greeting Polish speakers at the audience, the pope noted that May 13, the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, marked the 40th anniversary of the attempt to assassinate St. John Paul II.

The Polish pope, who was riding in the pope-mobile at the start of a weekly general audience when he was shot by Mehmet Ali Agca in 1981, was convinced “that he owed his life to Our Lady of Fatima.” Pope Francis said. “This event makes us aware that our lives and the history of the world are in the hands of God.”

In his main audience talk, Pope Francis focused on overcoming obstacles to prayer, but also on the power of prayer.

Prayer, he told the crowd, is not always “a walk in the park.”

While it may be easy to “parrot” prayer, “blah, blah, blah,” he said, real prayer requires effort.

Prayer “certainly gives great peace, but through inner struggle, at times hard, which can accompany even long periods of life,” he said.

Often when a person wants to pray, he said, “we are interrupted by a reminder of many other activities, which at that moment seem more important and more urgent. This happens to me, too: I’m going to go pray. But no, I have to do this and that.” We run from prayer; I don’t know why, but that’s how it is.”

But “almost always, after putting off prayer, we realize that those things were not essential at all, and that we may have wasted time” on things that were not as important. “We run from prayer; I don’t know why, but that’s how it is.”

Pope Francis told the story of a man he knew in Buenos Aires, Argentina, “any other diocese,” who was told that his 9-year-old daughter was sick, and the doctors were convinced she was about to die. The man took a train to the Basilica of Our Lady of Lujan and prayed outside all night, “fighting for the health of his daughter.”

When he got back to the hospital, he found his wife smiling because their daughter suddenly improved, the pope said.

“I saw this myself,” Pope Francis said. “Prayer works miracles because prayer goes straight to the center of the tenderness of God who loves us like a father. And when he does not give us the grace of what was asked for in prayer, he gives us another, which we will see over time.”

"Catholic News Service

May 21, 2021 7
High court to hear major abortion case from Mississippi in its next term

Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court said in a May 17 order that it will hear oral arguments during its next term in a 2018 Mississippi abortion law banning most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

The case is Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization. The court’s term opens in October and a decision is expected by June 2022.

Just after then-Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant signed the law March 19, 2018, a federal judge blocked it temporarily down the law. Kavanaugh and Alito were on the court when it took up its first major abortion decision since they were confirmed.

The case was a Louisiana law requiring abortion providers to have admitting privileges at local hospitals. The court struck down it as unconstitutional in a 5-4 ruling. Chief Justice John Roberts joined Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ruth Bader Ginsburg in knocking down the law. Kavanaugh and Gorsuch joined Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas in upholding the law.

The upcoming Mississippi case is Dobbs’ docket as a potential case since last fall — will examine the question of viability specifically if a fetus can survive on its own at 15 weeks.

“We applaud the U.S. Supreme Court for exercising the Mississippi law,” said Carol Tobias, president of the Thomas More Society, a nonprofit national public interest law firm, said his firm, on behalf of the Thomas More Society, a nonprofit national public interest law firm, said his firm, on behalf of Illinois Right to Life, has “argued against the now long-outdated science behind Roe v. Wade and urged the court to uphold the subsequent 14th Amendment rights due under the Constitution.”

Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., chair of the new Senate pro-life caucus, tweeted May 17 that he was encouraged the court decided to take the case.

There is no constitutional right to abortion, yet for nearly 50 years since Roe v. Wade was wrongly decided, more than 62 million children have been the tragic victims of abortion. It is long past time for the Supreme Court to right this wrong,” he said.

O’Rear, a law professor at the University of Notre Dame, said the court agreeing to take this case was a “sign that in a world that is increasingly more mixed on the issue of abortion, it will also be a sign of the court’s willingness to take on a case that is politically and constitutionally unjustified and unbalanced in the pro-choice and pro-life camps.”

The court’s 1973 decision to strike the law was overturned by Congress, and the court has not been asked to consider the issue since.

A ranger carrying a U.S. flag is seen in The U.S. Supreme Court is seen in Washington May 11, 2021. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)
Happy birthday to:
Father Thomas Robbins, retired, June 17; Father Sean Kopczynski, parochial vicar, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Park Hills, June 26; Deacon David Philbrick, St. Timothy Parish, Union, June 27.

Villa Madonna Academy senior Elizabeth Acuff will participate in St. Elizabeth Healthcare’s M.O.O.N. Program. The Medical Observation Opportunity Network allows students interested in medicine to experience the day-to-day life of a physician from the doctor’s office to the operating room. Elizabeth is one of 20 students selected out of nearly 140 applicants.

Upcoming study groups at St. Mary Parish, Alexandria:
“Diary of St. Faustina,” weekly Tuesday mornings, 10:30–11 a.m. Order the book on your own. This group may be joined any time.

Newport Central Catholic High School is once again offering youth summer camps for boys and girls basketball and soccer and volleyball and baseball. For dates, times and locations of camps read more at: https://www.ncchs.com/news.

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, is offering summer sports camps for girls and boys basketball and volleyball, girls soccer and youth baseball and football. For information visit http://www.bishopbrossart.org/page/summer-camps or call the school office at 635-2108.

Bishop Brossart High School summer K-9 drama camp will present “Annie Kids” in the BBHS Munninghoff Family Performing Arts Center. During the one-week camp students will learn about all aspects of the stage and put on a full-production musical. Auditions are July 7 from 3-5 p.m. or July 8 from 10 a.m.-noon. Camp dates are Monday, July 12–Friday, July 16, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Camp cost $150 per child; add sibling for $100. Contact rtieman@sthenrynky.com for questions and to sign up by Monday, July 2nd.

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization is sponsoring a Diocesan RCIA workshop: Implementing RCIA in the Parish, June 7, 8 and 9, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, 7–8:30 p.m. The instructor will be Vicki Klocke (Covid protocols will be followed - masks, social distancing, etc.) Register at covdio.org/register. Call 392-1592 for information.

Parish Kitchen, a ministry of Catholic Charities is looking for more volunteers to help serve their lunch meal from 11:15 a.m.-1:45 p.m. Regular or sub opportunities are available for weekday and/or weekends once a month or more. Volunteers must be willing to be VIRTUS compliant. Virtus training is available through the Diocese of Covington. The volunteer application is available at www.parishkitchen.org. A staff member will contact you as soon as possible.

Fifth- and sixth-grade students at St. Pius X School, Edgewood, participated in the Pass-It-On Book Project sponsored by the International Dyslexia Association. The students collected gently used books which will be distributed to local charities.

(Left) Students at St. Cecilia School, Independence, took advantage of the beautiful weather, May 13, and participated in the May prayer marathon to end the pandemic requested by Pope Francis by praying the rosary outside school. The entire student body was able to participate.

May Crowning at St. Henry Catholic School, Elsmere, was held May 11. As tradition, an eighth-grade student was chosen to crown Mary, while two second-grade students carried the crown and a candle.

First-grade students at Holy Cross Elementary School, Latonia, look at their caterpillars scientifically using their magnifying glasses. The students are charting the life cycle and waiting for the caterpillars to emerge as butterflies.

Students receive scapulars
St. Edward School, Cynthiana, held a May Crowning, May 13, with students receiving Our Lady of Mt. Carmel devotional scapulars. The students also prayed the rosary as part of Pope Francis’ request for a May prayer marathon to end the pandemic.

Honoring Mary
May Crowning at St. Henry Catholic School, Elsmere, was held May 11. As tradition, an eighth-grade student was chosen to crown Mary, while two second-grade students carried the crown and a candle.
What is the new ministry of catechist? A CNA explainer

Pope Francis on May 11 instituted the new lay ministry of catechist, with the apostolic letter “Antiquum ministerium” (“Ancient Ministry”). You might have questions about what this ministry is and who it is for: In this explainer, CNA answers your burning questions about this new (or is it?) ministry in the Church.

What is the instituted ministry of catechist?

An instituted ministry is a type of formal, vocational service within the Catholic Church. It can be either lay, such as a lector or acolyte, or ordained, such as deacon or priest.

The newly instituted ministry of catechist is for lay people who have a particular call to serve the Catholic Church as a teacher of the faith.

The ministry is “stable,” meaning it lasts for the entirety of life, independent of whether the person is actively carrying out that activity during every part of his or her life.

But catechists already exist. How is this different?

Many catechists today serve the Church at the parish level, but the instituted ministry of catechist will be tied to the diocese and be at the disposal of the diocesan bishop.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella explained at a Vatican press conference May 11 that “the institution of a ministry by the Church is confirmation that the person invested with that charism is performing an authentic ecclesial service to the community.”

Archbishop Fisichella is president of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, which oversees the Church’s instituted ministries.

“The institution of this ministry, together with the lay ministries of lector and acolyte, “will make it possible to have a lay that is better prepared in the transmission of the faith,” the archbishop said.

He also emphasized that the instituted catechist is dedicated to the transmission of the faith through proclamation and instruction—he or she does not have any kind of liturgical responsibility.

“The catechist collaborates with the local bishop and priests in the teaching of the faith to the local community. And it can be a benefit in places where priests are scarce.”

Pope Francis “is well aware of how many areas of Latin America and Africa today still have catechists at the head of the community,” Archbishop Fisichella said. He stressed the unique nature of each ministry, noting that they are not interchangeable.

“At stake here is much of what is new in this ministry,” he said. “Men and women are called to express their faith, authentic witnesses of the Christian community, and to transmit it.”

They have been properly prepared through “suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation.”

Prior experience of catechesis is also a prerequisite.

“Primary importance is the vocational dimension which implies a willingness to serve the Church where the bishop considers it most beneficial,” he explained. “Ministers are not conferred for personal gratification, but for service to be rendered to the local Church where the bishop deems the presence of the catechist necessary.”

The Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments will publish a Rite of Institution of the new lay ministry of catechist. It will be ready “in a short time,” according to Archbishop Fisichella.

Where did the idea of the lay catechist come from?

In his apostolic letter, Pope Francis emphasized the history of the catechist, beginning with the New Testament’s First Epistle to the Corinthians, which refers to “teachers” within the early Christian community.

He said that catechists played a critical role in the Church’s mission of evangelization. He noted the renewed appreciation for lay catechists in the work of evangelization following the Second Vatican Council.

Archbishop Fisichella said his pontifical council, at the request of Pope Francis, has been studying the institution of the lay ministry of catechist for more than five years in collaboration with bishops’ conferences and experts.

Who is qualified to be instituted into the ministry of catechist?

For Catholics today, to be instituted into the ministry of catechist is for men and women to be capable of welcoming faith and human maturity, be an active participant in the Church as a teacher of the faith.

The minimum is “stable,” meaning it lasts for the entirety of life, independent of whether the person is actively carrying out that activity during every part of his or her life.

“Who is qualified to be instituted into the ministry of catechist?”

“For the papal letter, Pope Francis said it is obvious that not everyone who is a catechist today will have access to the ministry of Catechist.”

“Of primary importance is the vocational dimension which implies a willingness to serve the Church where the bishop considers it most beneficial,” he explained. “Ministers are not conferred for personal gratification, but for service to be rendered to the local Church where the bishop deems the presence of the catechist necessary.”

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The brief document did not mention any of the beatified or canonized lay catechists by name, but many of the Catholic communities they served continue to honor them and keep their memories alive.

A catechist from the United States may soon be added to their ranks. The U.S. bishops in November gave their formal support to the sainthood cause of Nicholas W. Black Elk, a 20th-century Lakota catechist who is said to have introduced hundreds of Lakota people to the Catholic faith.

“Black Elk — Catholic, husband, father and elder — he was an ardent catechist and an internationally admired mystic,” Bishop Robert D. Gruss of Rapid City, South Dakota, told his fellow bishops.

An already-canonicalized catechist and martyr with a more remote U.S. connection is St. Pedro Calungsod, a teenage Philippine catechist who accompanied Jesuit priests to the Mariana Islands in 1686 and was martyred in Guam in 1672.

Lay catechists also were among the Korean martyrs canonized in 1984 and the Japanese martyrs canonized in 1897.

In late April, the Catholic Church in Guatemala celebrated the beatification of the 10 martyrs of Quiché, three priests and seven laymen killed between 1820 and 1821. The group of lay catechists were catechists, including 12-year-old Juan Barrera Méndez, who helped prepare younger children for confirmation and teaching. When they refused, they were stabbed to death with spears.

Sainthood processes also are underway for catechists martyred in the 20th century in El Salvador and in Mozambique.

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Hyde Amendment has long bipartisan history but an uncertain future

Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — The Hyde Amendment, born in 1976, has had a fairly long congressional history, but it could be marked for extinction.

The amendment, which bans federal Medicaid funding of abortions, must be renewed each year. Hyde’s reach has extended to bans on federal funds for abortion in federal worker health plans, women in federal prisons, women in the military, Peace Corps volunteers and international family planning programs that use non-U.S. funds to perform or advocate for abortion.

The Hyde Amendment has itself been amended over the years. While it originally barred federal funds for paying for any abortions, it later allowed for abortions when the mother’s life is endangered and was modified again to include cases of rape and incest.

It has been part of every budget-level annual appropriations package that covers health care, originally the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and later by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Yet even though the Hyde Amendment has been included in appropriations bills when Democrats controlled both the House and the Senate, as the House majority, it has been with reservations.

In the 1980s, for example, in the presidency of Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama — when the unwavering stance that it won’t let a penny to another country under President Joe Biden, despite the narrow margins by which Democrats control the House and Senate.

The Democratic National Committee’s 2016 platform called for the rescinding of the Hyde Amendment. The Democratic-led House, in response, passed a bill in 2017 that would have made the Hyde Amendment permanent. But the Republican-led Senate never took a vote on the bill.

Pro-life Democrats are an endangered species. The group, no longer has a Democrat as co-chair since the primary defeat in Illinois last year of Dan Lipinski. The caucus’ website lists only three Democrats among their members.

One indication of Hyde’s wavering support came in February when the Senate rounded up 53 votes in favor of including it in the American Rescue Plan. However, because the process of using the bill through Congress, the amendment needed 60 votes to be part of the bill. Three Democrats could be found to back Hyde in the 50-50 Senate, but not 60.

The U.S. bishops signaled their distaste after the American Rescue Plan’s signing. Without mentioning Hyde by name, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, along with six bishops who chair committees of the bishops’ conference, said it was “unconscionable that Congress has passed the bill without critical protections needed to ensure that billions of taxpayer dollars are used for life-affirming health care and not for abortion.”

Why did the bishops get so exercised? “The American Rescue Plan allocated funds that don’t go through the appropriations bills, so they wouldn’t be subject to Hyde” or the Helms Amendment, its international-policy counterpart, said Greg Schirneppeckb, associate director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities.

Any bill that appropriates money separate from the normal appropriations process, we advocate for health care services and funding. We advocated that Hyde has to be a part of that. Otherwise, it doesn’t otherwise control those funds,” Schirneppeckb said.

To make the point, the fact that abortion advocates characterize it as health care, and so anything, any legislation that would appropriate money to health care that doesn’t go through the health care process, the money can be used for abortion,” Schirneppeckb said. “The courts have ruled on this. This is why we’re always tracking any legislation that has anything to do with health care.”

Democrats for Life say the lives of 2 million babies have been saved as a result of the Hyde Amendment. Smith put the figure at 2.4 million. “Sixty thousand a year are alive today because the money was not there to effectuate their demise,” he said.

While there may be a cost saving in terms of federal tax dollars not being spent on abortion, some 40% of women who get abortions live in low-income households. If they were to bring their babies to term, those new mothers could be eligible for other federal benefits, among them Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Women, Infants and Children feeding program.

How can Hyde survive?

Schirneppeckb’s predecessor at the secretariat, Richard Doerflinger, detailed the process by which the Hyde appropriations bill gets written. The House committee that oversees HHS has a dozen subcommittees. Each subcommittee has a portion of the HHS budget to authorize. Once authorized, it goes to the full committee. If it’s OK’d by the committee, it then goes to the House floor for approval before first being sent to the Senate.

If Hyde isn’t in the House-passed version, someone in the Senate would likely move to include the amendment to include it. Doerflinger said he was heartened by the fact that three Democrats had voted to add Hyde language to the American Rescue Plan. “That bodes well when you’re back in regular (legislative) process,” he said.

One scenario would see continuing resolutions passed until a new bill is authorized, according to Doerflinger; the current HHS funding bill contains Hyde language. A related scenario could have a Senate unwilling to pass an HHS funding bill without the Hyde Amendment, he said, “and you shut down the government for a while, or part of it.”

Then you have a game of chicken — who flinches first.”

Smith anticipates a Senate filibuster. “The filibuster in the Senate side will be critical to maintaining Hyde,” he told CNS, adding he took part in such a filibuster in 1984. “We’ll probably get the most out of it.”

The effects of an appropriations bill without Hyde, Doerflinger said, would include requiring states to use federal funds for abortion services just as they would for any other kind of health care.

A hundred of states pay for abortions via legislation, and more than a dozen others do so by court order. These are also some states that have constitutional language forbidding the use of tax dollars to pay for abortion, but Doerflinger said but they would be overridden by the U.S. Constitution’s supremacy clause.

So, even after 45 years, Doerflinger said, “it’s not the end of the debate, it’s the beginning of the debate.”


Abortion demonstrators are seen near the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington.
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT WANTED
The Messenger, a weekly Catholic newspaper and maintaining an organized work environment. The Editorial Assistant helps update the diocesan database (Camino) and creates the weekly mailing list for The Messenger. The Editorial Assistant proofreads each edition of the Messenger, maintains the office archives, prepares invoices for payment and assists editorial staff, when needed, with writing/photography assignments. The qualified candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic and will be comfortable with Excel and Word (or comparable) office software with a solid foundation in writing skills and the ability to meet deadlines. Anticipated start date: June 2021. Interested candidates may submit a resume, references, and writing samples to Stephen Koplyay by e-mail: skoplyay@covdio.org or by mail to 1125 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011-3115.

TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR
Saint Timothy School
Saint Timothy School has an opening for a full-time Technology Coordinator. The primary responsibilities of this position are to provide technical support for and input in the integration of technology, as well as to provide information on current best practices, innovations and emerging trends. Interested candidates, please email Deb Geers to view the entire job description. dgeers@sttimothy.org

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Covington Catholic High School in Park Hills, Kentucky is seeking a part-time Physics teacher for the 2021-22 school year.
Interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and references to klink@covcath.org or lgwvani@covcath.org.

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
St. Catherine of Siena parish in Ft. Thomas, Ky. (www.stcatherinesiena.org) seeks a dynamic principal for our school (K-8) of 150 children. The school is an integral part of our parish, and our parish permeates the school. We are committed first to helping our parents raise their children in the practice of the faith, by teaching the objective elements of the faith and fostering the subjective elements: helping them to grow closer to Christ and to be His witnesses in the world by word and service. We are committed to the development of the whole person: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and social. St. Catherine of Siena is a sought-after school with a talented and committed staff with a wide range of experience, and the parents of our children are engaged and enthusiastic. The successful candidate will be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church and supportive of her teaching and mission. She or he will hold or be eligible for Kentucky principal certification. We prefer a candidate with at least three successful years as a classroom teacher and experience in Catholic school administration, but are willing to consider giving a chance to someone with potential. Interested individuals should send at least a resume or CV along with a cover letter and five references with contact e-mail addresses to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR, at skoplyay@covdio.org, or mail to 1125 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011-3115.
MUSICIAN/MUSIC DIRECTOR
All Saints Parish, Walton, Ky., is hiring a musican/music director for all weekend Masses, as well as special occasions such as Holy Days of Obligation, weddings and funerals, etc. The successful candidate must be able to play personnel organ and sing. Choir directing is desired, as All Saints Parish is interested in organizing a choir. This position is part time, but could be developed into a full-time position. Interested applicants may call (859) 485-4476, or visit at alsaintswalton.com and select the “Contact” tab to submit name, number and a message of interest.

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School (www.stceciliachool.net), a nationally distinguished Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and a ministry of St. Cecilia R.C. Church (www.saintceciapharish.net) in Independence KY, is conducting a search for a new Principal for the 2021-2022 school year. St. Cecilia is a fully accredited, traditionally graded Kindergarten through 8th grade school which additionally operates an Early Childhood Learning Center and an after-care program. Quality teachers, loyal and involved parents, and a supportive Pastor and Board of Education make this an attractive destination for the successful candidate. We are searching for an energetic and experienced, Christ-centered professional with solid professional and interpersonal skills who will join us in our mission to provide the highest quality Catholic education for our students. It is expected that the candidate must be a practicing Roman Catholic and eligible for Kentucky certification. Interested individuals should email, fax or mail: a complete resume, two references or C-V, a recently prepared Baptismal Certificate, transcripts of academic preparation, and a list of at least five references to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR, 1125 Madison Avenue, Covington KY 41011-3115, FAX 859/392-1589 or skoplyay@covdio.org. EOE.

NOVENA
NOVENA TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN O, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, Fruit of the Vine, splendorous of Heaven. Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this my necessity. O, Star of the Sea, help me and a choir directing you and 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 an e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them. Bulletin: Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution. For other difficulties, contact Marilyn Steffen at (819) 392-1550 or mstein@covdio.org.

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NOVENA
NOVENA TO SAINT ANTHONY FOR A SICK CHILD. St. Anthony, your love for the infant Jesus in-spired Him to grow to love the Lord and His servant, St. Anthony. Guard this compassionate Lord Jesus to heal him/her so that he/she may (name condition). Intercede for (name the child) asking our (Continued from page 5) all? He did it through a humble honesty that never denied his struggles. He did it by accepting his own complexity, by failing to his knees in prayers of helplessness when his own strength wasn’t enough, and by letting the poor love him. And he did it by sharing his wounds with the world, by seeking professional help whenever he broke down, and by learning from all the pain, obsessiveness and heartache that, in the end, our hearts are stronger than our wounds, because of that we can keep our com- mitments and ultimately find peace inside of completeness and struggle. The saints of old, on doubt, had their own struggles in trying to will the one thing, to healthily channel their will energies and give themselves over to God. However, the stories we bear of their lives tend to highlight more their virtue than their struggle. For example, Mother Teresa is also a saint from our generation, and a very inspirational one at that. For many of us, her life and her virtue seem so far removed from our own earthly and messy struggles that we look at her as a saint we can admire but not quite imitate. That’s unfair of course. She also had her struggles, mammoth ones. Still, it is not her struggles that are generally highlighted when her story is told. Henri Nouwen’s story and his writings highlight his struggles, not just his virtue and wisdom. Knowing the earthiness of his struggles can give the impression that there is less in him to admire than in someone like Mother Teresa. Perhaps. But, in Nouwen we see someone we can more easily imitate. Observe Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher; and award-winning author.

A saint for our time

Over Seven Decades of Caring!
“Mother Teresa is also a saint from our generation, and a very inspirational one at that. For many of us, her life and her virtue seem so far removed from our own earthly and messy struggles that we look at her as a saint we can admire but not quite imitate.”

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May 21, 2021

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Step 2: Go to www.virtus.org and click on Registration. Follow the prompts to create an account and to 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 an e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

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Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution. For other difficulties, contact Marilyn Steffen at (819) 392-1550 or mstein@covdio.org.

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“Finding You” (Roadside) In adapting Jenny B. Jones’ 2011 young adult novel “There I’ll Find You” into a romantic comedy, writer-director Brian Baugh has somewhat downplayed the book’s Christian themes. Yet a sense of God’s providence and care does seep into this coming-of-age story about an aspiring violinist who, on the rebound from failing her audition for a New York City music conservatory, decides to spend a semester in the same small coastal town in Ireland where her deceased brother, for whom she still grieves, had lived for a time years before. There, her initial skepticism toward a Hollywood heartthrob who’s on a movie shoot in the village gives way to more positive feelings while she also bonds with a gifted local fiddler and a nursing home resident. As her newfound relationships teach her to look beneath the surface and see into people’s hearts, thus enabling her own heart to heal, the significance of the lessons she learns, and their congruity with Gospel values, make the film probably acceptable for teens. A few crude terms. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG-13.

“Monster” (Netflix) Affecting, though uneven, drama in which a Harlem teen stands accused of participating in the robbery of a bodega that resulted in the shooting death of its owner. Despite the best efforts of his overworked public defender and the support of his caring parents, the legal system seems stacked against him. Director Anthony Mandler’s screen version of Walter Dean Myers’ 1989 young adult novel sometimes feels stagy and at other times static. But viewers will likely be engaged by the protagonist’s plight and the film gains credibility by its avoidance of pat answers. Brief violence, gory images, mature themes, drug use, at least one instance of profanity, a milder oath, frequent rough and much crude language. CNS: A-II; MPAA: R.

“Those Who Wish Me Dead” (Warner Bros.) Haunted by the assassins who killed his son before his death, a forest fire tragedy for which he blames himself, an emotionally isolated, self-destructive smokejumper is forced to pull herself together when a young boy being tracked by the assassins who killed his father; an accountant who uncovered explosive information he managed to share with his son before his death, comes under her protection. Though the local sheriff’s deputy and his wife, a trained survivalist, are also out to rescue the lad, his pursuers prove to be both ruthless and relentless. Director and co-writer (with Michael Koryta and Charles Leavitt) Taylor Sheridan’s loose adaptation of Koryta’s 2014 novel benefits from an offbeat plot and the appeal of its central duo. But some slightly unsavory mentoring briefly sours the proceedings while rib- bard hunter exchanges with colleagues, the extremes to which the murderers are willing to resort as well as the graphic depiction of the mayhem they wreak makes this thriller strictly grown-up fare. Much violence with brief “but vivid gore,” sexual humor and references, about a half-dozen profanities, a couple of milder oaths, pervasive rough and consider- able crude language. CNS: A-II; MPAA: R.

“Wrench of Man” (AMC) When a taciturn new employee joins a Los Angeles armored car company, it’s obvious to the audience, if not to his fellow employees, that he has an agenda of his own, one that eventually pits him against a gang of thieves made up of disgruntled Afghan War veterans led by their former commanding officer. Though it comes wrapped up in a slick package, director and co-writer Guy Ritchie’s adaptation of the 2004 French thriller “Le Convoyeur” is a morally crude tale of do-it-yourself justice. Bensively viewed vengeance and vangu- lantism, much gory violence, including torture, an implied casual encounter, rear nudity, considered sexual humor, a handful of profanities, at least one milder oath, pervasive rough and occasional crude language. CNS: O; MPAA: R.
**News Briefs**

**National/World**

Pope appeals for peace in Holy Land, says deaths of children 'unacceptable'  

**VATICAN CITY** — The injury and death of so many innocent people, especially children, caused by escalating violence between Israel and the Gaza Strip is “terrible and unacceptable,” putting the area at risk of sinking into “a spiral of death and destruction,” Pope Francis said. The pope launched an appeal for calm and asked leaders of both sides “to put a stop to the roar of weapons and to follow the paths of peace, even with the help of the international community,” he said May 16 refecting the “Regina Coeli” prayer with hundreds of people in St. Peter’s Square. “Many people have been injured and many innocent people have died. Among them are even chil- dren, and this is terrible and unacceptable. Their death is a sign that one does not want to build the future, but wants to destroy it,” he said. The growing hatred and violence in differ- ent cities in Israel “is a serious wound to fraternity and to peaceful coexistence among citizens, which will be difficult to heal if we do not open immediately to dialogue,” the pope said, asking, “Where will hatred and vengeance lead? Do we really think we can build peace by destroying the other?” The pope appealed for calm, a cease-fire and constant proactivity so that “Israelis and Palestinians may find the path of dialogue and forgiveness, to be patient builders of peace and justice, opening up, step by step, to a common hope, to a coexistence among brothers and sisters.”

Revised canon law on crimes, penalties almost ready for publication  

**VATICAN CITY** — The revised section of the Code of Canon Law dealing with crimes and penalties, including those related to clerical sexual abuse, should be ready for publication before the end of summer, said the secretary of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts. Bishop Juan Ignacio Arrieta, who spear- headed the project, confirmed the imminent publication in late May after the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales released correspondence about changing the current code “to clearly distinguish” between a priest violating his promise of chastity and sexually abusing a minor. Pope Francis already said in February 2020 that the work on a revised Book VI of the Code of Canon Law, “Sanctions in the Church,” was complete. The revision, the pope had said, was needed “to make it more organic and responsive to new situations and problems” that the Church has become more aware of since the code was pub- lished in 1983. Work on the revision began in 2008. As the Church’s chief legislator; it is Pope Francis who will decide when or if to promulgate the revised book and order that it replace the current law.

South Carolina death penalty now includes electric chair, firing squad  

**WASHINGTON** — South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster has signed into law a bill requiring death row inmates to choose between the electric chair or the firing squad for their executions. balcony drugs are not available. The measure, signed by the Republican governor May 14, was touted as a move to restor capital punishment in the state after a 10-year pause due to a lack of lethal injection drugs. Days before it was signed into law, a Catholic death penalty opponent called the measure a “setback for South Carolina” and a move that “stands in stark contrast to powerful efforts elsewhere to abol- ish the death penalty.” “The decade without executions in South Carolina should be seen as a mark of progress toward a culture of life, not as a reason to backslide into inhumane and gruesome means of killing,” said Krisanne Vaillancourt, executive director of Catholic Mobilizing Network. The electric chair and firing squad “should have no place on the state’s list of means to address harm or bring about so- cial justice. … There is no reason why the state should be executing people at all,” she told Catholic News Service in a May 13 email.

Polish pilgrims mark anniversary of attempt to assassinate St. John Paul  

**VATICAN CITY** — An elderly man stood alone in St. Peter’s Square May 13, using his wooden rosary beads to pray by a simple plaque marking the place where St. John Paul II was shot exactly 40 years earlier. The man soon was joined by members of “Polka w Serw” (Polish at Heart), a group of Polish Catholics who have lived for years in Rome but have not forgot- ten their homeland or their beloved pope. Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, who served for more than three decades as personal secretary to the late pope, arrived to process with the group to the plaque where someone already had placed two red roses. They added a bouquet of gerbera daisies — red and white — to the plaque where someone already had placed two red roses. Cardinal Dziwisz said in his homily in Gaza, tiny Catholic community tries to stay in touch during airstrikes  

**JERUSALEM** — Since early May 11, Israeli bombs have been falling around the Rosary Sisters’ school in Gaza, which sus- tained light to moderate damage inside and outside the com- pound — including to the front door and solar panels used for electricity. It’s very terrible; from (today) 3 a.m. in the morn- ing there have been bombing behind our school and in our yard,” Sister Nahila Saleh, principal of the school, told Catholic News Service in a WhatsApp call May 12. Bombs could be heard exploding in the background and, oddly dis- trusted, Sister Saleh was unable to continue with the inter- view. Father Gabriel Romanelli of Holy Family Parish in Gaza told CNS he had left the parish compound early in the morning to make the “necessary steps to Rosary Sisters to assess the damage and celebrate Mass with the sisters, but was unable to leave for eight hours because of the incessant bombing around the area, where many government buildings are located. As soon as he returned to the parish, the sisters told him bombing had begun again. The tiny Catholic community in Gaza con- sists of 333 people — including a baby born in early May. Fewer than half the Christians live in Gaza among the 2.5 million Muslims. Many of the students at the school are Muslim.

With book launch, Jesuits prepare to celebrate Ignatian Year  

**ROME** — The roughly 10,000 members of the Society of Jesus, their collaborators and many people who draw on the spiritual heritage left by St. Ignatius of Loyola are preparing to mark a special Ignatian Year beginning May 20 and lasting until the feast of St. Francis on Oct. 4, 2022. Father Arturo Sosa, the Jesuit superior general, hosted the launch May 11 of “Walking with Ignatius,” a book-length interview he did with journalist Dario Menor. On May 20, 1521, the savior Ignatius was wounded by a cannonball in battle, he spent months in bed recuperating and read- ing about Jesus and the lives of saints. He decided he wanted to be one of them, laid down his sword, gave away his belongings and set off on a journey to discern God’s will for his life. With his leg shattered, he became a pilgrim, a wanderer, a true “freedom seeker.” Father Sosa said at the book launch. “He freed himself from the illusions he had built up from his own life,” the Jesuit in the royal court, to pursue the ideals from his spiritual encounter with Jesus of Nazareth, which allowed him to discover the essence of freedom: the love that leads to the reconstruction of one’s own life so that others may have it,” he said. The Ignatian Year is “to see all things new in Christ.”

Pro-life leaders say HHS should not do away with Trump-era Title X rule  

**WASHINGTON** — The same day the U.S. Supreme Court announced it will hear a Mississippi appeal of a lower court’s decision to strike down the state’s 15-week abortion ban, it dis- missed suits against a Trump-era Title X policy that policy enforced an existing Title X ban on family planning funds being used for abortion or contraception. May 17 also was the final day for public comment on the Biden administration’s proposed rule to end the Trump pol- icy known as the “Protect Life Rule.” Under the Biden propos- al, Title X funds could again be used by health care services for low-income patients to perform abortions or to refer patients to abortion providers. A May 2 letter to the court from the Office of the Solicitor General said the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services expects to announce the final Title X rule in December. According to representatives of pro-life groups, this revision process has been rushed and the new rule as pro- posed would obliterate conscience rights. They made the com- ments at a May 17 online news conference hosted by the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington. “From the start, Congress was very clear that none of these funds be used to fund abortion,” said Valerie Huber, a former acting deputy assistant secretary in the HHS Office of Population Affairs. “When Congress mandates something, HHS has neither the authority or freedom to choose what to ignore.”

Brooklyn Diocese reports attacks on crucifix, statue over three-day period  

**BROOKLYN, N.Y.** — Officials in the Brooklyn Diocese said May 17 they will be “notifying our churches to be on alert” to vandalism and hate crimes directed at Catholic church proper- ty following two such incidents in about a three-day period. “And we are asking the NYPD to increase patrols in and around the area of our churches,” the diocese said in a state- ment. Over the weekend of May 15 and 16, a statue depicting Mary holding her son, Jesus, was vandalized on the grounds of the diocesan administrative offices in the Windsor Terrace sec- tion of Brooklyn. The child Jesus was decapitated. The diocese immediately reported to the New York City Police Department. “The crime is currently being investigated as a hate crime.”

It said, adding that the diocese “is already working toward updating the statue to its original form.” In the early hours of May 14, Maor Doral Cassuto, pastor at St. Athanasius Catholic Church in Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn, said that a cross on church property was toppled and damaged. He called it “truly an act of hatred” and said discovering it was “the sad- dest day of my 20 years here at this parish.”
DIocese of Covington

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