The diocesan Pro-Life Office hosted the annual diocesan Pro-Life Mass, Oct. 5, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. The evening began with a rosary led by Theresa Gray, and the entirety of the congregation joined together to pray for the unborn.

The Pro-Life Mass was celebrated by Bishop John Iffert. In his homily, Bishop Iffert reflected on the first reading where God declares to the people of Israel and Judah that he will make a new covenant with them, one that will be put in their minds and written in their hearts (Heb 8:6-13). He also shared how God affirmed the gospel of life in his own life.

"During this time in history, Bishop Iffert said, it was a low point for God's people. The enemies of Israel in the kingdom of Babylon were able to conquer Judah, due to the failure of God's people to live the covenant. "It's in the midst of this experience of loss, in the midst of this grief, in the midst of this most challenging moment in the history of God's holy people, a prophecy of hope ... I will make with my people, a new covenant. It will not be like the covenant of old ... No, the New Covenant will be a covenant of mercy. It will be a covenant of grace, it will be a covenant where God himself in his mercy, in his love, maintains both sides of the covenant." Bishop Iffert said about how, in his mercy, God is able to write his law into the hearts and minds of all.

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During his early college years, Bishop Iffert said, a professor of his told him that he should be reading a daily newspaper, so he subscribed to The Chicago Tribune. One day he noticed two stories in the same paper; one was about a premature baby who had been delivered and was receiving the best treatment possible at the neonatal ICU, and the other was about a mother who had gone to that same hospital to procure an abortion, which the father of the child had fought against in court.

"Millions of dollars were invested in saving the premature baby in the ICU, and the nurses who were interviewed said they dreamt at night of the day they'd be able to put the baby in his mother's arms."

"[God] helped me to notice these two stories," Bishop Iffert said. "And God planted this thought in my mind: John, the only difference between these two babies, they were both almost exactly the same stage and age of development, the only difference between these two babies, is that one has a loving mother, who desires this child, and the other is not desired. And then God prompted this thought in my mind: surely John, whether these children are human or not, whether they have rights or not, whether they should be protected or not, shouldn't depend on anything as relative and changing as whether or not their parents want them. Surely there is something more true, more real, at the heart of who these children are and who they might become. And in that grace moment, my thinking changed forever."

Bishop Iffert then brought his homily to its conclusion, stating, "Here's my central proclamation today. If it can happen for me, if God and his love and mercy will do this for me, if God will intervene in my life to keep me following on the path of life, God can do this for our society; God loves enough to bring conversion to the world. ... God's mercy can convert the heart of the world. You and I will work, to protect life ... Brothers and sisters, I know that God writes his law on our hearts because he's written this part of his law on mine."
Safe Environment audit finds Diocese of Covington compliant

Laura Keener
Editor

In a letter to Bishop Roger Foys, and copied to Bishop John Iffert, Stonebridge Business Partners found the Diocese of Covington “compliant with all audited Articles with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” for the audit period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2021. This is the seventeenth such audit for the Diocese of Covington; all have found the diocese compliant.

In response to revelations of child sexual abuse by priests, in 2002 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) developed the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The charter outlines 17 articles that all dioceses are to adhere to in order to minimize the possibility of child abuse within the Church and to establish clear and efficient avenues of reporting child abuse. Of these 17 articles, 14 can be qualified by an audit. All 212 (arch)dioceses and eparchies in the United States receive an independent paper audit every year; on-site audits are conducted every three years.


Since the implementation of the Charter the Diocese of Covington has participated in an audit. With an on-site audit, not only are documents and procedures evaluated but auditors also visit several parishes and schools and interview Curia staff and school and parish personnel who are directly involved in implementing articles of the Charter.

This year auditor Larissa Bobisky from Stonebridge Business Partners was in the diocese, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, conducting the on-site audit. Julie Feinauer, director for diocesan Safe Environment Office, coordinated the audit. Mrs. Feinauer was appointed director for the Safe Environment Office in June, following the retirement of Margaret Schack.

“H I am most grateful for the cooperation and hard work of each and every individual who helps to create and maintain a safe environment for us all,” said Mrs. Feinauer.

Deacon rededication

The deacons of the Diocese of Covington gathered for Vespers, Oct. 4, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, and to reconfirm their ordination promises to Bishop John Iffert.

“Today you rededicate yourself to your identity and your ministry,” said Bishop Iffert. “You seek to grow in virtue together, not speaking ill of one another but building one another up. Where we do have conflicts let us remember that we are called to be brothers in the Lord. Let us turn to one another with good faith, building on the virtues that God has given us to grace and that are ours by nature. Let us resolve today, that we will remain reconciled with one another, never speaking ill but always building each other up, in Christ Jesus.”

The annual rededication was followed by dinner in the Covington Latin School forum.

Sister Therese Marie of the Divine Child professes first vows

Laura Keener
Editor

The Franciscan Daughters of Mary, Covington, celebrated, Oct. 2, the first vows of its newest member — Sister Therese Marie of the Divine Child. Bishop John Iffert was the celebrant and witness of the solemn ceremony held at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption.

Mother Seraphina Quinlan accepted Sister Therese’s profession in observance, for one year, the rule of the Franciscan Daughters of Mary — to live in obedience without property, in poverty and chastity, upholding the dignity of every human person from conception until natural death.

In his homily, Bishop Iffert acknowledged that he and Sister Therese share “a moment of new beginnings” as, just two days prior, he was consecrated and installed Bishop of Covington.

“I am pleased to preside at the Mass where you will profess your first vows as a consecrated religious and to give your life consecrated to the Lord, Jesus Christ — who is your love, he is your friend, he is the poor one for whom you pour out your life, he is your sacrifice. I am very pleased that my first act as bishop is to share this moment of yours,” said Bishop Iffert.

“What would you like your first act of devotion to be? What act of mercy would you like to be your first after professing first vows?”

Having been given the name of Therese, after St. Therese of Lisieux, and Marie, after Mary — the handmaid of the Lord, offers some indication. St. Therese, Bishop Iffert said, wanted the fastest route — an elevator — to Christ. “She found that elevator in the Gospel passage proclaimed today ‘Whoever becomes humble like this child will be the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.’”

Bishop Iffert said, “We have an advantage in living this little way — living like children — because we have been children. We remember what it’s like and we know how to lead simple, childlike lives.”

Living like a child is “about living in the moment of every day and recognizing that the God who loves you is present to you, and is taking you by the hand and leading you graciously into the future that God has in mind for you,” he said.

Bishop Iffert reminded Sister Therese that, more important than what her first act of devotion or first act of mercy is, is the manner in which the act is performed — with the love of God who loves you in present to you, and is taking you by the hand and leading you graciously into the future that God has in mind for you,” he said.

Bishop Iffert reminded Sister Therese that, more important than what her first act of devotion or first act of mercy is, is the manner in which the act is performed — with the love of God who loves you in present to you, and is taking you by the hand and leading you graciously into the future that God has in mind for you,” he said.
SUMMIT21: an invitation to experience Christ who gazes lovingly and says ‘follow me’

Laura Keener
Editor

After a one-year hiatus, the Eucharistic retreat for young people returned to the Diocese of Covington the weekend of Oct. 8-10. SUMMIT21, a rebrand of the YOUTH2000 retreat, gathered over 125 young people from across the diocese to pray, sing, and worship as they learn to grow as disciples of Jesus. The retreat was held at Notre Dame Academy.

The final morning of the retreat brought the entire group together for a final moment of adoration around the “Burning Bush,” a wooden tower-like structure used as an altar for the monstrance containing Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, and Benediction, followed by the crowning of Mary. The entire weekend was dedicated to Mary under her title Our Lady of Guadalupe. Bishop John Iffert closed the retreat with Mass.

Prior to Mass, members of the SUMMIT21 Core Team and other participants shared their thoughts about the weekend.

Eva Roussas from All Saints Parish, Walton, said she enjoyed the retreat because, “I can talk to people who are my age about Jesus.”

Allison Dover from St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, said, “SUMMIT21 has been really fun for me because I got to grow closer with God and got to meet a ton of new people.”

Paige Pence from St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, agreed. “SUMMIT21 is a great opportunity to grow closer with God and helps others grow closer with him and communicate better with him.”

Leah Brandon from St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, liked the vocational aspect of SUMMIT21. “It gave me a chance to embrace and understand God’s will and purpose for me and to grow close to others who are on the same path as me,” she said.

Ryan Aguiler and Alan Jardinze from Cristo Rey Parish, Florence, said that their favorite part of the retreat was the praise and worship music. “I really liked the beautiful gathering we had in the afternoon where everyone got together to sing together,” Ryan said.

Cristo Rey parishioner Rio Bartolo said he enjoyed praying the rosary together.

In his homily, Bishop Iffert encouraged the teens to always fix their gaze on Jesus Christ and to continually identify and eliminate anything they are holding on to that would prevent them from following Jesus.

“We hear Jesus say in the Gospel how difficult it is for rich people to be saved,” said Bishop Iffert. “We don’t think that applies to us. We’re not rich people… even those who are not rich are at risk of holding too closely to the things we have. We need to recognize, too, that in our lives we are holding on to things that hold us prisoner… that limit our freedom.”

Those “things,” Bishop Iffert said, include power, influence, the ability to affect others, esteem, fame, popularity and pleasures. “All these things can prevent us from following the path of God,” Bishop Iffert said. “We can get too attached to them and they can steal away from us our freedom.

“Jesus is looking upon us, loving us and inviting us to follow him… Calling us to holiness in life so we can let go of all these things and claim Christ who sets us free,” he said. “That’s the invitation to you today: to be free, to open yourselves to Christ and encounter him in his Word and his Church, in his sacraments and prayer. To fix our eyes on him. This is how we get fulfillment… when we love Christ with our whole heart, mind and strength.”

High School Open Houses
Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria
Sunday, Nov. 7, 1–3:30 p.m.
Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills
Sunday, Nov. 7, 1–4 p.m.
Covington Latin School, Covington
Sunday, Dec. 5, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
Holy Cross District High School, Covington
Wednesday, Nov. 10, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m.
Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Wednesday, Oct. 27, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills
Sunday, Nov. 7, 1–3 p.m.
St. Henry District High School, Erlanger
Sunday, Nov. 14, 1 p.m.
St. Patrick School, Maysville
Contact the school to schedule a tour
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
Sunday, Oct. 24, 1–3 p.m.
Tuesday, Nov. 17, 7 p.m.

Diocese of Covington Catholic Courses for Adults
Hosted by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization

Basic Courses
Introduction to Catholic Spirituality , Oct. 23 and 30, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
Covington Latin School, Covington, Classroom #206, Very Rev. Ryan Maher

Maintenance Courses
Theology of the Body, Oct. 20 and 27, 6–8 p.m.
Mary, Queen of Heaven School, Erlanger, Library, Rev. Raymond Enrweiler
Register at Covdio.org/registry; cost is $35 per course or workshop.
Mary, the Mother of Jesus – ‘Ark of the Covenant’

“The Hail Mary: A Verbal Icon of Mary” (1994), a study by Holy Cross Father Nicholas Ayo, is a theological meditation on the “Hail Mary.” With the exception of the “Our Father,” the “Hail Mary” may be the most popular recited prayer among Catholics.

In synthesizing a biblical portrait of Mary the mother of Jesus, at the Visitation of Mary and Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56), Father Ayo interpreted that dramatic scene as the moment in salvation history when “the Old Testament encounters the New Testament.”

The Visitation conveys a core insight into the spirituality of Christian discipleship; Mary stands “as the first apostle, sent on a mission to bring Christ to others.” In other words, she becomes “a vessel of grace” who “brings Jesus Christ to others.”

In particular, Father Ayo highlighted the revelatory Old Testament allusion inferred from John the Baptist’s “leaping with joy” in his mother’s womb: “The leaping with joy of John, yet unborn in Elizabeth, and the exultation of them being filled by the Holy Spirit by the greeting of the Lord.”

Many theologians and biblical exegetes have likewise identified a similar resonance with the theme of the Ark of the Covenant in the Annunciation scene (Luke 1:32-38). Other spiritual writers discover a starting point for distinguishing that allusion in the Book of Revelation, Chapters 11:9-12.

For example, in his newly released “Jesus and the Jewish Roots of Mary” Brant Pitre describes the Annunciation as “The Return of the Glory Cloud.” He identifies a parallel “between the descent of the glory cloud” on the Tabernacle in Exodus 40:35 with “the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary (Luke 1:35).”

Accordingly, Professor Pitre notes the correspondence: “The cloud of the Lord’s glory ‘overshadows’ (epakeino) the Tabernacle” and “The Holy Spirit ‘overshadows’ (epakino) the Virgin Mary.”

The origin of the Old Testament allusions to the Ark of the Covenant in the Luke narrative of the Visitation (or the Annunciation) can be traced historically to the earliest times of the patriarchic age. It is a typology which prefigures the Mother of Jesus in her role as the “Theotokos” (“Bearer of God” or “Mother of God”).

In “Thetokos: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” Spiritual Father Michael O’Carroll collects and presents ancient sources that give witness to the tradition of linking the Ark of the Covenant imagery to Mary. Nonetheless, Father O’Carroll concludes that “the connection between the Old Testament and the New presents many difficulties to the person trying to prove its existence.”

Father O’Donnell concludes that the story of the Visitation can serve as a mirror for Christians to reflect on Mary “as model of the apostolate of the Church.”


According to the Marian pastoral letter, the Gospel of Luke is marked by a “rich ‘allusive theology,’” especially in Chapters 1 and 2 of the Infancy Narratives.

The Ark was a wooden chest which the Israelites carried during years of their wandering in the desert. It held “the tablets of the law, Aaron’s rod, and other sacred objects.” In the Temple of Solomon, the Ark was located in the Holy of Holies.

Chapter 14 of the Book of Exodus creates a verbal picture of the Ark of the covenant and the significance of the overshadowing cloud of glory. The Ark in the midst of the People of God was a visible sign of the invisible presence of God. “Abide the ark and the tent containing it, an overshadowing cloud was the visible sign of God’s invisible presence” (Hymn, n. 25).

When Jerusalem was conquered in 587 B.C., the Ark disappeared and was said by some at the time to be “asymptomatic of God’s protecting presence.”

The “Catechism of the Catholic Church” explains the symbolism of the cloud that overshadowed the Ark and of the power of the Holy Spirit that overshadowed Mary at the Annunciation: “In the theophanies of the Old Testament, the cloud, now obscure, now luminous, reveals the living and saving God, while veiling the transcendent glory of his glory — with Moses on Mount Sinai, at the tent of the meeting, and during the wandering in the desert, and with Solomon at the dedication of the Temple. In the Holy Spirit, Christ fulfills these figures” (CCC, n. 697).

In this context, the Catechism then states: “The Spirit comes upon the Virgin Mary and ‘overshadows’ her, so that she might conceive and give birth to Jesus (Luke 1:33).”

“Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith” interprets the Annunciation narrative of St. Luke through the prism of symbolism of the Ark and the overshadowing cloud. In his account, however, the vivifying power of the unseen Spirit overshadowed the Virgin, and God is visibly made present as the Son of Mary.” Thus, the Mother of Jesus is viewed as “the new and perfect ark of the covenant, the living tabernacle of the divine presence” (BYM, n. 27).

The pastoral letter adds: “The sacred ark that disappeared six centuries before has now returned in a more perfect way. Mary is the living ark of the covenant carrying Jesus. Salvation comes through Mary’s flesh, through Mary’s faith.”

“Behold Your Mother: Mother of Faith” then describes parallels in the Lukean account of the Visitation with the transfer of the Ark to Jerusalem under the tutelage of King David in the sixth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel.

In that Lukean scene of the visit of Mary with Elizabeth, the unborn John the Baptist “leaping for joy” in his mother’s womb is reminiscent of King David joyfully dancing before the Ark (2 Sam 6:9).

Secondly Elizabeth’s exclamation, “Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” echoes David’s shout in the presence of the Ark, “How can the ark of my Lord come to me?” (2 Sam 6:9).

Lastly, Mary’s stay of “about three months” with Elizabeth is a sojourn from which, in the words of the pastoral letter, “Mary’s whole house received great blessings from the presence of Mary’s unborn Son.” The Second Book of Samuel records that “[t]he ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom for three months and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and his house” (2 Sam 6:11).

The “allusive theology” of the Gospel according to Luke enhances a Marian dimension of biblical spirituality.

For example, in the apostolic exhortation “Marialis Cultus” (1975), Pope St. Paul VI invoked the imagery of Mary as Ark of the Covenant and the Temple of God in his commentary on the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord. Concerning the liturgy of this feast and that of the Assumption, the late Holy Father wrote: “With regard to Mary these liturgies celebrate it (the salvific ‘fiat’ of the Incarnate Word ... as a feast of the new Eve, the obedient and faithful virgin, whom with her generous ‘fiat’ (cf. Lk 1:38) became through the working of the Holy Spirit the Mother of God, but also the true Mother of the living, and, by receiving into her womb the one Mediator (cf. Tm 2:5), became the true Ark of the Covenant and the true Temple of God (1 Cor 3:16).”

Again, Pope Benedict XVI correlates the image of Mary the Ark of the Covenant with Eucharistic spirituality: In his “Heart of the Christian Life: Thoughts on Holy Mass” (2008), the Holy Father presents a brief theological reflection on the theme, “Mary, The Eucharistic Woman.”

Contemplating the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth the Pope says: “The Ark of the Covenant is announced and enfleshed in the Visitation ... by the symbolic ‘fiat’ of Mary to Elizabeth as ‘the first Eucharistic procession in history’ ... In this perspective then the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth can be understood as the ‘return of the Ark of the Lord’ in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion, open to the Ark of the Covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is ‘the dwelling of God with men’” (CCC, n. 367).

Mary, the Mother of Jesus – ‘Ark of the Covenant’ by Bishop John C. Pitt. Published in Messenger, the Diocesan newspaper of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY. 415 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011. Telephone: (859) 585-3000. Fax: (859) 585-3151. E-mail: messenger@covdio.org. Web site: www.messengeronline.org. Edited by Laura Keener. General Manager, Kim Dismang, 502-708-7066. Designed and printed by Graphic Creations, Inc., Covington, KY. © 2014, Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY. All rights reserved. Subscriptions, address changes: Bishop John C. Pitt, 415 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011. Telephone: (859) 585-3000. Fax: (859) 585-3151. E-mail: messenger@covdio.org.

"Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." Wow! What arrogance, for James and John to tell Jesus, not only what they want, but that they want Him to do it, whatever it is. And yet — we do this all the time.

Every time we com­plain, we are, in effect, saying to God, "This is wrong. Stop this! (Or: do the opposite.) Do things the way I think they should be done."

We likely do not think we are saying this, we likely do not intend to say this, but this is what we are saying. So what should we be saying? What should we be doing? Let us begin with the Collect for today.

*Almighty ever-living God,*

*grant that we may always conform our will to yours and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart*.

*Almighty ever-living God.* We are so accustomed to praying these prayers that we often do not pay attention to the details of them. We call God here *Almighty.* That does not mean that God can do anything (God cannot create a square circle), but that God can do anything God wills. Since nothing happens without God willing it, per­haps we should begin by thanking God for whatever is happening, and then asking God to show us what he is doing.

*What would we do this? The Collect continues: grant that we may always conform our will to yours. Remember, the goal of the Christian life is conversion. We need to become something, to be changed. The Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one — from enemies of Christian journey is not an exterior journey — from earth to heaven — but an interior one.*

*The first is from Isaiah:* The Lord was pleased to crush him in infirmity. This is one of those lines in Scripture that we can gloss over because it is disturbing to think about.

*Whatever that sentence means in Isaiah’s specific time, the Church has always seen it as applying prophetic­ally to Jesus. What does it mean that God was “pleased to crush” Jesus in infirmity? We cannot mean that God actually wills evil, nor can it mean that the Father took some kind of pleasure in Jesus’ suffering.*

*We might say something like: What God did not want the...*  

(Continued on page 17)
VATICAN CITY — By remaining in Jesus, Christians are free because his truth transforms their lives and guides them away from the slavery of sin toward what is good, Pope Francis said.

“The call is above all to remain in Jesus, the source of truth who makes us free,” the pope said Oct. 6 during his weekly general audience.

“Christian freedom, therefore, is founded on two fundamental pillars: first, the grace of the Lord Jesus; second, the truth that Christ reveals to us and which is he himself,” he said.

The pope continued his series of talks on St. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians by looking at the apostle’s struggle to convince people of their freedom in Christ and of the need to resist becoming slaves of the law.

“The apostle could not bear that those Christians, after having known and accepted the truth of Christ, allowed themselves to be attracted to deceptive proposals,” he said. They moved “from the liberating presence of Jesus to slavery, to sin, to legalism and so forth. Even today, legalism is one of our problems for so many Christians who take refuge in legalism, in sophistry.”

As the Gospel of John explained, Jesus pointed the way to Christian freedom, saying, “If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

St. Paul continues that teaching, saying people are called to “remain in Jesus, the source of truth who makes us free,” the pope said.

Christian freedom is founded on the grace of the Lord as it is “a gift which was given to us in baptism,” he said.

It is a “mystery of love,” he said, that “we are free from slavery to sin by the cross of Christ. Right there, where Jesus allowed himself to be nailed, making himself a slave, God placed the source of the liberation of the human person.”

Therefore, a Christian “should be free and is called not to return to being a slave of precepts and strange things,” he said.

Freedom is built on truth, he said, and “the truth of faith is not an abstract theory, but the reality of the living Christ, who touches the daily and overall meaning of personal life.”

“Freedom makes free to the extent to which it transforms a person’s life and directs it toward the good,” he said. This is why “truth must disturb us” and make a person feel restless.

“Restlessness is a sign that the Holy Spirit is working inside us, and freedom is an active freedom that comes from the grace of the Holy Spirit. This is why I say that freedom must disturb us, it must constantly question us, so that we might always plunge deeper into what we really are,” Pope Francis said.

“Remaining free is arduous, it is a struggle, but it is not impossible,” he said. “Courage! Let’s make progress regarding this; it will be good for us.”

The love that comes from the cross of Christ “guides and sustains us and points the way to happiness,” he said.

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Jesus, the source of truth, sets people free, pope says at audience

Pope Francis blesses a statue presented by a woman during his general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican Oct. 6, 2021.

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Forced to flee Afghanistan, Catholic mission waits to start a ‘new page’

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Evacuated in August as the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan, the head of the non-interrupted Catholic mission said this is a time of “advent,” waiting for God to reveal how the Church can be present in the country again.

“We are now putting our mission back in God’s hands,” Barnabite Father Giovanni Scalese told the Vatican newspaper Oct. 12.

“We are living a ‘time of advent,’ waiting for God, willing, that there may be a new page to turn in this missionary adventure that has lasted almost a century,” he told L’Osservatore Romano.

Father Scalese, 66, was among thousands of foreigners who had to flee the country in the run-up to the full withdrawal of U.S. forces in August. The Italian priest landed in Rome Aug. 25 along with five Missionaries of Charity nuns and 14 orphaned and disabled children and young adults in their care.

The sisters’ center had to close as did the sole parish in Afghanistan, the Chapel of Our Lady of Divine Providence, located at the Italian embassy, where the pontifical mission was housed.

As the international community looks for ways to offer humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, Father Scalese said it will remain critical for countries to retain or establish some kind of ties with the country’s rulers.

“I believe one must establish a relationship of respect, dialogue and collaboration, a relationship based on a healthy realism, certainly frank, but devoid of ideological prejudices and attitudes of presumed moral superiority,” he said.

“For me, this is a ‘mission of hope’ for the Afghan people, who deserve all the best and a future of peace,” the priest said.

Father Scalese was appointed by Pope Francis in 2014 as the superior of the Catholic Church’s mission in Afghanistan. St. John Paul II, as pope, established the mission “sui iuris” in Afghanistan in May 2002, led by the Clerics Regular of St. Paul, known as the Barnabites, who have been serving in Afghanistan the past 90 years.

The pontifical mission’s work was limited to charitable and humanitarian activities, and the priest’s spiritual and pastoral responsibilities were limited to foreigners.

“Unfortunately, the sensitive political-military situation did not allow me to get to know Afghanistan very well, which still remains in my heart no matter what. Even my relationships with the people there were practically limited to staff at the embassy,” he said.

He said he was obviously disappointed that even this limited presence of the Church in Afghanistan had to be suspended, “also because it would be better if this were not contingent upon political change; the Church should have the possibility of carrying out her mission in a particular country irrespective of who is in government.”

The first 50 years of the Barnabites’ presence in Afghanistan was “fairly peaceful,” he said, because there was a certain amount of stability and freedom when the country was governed by a constitutional monarchy and Islam was the official state religion.

“Priests could travel without a problem and they were respected and esteemed. The Christian community was flourishing, many Masses in different languages were celebrated on Sundays” as well as the sacraments of baptism, communion and confirmation, he said.

Difficulties began when civil war erupted in 1978, followed by the Soviet invasion and occupation and so on, he said.

Despite the various conflicts and hardships, the Church was still able to keep its mission alive all that time, even during the years the Islamic resistance of the mujahedeen ruled and when the Taliban took control from 1996 to 2001.

Their work continued even when Barnabite Father Giuseppe Moretti had to return to Italy in 1994 after he was injured in a rocket attack against the Italian embassy.

“The only Christian presence in Kabul those years was made up of the Little Sisters of Jesus, consecrated women inspired by Charles de Foucauld, who unceasingly remained until 2017, and they were always respected, as was the Church in the Italian embassy,” he said.

He felt a bit frustrated, he said, for not having been able to do any more the past seven years and for the termination of what little they had been able to do.

But he finds comfort in the conviction that God can act in every situation, “even amid apparent setbacks,” and that “all those who entrust themselves to God in love will bear good fruit,” even if that fruitfulness is often invisible, he said, highlighting passages from the apostolic exhortation, “Evangelii Gaudium.”
Believe It or Not. In their minds, and I dare say in Bill Freehan’s, demonstrated athletic excellence was complemented by a manly reticence about that excellence.

My heroes didn’t think of themselves as jocks, and certainly not as dumb jocks, but as men with dignity — a dignity that ought to be displayed on the field. One only wonders what today’s gazillionaire athletes, vastly talented as so many of them are, think of themselves as being or representing. One hopes that the most garish and outrageous of them find something in Bill Freehan’s example to emulate. They’ll be a lot happier in life for it. They might also try adopting Bill Freehan’s deep Catholic faith. It sustained him through life and I’m confident that it brought him, on August 19, to the Hall of Fame that really counts.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow and William E. Simon Chair in Catholic Studies Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Gentleman behind the plate (Continued from page 5)
Respect life — five ways you can get involved

We Choose Life Committee
Message Contributor
Each October the U.S. Catholic Bishops ask all to ‘consider more deeply why every human life is valuable and reflect on how to build a culture that protects life from conception to natural death’.*

1. Pray for the End of Abortion

What does it mean to respect the dignity of every human life? What do those who are vulnerable or threatened need? How can I discern where Jesus wants me to serve?

Some of us work directly with the most vulnerable, supporting crisis pregnancy centers or serving people of all ages and abilities in countless ways, according to our talents and vocations. Others, especially those that are short on time or resources, focus on the crucial task of fervent prayer for an end to the culture of death in America and the world.

Whatever our means of being pro-life, it all starts with pondering responsi-
bility. Respect Life Month is the time for a self-examination that should inspire each of us to defend life ever more strongly year-round.

Every month, through this “We Choose Life” page, the diocesan Pro-Life Office suggests new ways to be engaged. The following ideas and events are just a sampling of the breadth of pro-life opportunities to serve our neighbors at every age and stage of life.

1. Join the 40 Days for Life campaign

Each spring and fall, 40 Days for Life gathers people at local abortion cen-
ters to pray and fast for an end to abortion. This is a peaceful, public wit-
tness to the sanctity of human life that has proven to not only save lives but also convert minds and hearts. Last spring 1 million volunteers in 900 cities across 63 nations were part of the campaign. With God’s help, 1,198 babies were saved, 10 abortion workers converted and five abortion cen-
ters closed.

Cincinnati’s fall vigil outside Planned Parenthood, at 2314 Auburn Ave.,
ends Oct. 31. Many volunteers are needed for this 40 Days prayer vigil. You can sign up online or ask your parish pro-life committee to organize a par-
tial or full-day vigil. More than 20 diocesan parishes have participated in recent campaigns. The Northern Kentucky coordinator is Gail Macke, gail-
macke@gmail.com. Why is joining 40 Days for Life important? Because prayer and fasting work! Abortion staffers say that when volunteers show up to pray, the no-
show rate for appointments can hit 75 percent. Last fall, 761 women told 40 Days volunteers that they intended to have an abortion until they saw people praying outside the building.

Since these silent vigils started in 2007, their cumulative impact has been staggering. Organizers know of 19,198 babies whose mothers changed their minds, 221 abortion workers who quit and 112 abortion facilities that closed after campaigns. God alone knows how many hearts have been changed.

2. Give to pro-life organizations

Donations of both goods and money ensure that pregnancy care centers can provide life-saving, life-changing services to young women and men in need. In Northern Kentucky, New Hope Pregnancy Center has four loca-
tions. Care Net Pregnancy Services of Northern Kentucky has three and the Franciscan Daughters of Mary, at the Rose Garden Home Mission in Covington, operates four days a week.

Trained staff members defend and promote the sanctity of human life with a range of offerings, including abortion facts, pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, adoption infor-
mation, adoption agency referrals, maternity and infant supplies, parenting classes, adoption initiative education, post-abortion support and bible study programs.

Kentucky Right to Life and Greater Cincinnati Right to Life work to end abortion and prevent euthanasia through grassroots activism, education, communication and political support. Your support helps to lobby for pro-life laws, oppose pro-death legislation and influence government policy at every level.

At the college level, Thomas More University’s Saints for Life, and Northern Kentucky University’s Northern Right to Life, are official student pro-life groups. Both put a positive public face on pro-life efforts, educate peers, train future pro-life leaders and support crisis pregnancy centers. They welcome donations for their programs.

3. Attend pro-life events

We don’t have to travel far to find ways to stand up for life. A few regular gatherings follow: Invite your family and friends.

Greater Cincinnati Right to Life has an annual “Evening for Life” fundraising banquet. Oct. 21, at the Sharonville Convention Center. This year’s guest speaker is George Dennehy. Register online.

The Cincinnati chapter of 40 Days for Life concludes its fall campaign, 2 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 31, with a closing hour of thanksgiving in front of Planned Parenthood. Father Matthew Cushing, pastor, All Saints Parish, Waiton, will lead the prayers and speak. No sign-up is necessary; families are welcome. Bring a chair if needed. Park on side streets or at Holy Name Church, 2448 Auburn Ave., Cincinnati.

Every Saturday morning at Holy Name Church, Cincinnati, an 8 a.m. pro-
life Mass precedes a rosary walk and prayer vigil at Planned Parenthood. The usual hosts are the Helpers of God’s Precious Infants and Mary’s Mantle. Call John Wendenh at (513) 218-1938. On fifth Saturdays, the host is Life’s 5th Quarter, focusing on high school and college students. The next Life’s 5th Quarter is Oct. 31. Call Richard Andolina at (513) 703-7408.

4. Contact Your Lawmakers

Pro-life legislators agree that hearing from pro-life constituents makes it easier to defend a vote for life. Your voice is crucial to containing and re-
versing the culture of death at every level of government. Kentucky Right to Life’s website has updates on Kentucky and federal legislation and initiatives impacting life issues, plus links for contacting legislators individually.

5. Pray

Pray that lonely, fearful moms will feel God’s power and love and choose life for their babies. Pray that all who defend and assist in abortions will have a change of heart. Pray for the courage to share the Gospel of Life, to promote the legal protection of human life from conception to natural death and to uphold the dignity of every child of God.

Praying outside Planned Parenthood.

*October 15, 2021
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For more information about the Pro-Life Office or to be added to our e-mail newsgroups, visit us online at www.covdio.org/pro-life/ or call (859) 392-1500.
Resisting temptation: Synod process relies on faith, trust

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — From Australia’s Plenary Council, Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane tweeted, “Our small group facilitator was for years a midwife, and she says the process is like giving birth: slow, painful, messy, but in the end fruitful and joyful.”

The Australian council, which was holding its first assembly Oct. 1-5, is one example of large “synodal” processes taking place around the world. Just as that assembly was scheduled to close, Pope Francis was scheduled to launch the global process looking up to the meeting of the world Synod of Bishops in 2023.

And the Vatican expects the process to be similar to what Archbishop Coleridge experienced: “slow, painful, messy, but in the end fruitful and joyful.”

In fact, a section of the “vademecum,” or handbook, prepared by the Vatican synod office to guide the two-year preparatory process has a section titled, “Avoiding Pitfalls.”

Synodality “is an open path — you don’t know in advance where it will go, and it can be messy,” said Vice-Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart, one of two undersecretaries of the synod, told participants at a Rome meeting Oct. 7.

At the same time, she said, “truly, the best way to help people understand synodality is to give them a good, true experience of synodality.”

Synodality is “the temptation of focusing only on structures,” which would prevent participants from hearing the Holy Spirit and one another.

— “The temptation to lose sight of the community and ecclesial dimension of the church, but we cannot simply copy and paste,” even if that sounds like the neatest way to proceed.

In a process calling everyone to get involved, it reminds them that “everyone can grow in understanding through dialogue.”

The document identified nine specific “pitfalls” that could prevent participants from hearing the Holy Spirit and one another:

— “The temptation of wanting to lead ourselves instead of being led by God.”
— “The temptation to focus on ourselves and our immediate concerns,” rather than broadening perspectives and making a real effort to listen to the concerns of the people on the margins of the life of the church or of society.
— “The temptation to see ‘problems,’ which depresses people and ignores the fact that the Holy Spirit is at work in the church today.”
— “The temptation of focusing only on structures,” which are important only insofar as they “foster deeper communion, fuller participation, and more fruitful mission.”
— “The temptation not to look beyond the visible confines of the church” for signs of where God is at work in the world and where God is calling the church to be more involved.

In an interview published in the October edition of the Vatican newspaper’s women supplement, Sister Becquart said that “in our very individualistic societies we often lose sight of the community and ecclesial dimension of our faith,” dimensions that are expressed and strengthened through synodality.

“Today it is as if we are in a phase of relearning synodality,” she said. “Synodality that was present at the dawn of the church, but we cannot simply copy and paste,” even if that sounds like the neatest way to proceed.

The Diocese of Covington will fully participate in the world synod. Information about the synod and how parishioners will be able to participate will be distributed to pastors in the upcoming months.

The Messenger contributed to this article.

A crucifix and organ are seen at the opening Mass for Brisbane members of the first assembly of the Plenary Council in Brisbane, Australia, Oct. 3, 2021. The Australian council, which was holding its first assembly Oct. 3-5, is one example of large “synodal” processes taking place around the world.
October 15, 2021

**Messenger**

**People and Events**

**SEEK Retreat**

(left) In preparation for the sacrament of confirmation, eighth graders at St. Henry School, Elsmere, attended a SEEK retreat this past week. The goal of the SEEK retreat is to make confirmation more aware of those people who are, as Pope Francis says, on the peripheries and to learn about the organizations ministering to them, and how they can help. As a part of the retreat students walked through the streets of Covington visiting the Emergency Shelter, The Parish Kitchen, and Welcome House. There was also some time for questions, reflections, and activities to process what the students saw and learned. The SEEK retreat was led by Benedictine Sister Cathy Bauer.

**Supporting Faith**

Community Pharmacy Villa Madonna Academy fourth grade students wrapped up their service learning project. They collected items for Faith Community Pharmacy. Florence. Pharmacy director Charity Spille talked to the students about the organization’s mission to provide medications at no cost to uninsured individuals in Kentucky. Students then collected items to help the pharmacy keep its overhead costs down. They collected a car full of products such as paper towels, envelopes, and plastic bags. They also decorated bags for the pharmacy’s clients.

**Electronics recycling day at Covington Latin School**

Oct. 26, 2 p.m. Items can be dropped at school this day on the front steps on Madison Ave (not inside the school) from 7 a.m.–1 p.m. Items accepted: LCD monitors, servers, desktops–networking equipment, UPS backups, metal, rechargeable batteries, especially lithium ion, anything with a power cord, CRT/bulky monitors/TVs cost $20 each cash (the school has to pay if you don’t). E-mail Stephanie.Tewes@covingtonlatin.org.

**Newport Central Catholic High School Open House**

Oct. 27, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. (join us at any point between these times). The Open House will feature academic department exhibits along with Fine Arts, athletic and extracurricular activity displays. For details, contact the NCC Development Office at 292-0001.

**The fourth annual Euchre Tournament benefiting Bishop Brossart High School Mustang basketball**

will be held Oct. 28. Optional skins game and other raffles available. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.; games at 7 p.m. Advance registration is $25 by Oct. 25; walkups $30. Call or text 780-8228.

**St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, PTO Craft Fair**

Nov. 6, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. in Memorial Hall. Admission $2.

Are you or someone you know, a Veteran? Since 2016, the St. Elizabeth Hospice Program has made an ongoing commitment through the national We Honor Veterans program, to recognize the unique needs of veterans and their families through an annual Veteran Appreciation Event. Join St. Elizabeth Hospice Nov. 8, Pioneer Park, Covington, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. for a free drive-thru resource event honoring and celebrating veterans.

Service recognition certificates, giveaways, military-themed music and resources for veteran services will be provided. RSVPs kindly requested for certificate recognition. Contact natalie.cuilla@stelizabeth.com or call 446-0538 for information.

**Emerald Gala**

is Nov. 13, Seither Sports Center, 7 p.m.–12 a.m. The theme for the night is Totally 80s. For information, visit BBHSGala2021.GiveSmart.com or e-mail gala@bishopbrossart.org.

**Men’s Retreat**


**Super experiments**

(right) St. Joseph School, Cold Spring, fourth grade science teacher, Sarah Bryant, gave her students an assignment — write an experiment to demonstrate the use of The Scientific Method. It was a task with a fun twist. They had to use at least one superball in their experiment. This was a challenge accepted with a smile.

As confusion mounts in the world we can have peace, for Jesus said: “... the Spirit of truth ... will guide you into all the truth ... and he will declare to you the things that are to come” (John 16:13). Learn more about the Spirit of truth as Deacon Jerry Franzén unpacks the book, “Sober Intoxication of the Spirit,” by Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher to the Papal Household, Oct. 19, Blessed Sacrament Parish Center, Ft. Mitchell, 7–8:45 p.m.

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ed a SEEK retreat this past week. The goal of the SEEK retreat is to make confirmation more aware of those people who are, as Pope Francis says, on the peripheries and to learn about the organizations ministering to them, and how they can help. As a part of the retreat students walked through the streets of Covington visiting the Emergency Shelter, The Parish Kitchen, and Welcome House. There was also some time for questions, reflections, and activities to process what the students saw and learned. The SEEK retreat was led by Benedictine Sister Cathy Bauer.

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Barron: If religion becomes an afterthought, ‘our society loses its soul’

Peter Finney Jr.
Catholic News Service

NEW ORLEANS — With tensions rising over the proper role of religion in society, the broader culture appears to be compartmentalizing religious faith and moral thinking into something akin to “a hobby,” said Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron Oct. 4.

He made the comments in his homily at St. Louis Cathedral at the Red Mass of the Archdiocese of New Orleans Oct. 4, 2021. 

During the Red Mass of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.


Cathedral at the Red Mass of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, which drew judges, lawyers and politicians.

“Today, it seems to me the far greater threat is coming from the side of an ideological secularity that would like to shuffle religion off the playing field altogether or, at the very least, to confine it to the realm of privacy so that it would function as a kind of hobby,” said Bishop Barron, founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

The annual Red Mass was attended by Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards, members of the Louisiana Supreme Court, other members of the judiciary and public officials.

If religious principles were relegated to an afterthought, Bishop Barron said, “then our society loses its soul, our laws lose their rootedness in the moral and spiritual law and our democracy loses its cohesiveness.”

“I would say that resistance to this sort of secularizing attack on religion should be of paramount importance for Catholics within the legal and political establishment,” he added.

Bishop Barron traced the relationship between religion and the law by drawing on the Book of Genesis, which added.

“Identifying them as creatures of the one God, the author of Genesis is knocking them off a pedestal,” he said. “But, at the same time and in the same measure, he’s establishing that they have their own integrity. The secular law is opened up by God in the very act of creation.”

Contrary to the thinking that Israel was a theocracy, Bishop Barron said its rulers were “not prophets and priests.”

“There’s a kingly palace and a priestly temple — and they’re not the same,” he said. “There are two separate realms. At the same time, (the king’s) work is always done under God, that is to say, in accord with the divine law, which judges him personally and his decisions.”

“His, in the biblical interpretation, political rulers, precisely because they are not divine figures and yet under God’s authority can and should be criticized.”

Even King David, the greatest of Israel’s rulers, was branded in the Bible “as an adulterer and a murderer,” he said.

“But, mind you, even as they harshly chastise them, the prophets don’t question the legitimate authority of kings, nor do they try to eliminate the office of king,” Bishop Barron said. “In short, we see the Bible is inviting us into this creative tension between nature and grace or between the sacred and the secular or between the church and state, to use our terms.”

Bishop Barron said a second-century letter to Diognetus tries to explain the unusual role early Christians played in politics and the broader society, saying “they dwell in their own fatherlands but as if sojourners in them.”

“This detachment is born of the profound conviction that they have,” Bishop Barron said. “Ultimately, as Paul puts it, their citizenship is in heaven. ... It’s because Christians do not see any one set of political arrangements as following inevitably from their faith that they can live happily enough in a variety of political and cultural settings.”

Bishop Barron said the fear of 19th-century philosopher and historian Alexis de Tocqueville that American democracy could be bedeviled by “rampant individualism” has become an issue of serious concern.

“Tocqueville saw in the rhetoric of Jefferson and the other founders a preference for the freedom of the individual to pursue happiness as he or she saw fit without any particular direction given from civil authorities,” Bishop Barron said. “The danger, as Tocqueville saw it, was the opening up of a civic space utterly demalled of moral or spiritual purpose, an arena in which individuals simply sought their own fundamentally materialistic ends. The needful thing, (Tocqueville) concluded, is a vibrant religious culture that operates outside of the direct control of the state but throughout the civil society as the soul of the nation. Pulpits, religious organizations, parishes, religious publishing houses, evangelistic enterprises all would provide a moral and spiritual ballast to what otherwise would be a purely secular space. ... I wonder if any of that sounds familiar?”

Bishop Barron also drew on the 13th-century writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, who taught that all positive laws are the prerogative of the “properly constituted civil authority,” but to be legitimate, they must be rooted “in the natural law, which is to say, that a set of moral prescriptions, for example, ex hypothesi, are discernible as objective values.”

He said the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. explicitly drew on Aquinas’ thinking by declaring that the “Jim Crow laws of his time were unjust precisely in the measure that they did not embody the principles of the natural, moral law.”

“Finally, argues Aquinas, moral law is grounded in the eternal law, which is the final, eternal purpose for the world,” he said. “Thus, a supposedly moral law that stands in contradiction to the intentions of God would be revealable, ipso facto, as fraudulent.”

After Mass, Gov. Edwards greeted Bishop Barron outside the cathedral and thanked him for his message.

Bishop Barron replied by thanking Edwards, a pro-life Democrat, for his official actions: In 2019, Edwards signed a state law that prohibited abortion if a fetal heartbeat was detected.

The governor then asked Bishop Barron for a copy of his homily
Professes first vows
(Continued from page 2)

Christ. “After the pattern of the Little Way, fill every moment of this service with love and devotion to Christ,” Bishop Iffert said. “This will be the fulfillment of the dedication that you accept today. It will be your path for joy here and for all eternity.”

Sister Therese made her visit to the Franciscan Daughters of Mary in 2018 and entered the community as a postulant on Jan. 1, 2019. She found the community after being matched by a community matching website — Vision Vocation Network. Coming from Charlotte, North Carolina, she is the eldest of nine children. Her love for her biological sister, who has Down’s Syndrome, drew her to the community because of its commitment to uphold the dignity of every human person from conception to natural death.

“She’s always helped me,” Sister Therese said about her sister. “She is just always this little joy and this little bundle of love that I could just be loved by and love on. Growing up, I always knew that she was there for me; being with her was just a relief from anything or everything that was going on around me — just like a piece of heaven.”

Sister Therese said she first felt the call to religious when she was 16 or 17 years old.

“The Lord has given me so much love and just want to give everything to him,” she said. “It’s a response from heart to his call of love.”

“I just want to give everything to him,” she said about her sister. “She is just always this little joy and this little bundle of love that I could just be loved by and love on. Growing up, I always knew that she was there for me; being with her was just a relief from anything or everything that was going on around me — just like a piece of heaven.”

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.

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 e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletin:
• October bulletin: posted Sunday, Oct. 3; due Tuesday, Nov. 2.

If your Virtus account is inactivated please contact your primary location for assistance. To login www.virtus.org, enter user id and password.

VIRTUS Training:
• Tuesday, Oct. 19, 6-9 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Covington, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium
• Thursday, Oct. 21, 6-9 p.m., Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Stieglitz Hall
• Thursday, Nov. 11, 6–9 p.m., St Agnes, Ft. Wright, Bishop Murphy Hall

How to access Virtual training
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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 Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-1500 or msteffen@covdio.org.

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“Cry Macho” (Warner Bros.) Clint Eastwood directed and stars in this gentle, though tense, road movie, set in 1980. He plays a burned-out rodeo star who, at the behest of his ex-boss, a Texas rancher, travels to Mexico to find the cattleman’s preteen son and bring him to the States to live with his dad. The journey that ensues, which finds the pair eventually bonding with a warmhearted cafe owner, is more amble than a scramble. But there’s a kindly tone to Nick Schenck and N. Richard Nash’s sometimes off-key script, adapted from a novel by Nash, that goes a long way toward redeeming the slow pace and predictable story arc. While cynics may also come away unsatisfied, viewers inclined to plumb the emotional depths explored in this always intense but sometimes awkward and overbearing film should equip themselves with Kleenex. Given the upright nature of the picture’s fundamental values and the lesson it teaches about the importance of honesty, parents will probably find it acceptable for older adolescents. Mature themes, including suicide and depression, references to homosexuality and sexual exploitation and physical abuse make it unsuitable for kids. Mature themes, including child prostitution, brief, mild sexual activity, several profanities, a couple of milder oaths, sporadic crude and crass language. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG-13.

“The Addams Family 2” (MGM) In this animated sequel to the 2019 film, directed again by Conrad Vernon and Conrad Vernon, the beloved characters from the imagination of Charles Addams are as creepy, kooky, mysterious and spooky as ever, and the humor remains dark and macabre, but overall good-natured. Gomez and Morticia are worried about their kids, Pugsley and Wednesday. When a creepy lawyer claims to have evidence that Wednesday is not their daughter, the family takes flight, embarking on a road trip across the United States. As the lightheartedness for torture and weapons could be misunderstood by young viewers, the film is best reserved for mature teens and grown-ups. The film contains macabre and suggestive jokes and non-perilous action sequences. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG.

“Cops Shop” (Open Road) In this tense, gritty crime drama, set in an isolated Nevada police station, a dedicated rookie officer gets caught up in the plight of a slippery con artist with a price on his head who is simultaneously being pursued by two contract killers, one somewhat civilized, the other an outright psychopath. Awash in gore by its closing credits, Joe Carnahan’s film is suitable for few but those grown ups willing to look past the sometimes-brutal mayhem will find complex moral shadings for few. But those grown-ups willing to look past the some-

Movie Capsule

For full reviews of each of these films — go to catholicnews.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.”

Catholic News Service

October 15, 2021

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The School Food Services Office of the Diocese of Covington Department of Catholic Schools seeks candidates for School Cafeteria Manager at Blessed Sacrament School. Monday – Friday, during the school year. The School Cafeteria Manager’s primary responsibilities involve overall supervision of the School’s meals program, including: managing employees; ordering, receiving, and managing inventory; preparing and serving meals; operating the point-of-sale system; and interacting with school staff, students, and their parents. Organizational and interpersonal skills are essential to this position. To request an application, contact Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org. Scan and return the completed application by e-mail, including references with contact e-mail addresses and compensation history. Applications may also be faxed to 859/392-1589.

SCHOOL CAFETERIA MANAGER
The School Food Services Office of the Diocese of Covington Department of Catholic Schools seeks candidates for School Cafeteria Manager at Blessed Sacrament School. Monday – Friday, during the school year. The School Cafeteria Manager’s primary responsibilities involve overall supervision of the School’s meals program, including: managing employees; ordering, receiving, and managing inventory; preparing and serving meals; operating the point-of-sale system; and interacting with school staff, students, and their parents. Organizational and interpersonal skills are essential to this position. To request an application, contact Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org. Scan and return the completed application by e-mail, including references with contact e-mail addresses and compensation history. Applications may also be faxed to 859/392-1589.

CLIENT SERVICES SPECIALIST
The Diocese of Covington Catholic Charities is seeking to hire a client care services specialist. The position is 40 hours per week. Its primary purpose is to assist, serve and support clients and inquirers seeking services and assistance, manage their case files and provide customer service through the entire process. Also, provide other office administrative support. To apply, e-mail or fax a letter of interest along with a C-V or comprehensive resume with compensation history, and a minimum of five references with their contact email addresses, to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org. Must be practicing Catholic. Please see job posting at https://www.covingtoncharities.org/news-events/job-opportunities for more complete details.

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Parish Kitchen Manager
The Diocese of Covington Catholic Charities ministry is seeking to hire a Coordinator for our Mental Health and Pregnancy/Adoption Programs. The position is 40 hours per week, including some evening hours. This staff person performs all the duties of a licensed counselor for our general counseling practice serving individuals and families, with a partial emphasis on pregnancy and adoption. Major areas of responsibility include providing assessment, case management, diagnoses, and therapy to children, families, and adults, within the outpatient program; and facilitating groups, and providing services to pregnant clients, their partners, and/or their families, including counseling, case management, parenting support, and foster care coordination and supervision. The successful candidate will be an actively-practicing Roman Catholic individual with a Master’s degree in Social Work or a related field and experience with diverse populations of families, couples, children, and adults. We prefer LCSW or LPC license, or eligibility within two years. Qualified individuals should submit a letter of interest along with a detailed resume or CV, including compensation history and at least 3 references with contact e-mail addresses, by email or by fax to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859-392-1589.

Mental Health & Pregnancy/Adoption Counselor
The Diocese of Covington’s Catholic Charities ministry is seeking to hire a Counselor for our Mental Health and Pregnancy/Adoption Programs. This position is full-time, generally 5 days M-F from 7:00 am-2:00 pm. The Manager coordinates and manages on-site activities of the Parish Kitchen, including the deployment, coordination, and supervision of all staff and volunteers, and also oversees day-to-day activities in a way consistent with its mission, values, and personnel policies. The Manager is an advocate for those served, providing hospitality and offering assistance in collaboration with other social service ministries. Candidates should be practicing Roman Catholics with a strong background in social services and/or ministry. Core requirements include a Bachelor’s degree in a human service or related field, and experience in food service operations and management. Interested individuals should submit a detailed resume, including at least five references, along with a cover letter and salary history by email or fax to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR, at skoplyay@covdio.org or fax 859-392-1589.
AFTERSCHOOL CARE PROGRAM STAFF

Mary, Queen of Heaven School is seeking to hire 2 responsible adults to assist with our Afterschool Care Program. Candidates must be 18 years of age or older, and enjoy working with children. Please contact Jennifer Jett at jjett@mshschool.com or call the school office 859-371-8100 for further information.

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SCHOOL CAFETERIA STAFF

St. Henry District High School cafeteria is in need of a full-time staff member. Monday through Friday during the school year. Duties include food preparation, serving, daily cleanup, helping with deliveries, and other tasks as needed. Candidates may contact Jackie Kaiser at jkaiser@covdio.org, or call 859-392-1536.

Not my will but yours

(Continued from page 5)
evil to occur, but since that is what human beings offered, God folded it into God’s plan, and it suited that plan that Jesus endure it. One thinks of the probably-apocryphal story of Teresa of Ávila saying to Jesus, “If this is how you treat your friends, it is no wonder that you have so few of them.” Yet God takes on the evil of the world and uses it for our salvation.

The second compelling idea in today’s Scriptures is from Hebrews, that we have a high priest, Jesus, who has “similarly been tested in every way” as we. We can pair this with something we will read in the next chapter of Hebrews, that “Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.”

Again, we need to wrestle honestly with this. Did Jesus have to learn how to be obedient? Think of it more this way that it is in suffering that we are most tempted to leave the way of God, to say, “This is wrong; God can’t want this.” It is precisely in suffering, though, that we have the chance to act in humility and trust, remaining with God even as our bodies or spirits want to rebel, allowing God to bring about good, in us and in the world.

Is evil good, then? Are we simply to accept it? Are we not to fight against evil? Evil, of course, is never good, but God uses even evil to bring about God’s good effects. Evil is not in God’s original plan, but as Wilfrid Stinissen wrote, “What he permits is also a part of his universal, all-embracing will. He has foreseen it from the beginning and decided how he will use it” (Into Your Hands, Father).

Nothing in our lives happens haphazardly ... Everything that takes place against our will can only come from God’s will, his Providence, the order he has created, the permission he gives, and the laws he has established” (Inarrationes, quoted in Struassen).

Our model for how to accept suffering from God is, of course, in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus prays that the Father allow the cup Jesus faces to pass from him, but he ends with the all-important phrase, “Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.” The suffering that God allows or ordains for us is part of God’s plan — for our growth and transformation, and for the good of the world. It is our part to accept it, abandoning ourselves to God’s idea of what is good.

It is fine to pray that our portion of Jesus’ cup be taken away from us, but it is vital that we always end saying, “nevertheless, not my will, but yours.” What we should be striving for is not to say to God, “We want you to do whatever we want,” but, “Do with us as you will, Lord.”

It is precisely in suffering that we can learn to say and mean, “Jesus, I trust in you.” God’s will is always good, even when we cannot see how. Let us let ourselves be transformed by the Scriptures and the liturgy.

Especially beneficial might be the closing prayer of the chaplet of Divine Mercy, when we pray that “in difficult moments, we might not despair; nor become despondent, [nor be disobedient], but with great confidence, submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy Itself.”

Father Stephen Bankemper is pastor, St. Catherine of Sienna Parish, Ft. Thomas, Ky.

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Vatican offers free e-book for family rosary

WASHINGTON — As the fight against COVID-19 continues in the United States, the nation’s leaders must not forget the ongoing struggle with the pandemic in poorer nations, particularly in Africa. That’s the message that leaders from inter-denominational groups around the country are trying to get across to Congress. Among them is Sam Brownback, former U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. In an opinion piece for The Hill, a Washington-based online news outlet, and in other forums, he has recently called on Congress to lend its support for African nations to receive additional funding from the International Monetary Fund.

The funds, Brownback said, would come at no cost to U.S. taxpayers. “The meditations are brief, taken from ‘Amoris Laetitia’ and are accompanied by short quotes from Pope Francis’ 2016 document, ‘The Joy of Love,’” wrote Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the dicastery. “The meditations are brief, taken from ‘Amoris Laetitia’ and are accompanied by short

U.S. urged to lead way to help world’s poorer nations recover from pandemic

WASHINGTON — As the fight against COVID-19 continues in the United States, the nation’s leaders must not forget the ongoing struggle with the pandemic in poorer nations, particularly in Africa. That’s the message that leaders from inter-denominational groups around the country are trying to get across to Congress. Among them is Sam Brownback, former U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. In an opinion piece for The Hill, a Washington-based online news outlet, and in other forums, he has recently called on Congress to lend its support for African nations to receive additional funding from the International Monetary Fund. The funds, Brownback said, would come at no cost to U.S. taxpayers and are desperately needed by nations so they can bolster vaccination efforts, purchase needed health care equipment, shore up struggling health care systems and bolster their economies. He noted the funds are especially critical because only about 3% of people in Africa have been vaccinated against COVID-19 and cases there continue to rise.

Court seems to lean toward Kentucky attorney general defending abortion law

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court, which is set to take up a major abortion case later this term, heard oral arguments Oct. 12 on a procedural question on a state’s abortion law. Specifically, the justices examined whether Kentucky’s attorney general, Republican Daniel Cameron, could defend an abortion law from three years ago that has been struck down by the lower courts. And in the more than one hour of arguments, the justices seemed inclined to agree that he should be able to defend the law. The Kentucky law banned an abortion procedure known as dilation and evacuation after the 15th week of pregnancy. Here’s a recap of how this case came to court: Right after the abortion law was signed by the state’s then-governor, Republican Matt Bevin, in 2018, it was challenged and blocked by a federal judge who called it unconstitutional. A year later, the state’s new governor, Democrat Andy Beshear — coincidentally, the state’s attorney general from 2015 to 2019 — named Eric Friedlander as Kentucky’s health and family services secretary. Friedlander defended the law in the courts until the block on it was upheld by a three-judge panel of the 6th Circuit. He did not file for a review of the ruling by the full 6th Circuit. Cameron, whose term also began in 2019, wanted to weigh in on this abortion law before Beshear and Friedlander dropped the case. So he asked the full 6th Circuit to examine the three-judge panel’s ruling. The appeals court rejected his case, saying he was too late with it, so he brought it to the Supreme Court.

It’s ‘wrong’ to let Title X cover abortion, says USCCB’s pro-life chairman

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration ‘is wrong’ to allow Title X family planning funds to be used for abortion, said the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities. It is “wrong to use taxpayer dollars to fund abortion providers who participate in a pre-pregnancy program specifically designed to exclude abortion,” Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, said in an Oct. 7 statement. “Abortion is not family planning. Abortion takes the life of an already-conceived and growing child,” he said. “The violence of abortion wounds countless women physically, spiritually and emotionally.” The administration announced late Oct. 4 that it had officially reversed the Trump-era “Protect Life Rule” enforcing Title X’s ban on taxpayer funds from being used to promote or provide elective abortions. “Title X was intended and authorized to be a program entirely separate from abortion,” Archbishop Naumann said, “and it plainly states that ‘the funds authorized under this legislation shall be used only to support preventive family planning services, population research, infertility services, and other related medical, informational and educational activities’.”

Historic Singapore church, now restored, reopens to continue ministry

SINGAPORE — A historic Catholic church built by French missionaries on the outskirts of Singapore has reopened to the public after two years of closure for restoration; it will continue its mission to serve southerners and the local Chinese-speaking community. The Church of St. Teresa sits on a hill overlooking the port of Singapore. Paris Foreign Mission Society priests built the church in 1929, making it the first rural church in Singapore, reported ucanews.com. The missionaries aimed to carry out a mission among the rising number of Chinese-speaking Catholics in the area, according to the church’s historical records. Later, missionary activities included seafarers. Besides serving mariners and Chinese Catholics, the church has also opened to people in distress. In 1961, when a nearby fire left four dead, about 50 injured and thousands of homes destroyed, the church offered shelter to many homeless people. Over the years, the church also has offered educational and social services to the community.
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