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# MESSENGER

Serving the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky since 1926



Pope Francis walks through the crypt of St. Peter’s Basilica as he visits the tombs of deceased popes at the Vatican on All Souls’ Day, Nov. 2, 2020. In a 2023 interview marking the 10th anniversary of his election, the 86-year-old pope said he thinks about death often, but it is a good thing to remember one will not live forever.

CNS photo/Vatican Media

## ‘Fraternity, tears, smiles’: Pope shares hopes for the future

Cindy Wooden  
*Catholic News Service*

VATICAN CITY — In interviews focused on the 10th anniversary of his election, Pope Francis insisted it is not his task to make an accounting of what he has or has not accomplished since March 13, 2013.

“The Lord will do the appraisal when he sees fit,” the pope told the Italian newspaper *Il Fatto Quotidiano*.

However, he said he was certain the criteria for judgment would be from Matthew 25: feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and visiting prisoners.

But he did have three words for what he hopes for the future: “Fraternity, tears, smiles.”

As Pope Francis marked his anniversary celebrating Mass with cardinals in the chapel of his residence, Vatican News released a short “popecast” that included the pope’s three-word response to a question about his dreams for the Church, the world and humanity.

“We are all brothers and sisters,” he explained, and more efforts must be made to live like it.

“And to learn not to be afraid to weep and to smile,” he said. “When a person knows how to cry and how to smile, he or she has their feet on the ground and their gaze on the horizon of the future.”

“If a person has forgotten how to cry, something is wrong,” Pope Francis said. “And if that person has forgotten how to smile, it’s even worse.”

The 86-year-old pope also asked the Vatican News interviewer, “What’s a podcast?”

In the handful of interviews Pope Francis granted in connection with his anniversary, several topics kept coming up: the war in Ukraine and wars around the world, women in the Church, outreach to LGBTQ Catholics, handling criticism and even whether he thinks about death.

He does, he told the Argentinean website *Perfil*. He said he thinks about death often and “very peacefully” because “it is necessary to remember” that no one lives forever.

The Argentinean newspaper *La Nacion* asked Pope Francis about the importance of the Synod of Bishops on synodality, a process the pope launched in October 2021 and that will culminate with synodal assemblies in 2023 and 2024.

In the context of explaining how he has tried to revitalize the synods, which were reinstated by St. Paul VI after the Second Vatican Council, the pope told *La Nacion* that including more voices is an ongoing process.

During the 2019 Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, he said, “the

question was asked: Why can’t women vote? Are they second-class Christians?”

The Vatican’s answer always had been that while the input of many was essential to a synod, it was the role of bishops to discern and vote.

However, 10 priests — and occasionally a religious brother — traditionally were elected by the men’s Union of Superiors General of religious orders as full voting members of the synod alongside bishops.

In February 2021, Pope Francis named Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart one of the undersecretaries of the synod general secretariat, a post that would make her an automatic voting member of the assembly.

So, *La Nacion* asked the pope if only one woman would have a vote at the next synod assembly.

“Everyone who participates in the synod will vote. Those who are guests or observers will not vote,” he said, but whoever participates in a synod as a member “has the right to vote. Whether male or female. Everyone, everyone. That word everyone for me is key.”

On the question of LGBTQ Catholics, Pope Francis insisted to the *Perfil* interviewer that “everyone is a child of God and each one seeks and finds God by whatever path he or she can.”

While the pope insisted matrimony can only be between one man and one woman, he also repeated his support for the legal rights guaranteed by civil unions for gay couples and others who share a life. And he said, as he told the Associated Press in January, homosexuality should not be criminalized.

As for Catholic teaching that homosexual acts are sinful, like any sexual activity outside of marriage, Pope Francis said he did not think those sins would send a person to hell.

“God only sets aside the proud, the rest of us sinners are all in line,” he said, and God always is reaching out to save sinners who seek his help.

In the interviews with both *La Nacion* and *Perfil*, Pope Francis insisted there is a difference between a pastoral outreach to LGBTQ Catholics and accepting “gender ideology,” which, he said, “is one of the most dangerous ideological colonizations.”

“Why is it dangerous? Because it dilutes differences, and the richness of men and women and of all humanity is the tension of differences. It is to grow through the tension of differences,” the pope said.

A gender theory that sees being male or female as a social construct or choice rather than a fact related to biological identity “is diluting the differences and making the world the same, all blunt, all equal,” the pope said. “And that goes against the human vocation.”

In each of the interviews, he spoke of the horror of war and his concern for the continued fighting in Ukraine.

Asked by Vatican News what he would want as a gift for his 10th anniversary, Pope Francis responded: “Peace. We need peace.”

*For more on Pope Francis’ 10 year anniversary, see pages 25-28.*



# Let your voice be heard — take the DMI survey

Laura Keener  
Editor

The *Messenger* reached out to the With One Heart Parish Points of Contact asking them to recommend a parishioner that has taken the Disciple Maker Index who might be interested in sharing interesting insights about the survey. Thank you to the PPOCs for the many recommendations. The *Messenger* was able to connect with six parishioners from a cross section of the diocese.

All but two of the respondents said that they completed the survey online and that it took about 10 to 15 minutes — which corresponded with the time projected by the With One Heart team.

Tom Seiter, parishioner at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, California, said that he wanted to take the time to reflect on the questions.

“I was not in a particular hurry to rush through it. In fact, I filled out a paper copy before going online, so I stopped a few times and returned to eventually complete it,” said Mr. Seiter. That added reflection left him disappointed in some of his responses. “There is clearly room for personal improvement,” he said.

Likewise, Jim O’Neill, parishioner at St. John Parish, Carrollton, was able to complete the survey in a little over 30 minutes, taking “some additional time to review and revise.”

There were some criticisms of the survey itself, with many sharing some degree of disappointment that there was no opportunity to share comments or explanations. Many said that they found it hard to answer objectively — sorting out what they would like for their faith life or their parish to be like and what is the reality. Others said that answering the questions made them proud of their parish. All respondents said that they are interested in seeing how the answers will be scored, interpreted and utilized.

Through answering the survey questions, Jeanette Franks, parishioner, St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, found a great appreciation for her pastor and fellow parishioners in the work that they are doing.

“After answering the questions, I realize how fortunate we are at St. Barbara’s. Our parish has a great pastor and is very welcoming. I have met some incredible people who have helped me in my faith journey,” Ms. Franks said. “There are many activities and opportunities in my parish

that I have not been able to participate ... I realize I need to get more involved, especially in volunteering.”

As she was taking the survey, Irene Pritchett, parishioner, St. Henry Parish, Elsmere, said she found herself thinking, “What are they trying to learn? What are they trying to get at?”

Ms. Pritchett is a marketing professional who is very familiar with both qualitative and quantitative research and surveys. One response she felt wasn’t quite fair: The question asked about hours of participation in parish ministry. One of the answers provided a range of, “0 to 4 hours per week.”

“There’s a huge difference between someone who participates zero hours a week in a ministry and someone

In the end, Mrs. Watson trusted that the survey would be anonymous and answered truthfully. “I wish that I could have explained better because some of the questions put me on a fence.”

Mr. O’Neill, too, tried to find the right balance between being “overly critical” yet still answering honestly “according to my conscience” on the parish community and the challenges of growing in faith together.

“Every organization on this planet has room for improvement,” he said. “Knowing how surveys work means that I had to balance responses carefully with ‘eh, it is what it is’ versus ‘this is not how it should be and since you’re finally asking...’”

In reflecting on the questions, Mr. O’Neill found that he



## What’s on your heart?

### Take the Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey

The Disciple Maker Index survey is open in the Diocese of Covington through March 27. The Disciple Maker Index is a 75-question, multiple choice answer, survey that allows parishioners of the diocese to “reflect on their journey of discipleship and their parish’s effectiveness in supporting that journey.” The survey is available online at [covidio.org/withoneheart](https://covidio.org/withoneheart).

who participates four hours a week in ministry,” she said.

Overall, she said the survey was good and covered a lot of ground. She especially found the questions asking her to reflect on her personal faith journey enlightening.

“I love this and it is timely,” she said given the past couple years of COVID and being Lent and, for the people of St. Henry during this time of transition as they get to know a new pastor:

“Where are you on your Catholic journey? That’s a really, really important thing for all of us to think about,” she said.

A key piece, Ms. Pritchett said, will be how parishes and the diocese share and use the data with parishioners. “People want to know, ‘okay, I’ve told you – now, tell me back what you’re doing about this.’ I think that responsiveness is so important,” she said.

“There were questions that I had to sit and ponder and decide, what do I really think about this,” said Sue Watson, parishioner, St. Mary Parish, Alexandria. “Some of my answers I struggled with because I knew that there was the answer that I should be giving and then there was the truth.”

had questions of his own. How will the survey map out opportunities for individuals and parishes? Is anyone going to check-in on where someone is on their journey?

“There’s always the promise of positive change from surveys, but wishful thinking isn’t going to change how our parish operates, what’s important to it and how it cares for and communicates with parishioners ... expecting a re-rack is foolish considering the resources just aren’t there,” he said. In the end, “transparency will be key ... We all need help — those delivering and those receiving — I very much appreciate the initiative and pray that the decisionmakers use the results wisely.”

Bob Gleich, parishioner, St. William Parish, Williamstown, agreed that some of the questions were difficult to answer honestly.

“The survey questions that required the most reflection for me were the questions regarding self-reflection on your journey with Christ,” Mr. Gleich said. “It can be hard to answer these questions in an honest and self-reflective manner. The question regarding the pace of my spiritual growth proved to be difficult and I asked the Holy Spirit to help guide me in answering. The pace is not as quick as I think it should be.”

Answering these questions, he said, helped to realize that what he is needing is a spiritual director. “This is an area I would like guidance in looking to implement,” he said.

The survey questions also made Mr. Gleich more aware of how difficult, yet necessary, it is for a small parish to both keep the “running of the parish” and finding ways for evangelization. “The same parishioners work in four or more ministries at a time. This is not a bad reflection on the parish by no means, but we need more people in the pews to lessen the load,” he said.

Mr. Gleich offered his appreciation to Bishop John Iffert and the With One Heart teams for their work.

“To come out with this survey shows true leadership ... being open to opinions is difficult. I am interested in the changes that could result from this survey,” Mr. Gleich said. “I am so hopeful and excited to see the next steps.”

Ms. Watson encourages parishioners to take the DMI survey.

“It’s a good opportunity for you to have a say in what is working and what is not working in your parish,” she said. “It’s sort of like voting — if you don’t fill out the survey, you’re not having your voice heard. You’re missing an opportunity.”

*Note: The parishioners interviewed have shared some concerns and questions that many others, possibly you, are having. The Messenger will be following-up with the With One Heart teams next week and in future editions to address these questions and concerns*

# DCCH Center for Children and Families names Denise Govan new Executive Director

## Staff report

DCCH Center for Children and Families, Ft. Mitchell, announced the selection of Denise Govan as its new Executive Director. Denise joins DCCH as its third Executive Director in the past 31 years. Notre Dame Sister Jean Marie Hoffman held the post for 23 years, followed by Bob Wilson’s eight years leading the organization.

“We are fortunate to have someone of Denise’s high caliber join the DCCH family and mission,” said Mr. Wilson. “I am grateful she has accepted the position. Her doing so confirms that my decision to step out of the executive role is not only good for me personally, but it also presents a tremendous opportunity for our organization to evolve and thrive as well.”

In November 2022 Mr. Wilson announced his plans to retire this spring. He will stay on with DCCH for a time to



Denise Govan

support the transition.

“Our entire DCCH family is grateful for Bob’s many years of dedication,” said Holly Mazzocca, president, DCCH Board. “His leadership shepherded us through many important transitions for our programs. We are confident Denise will continue our history of strong leadership and commitment to serving the most vulnerable children and families in Kentucky. We are thrilled to welcome her aboard.”

Ms. Govan is a respected leader in the Tri-state’s non-profit sector. She formerly held executive leadership, management and direct services positions at Life Learning Center, Brighton Center, and Transitions. She brings 28 years of experience working with and advocating for impoverished and underserved individuals and families in a cross section of programs.

“I am so honored and proud to serve as the next Executive Director in the family tree of DCCH’s inspiring programs,” Ms. Govan said.



# Eucharistic meditation 4: Clothed in light

**USCCB/Eucharistic Revival Team**

This Eucharistic Meditation is designed to help you spend 30 minutes to an hour in meditation and silent prayer with Jesus during Eucharistic adoration. Even if you cannot be physically present in a church or adoration chapel with the Blessed Sacrament, you can unite yourself spiritually to the Eucharist as you spend this time in prayer.

The grace I seek: To believe that Jesus will transform my whole being in himself

**Pray:** In the name of the Father; and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, the Lord of Life, has given himself to you in the Eucharist. He is gazing upon you, his beloved child, with great love at this very moment. Pause for a few moments and wonder at his gift for you. Allow yourself to rest in his loving gaze. Thank Jesus for the gift of himself in the Eucharist.

**Ask for the grace:** Jesus, help me to trust you to envelop me daily with your light and grace.

**Scripture Meditation**

“The LORD said to Abram: ‘Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father’s house to a land that I



will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.” (Gen 12:1-2)

**Reflection Questions**

As you continue this journey of Lent, how has the Lord revealed his blessings to you? Recall concrete examples of the physical and spiritual blessings he has showered upon

you. How do these blessings transform your heart so that you are a blessing to others?

**Scripture Meditation**

“Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. [...] Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, ‘Lord, it is good that we are here.’” (Matt 17:1-2, 4)

**Reflection Questions**

The Lord leads us to a place of intimacy with himself, and in that intimacy he transforms us in his light and goodness. Gazing upon the Eucharist, ask Jesus to lead you to intimacy with his heart. Rest in that heart, and say with the disciples,

“Lord, it is good that I am here.”

**Closing Prayer**

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

## High School Theatre

**Bishop Brossart High School**

**Presents: “Grease”**

March 24 and 25, 7 p.m.; March 26, 2 p.m.

Bishop Brossart High School, Munninghoff Family Performing Arts Center, Alexandria

Tickets: \$10

Order online at [bishopbrossart.org](http://bishopbrossart.org) under Events

**Covington Catholic High School and Notre Dame Academy**

**Presents: “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”**

March 31 and April 1, 7 p.m.; April 2, 2 p.m.

Location: Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills

Tickets: \$5 students; \$12 pre-paid non-students; \$15 at the door non-students

Tickets can be purchased at the door with cash or Venmo or online

**Covington Latin School**

**Presents: “Little Women”**

April 21 and 22, 7 p.m.

Location: Covington Latin School, Covington

Tickets: \$5

Tickets may be purchased at the door.

**Holy Cross District High School**

**Presents: “Schoolhouse Rock Live”**

April 21 and 22, 7 p.m.; April 23, 1 p.m.

Location: Carnegie Theatre, Covington

Tickets: \$22 adults; \$17 students and seniors

To purchase tickets, call the box office at (859) 957-1940

**Newport Central Catholic**

**Presents: “Something Rotten”**

April 21, Gala Event; April 22, 28, 29, 7 p.m.

Location: Newport Central Catholic, Newport

Tickets: \$12 adults; \$7 students

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/2cf33ece/6UhuL1YLkUWkbZU014nftw?u=https://gofan.co/app/school/KY6479>

**St. Henry District High School**

**Presents: “Bedtime Stories” by Ed Monk**

March 24 and 25, 7 p.m.; March 26, 2 p.m.

Location: Drees Homes Auditorium, St. Henry District High School, Erlanger

Tickets: \$12 adults; \$8 students

To purchase tickets, go to <https://shdhs.org/product/bedtime-stories-as-told-by-our-dad-who-messed-them-up/>

**St. Patrick School**

**Presents: “Cinderella”**

March 10, 7 p.m.; March 11, 3 and 7 p.m.

Location: Maysville Technical & Community College, Maysville

Tickets: \$15 adults; \$10 children; age 3 and under are free

Call the school office for tickets at (606) 564-5949

**Villa Madonna Academy**

**Presents: “Anything Goes!”**

March 16 – 18, 7 p.m.; March 19, 2 p.m.

Location: Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills

Tickets: \$12 adults, \$8 children.



**Stations of the Cross at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption**

Fridays, through March 31, 6:30 p.m.



**Bishop’s Schedule**

**March 18**

Mass, Society of St. Vincent de Paul centennial, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell, 4 p.m.

**March 19**

Mass and installation of deacon candidates to Lector, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.

Serra Club Server Awards/Vespers, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 2 p.m., reception following, Covington Latin School

**March 20**

Pro-Life Essay banquet, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Curia, Covington, 6 p.m.

**March 21**

Advisory Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.

Diocesan Finance Council meeting, 2 p.m.

Diocesan Board of Education meeting, 7 p.m.

**March 22**

Directors meeting, 9:30 a.m.

**March 24**

Senior Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.

**March 25**

Mass, Franciscan Daughters of Mary perpetual vows, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.

Vigil Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 4:30 p.m.

**March 25–26**

DPAA Follow-up Weekend

COMMENTARY

Rejoicing in traditions

This Sunday we celebrate Laetare Sunday. Laetare is Latin for “Rejoice.” It’s the fourth Sunday of Lent, a little more than halfway through our journey to Easter. The Church gives us a slight break from the penitential focus

VIEWPOINT



Jamie Schroeder

of the season, a “shot in the arm” so to speak, as we get ready to enter the most solemn days of the liturgical year. My mind automatically turns to the traditions I plan to observe in these final weeks leading up to the great feast. Traditions bring the faith alive in our homes and in our communities which makes living our faith real, more than something we do only on Sunday.

The food and the meals we enjoy during Lent and Easter are one such tradition. Many Catholics know that pretzels are a Lenten staple. The shape represents arms crossed in prayer and the simple ingredients of flour, salt and water remind us of fasting. Maybe pretzels could be the only snack food kept in the house in the final weeks of Lent.

I sometimes incorporate the foods of the Jewish Seder supper in my family’s meal on Wednesday of Holy Week. On Holy Thursday, we attend the potluck dinner at our parish before the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, and we always have hot cross buns with our main meal on Good

Friday. On Holy Saturday, we color Easter eggs and sometimes bake Resurrection rolls. Resurrection rolls are especially fun because every ingredient carries a meaning and when they are finished there is a hollow in the roll symbolizing the empty tomb. The recipe for Resurrection rolls can be found here <https://www.catholicicing.com/how-to-make-resurrection-rolls-aka/>.

Other traditions involve the parish activities in which we take part. I find it most meaningful to participate in as many of the liturgical celebrations as possible. Stations of the Cross, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral on Tuesday of Holy Week (one of the most beautiful liturgies of the year in my opinion), the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, Good Friday services, and the Easter Vigil are all celebrations that I try to attend. My joy on Easter Sunday is much greater when I’ve commemorated the Passion and Death of Jesus with my parish community.

There are also individual traditions that can be observed. Lining an Easter basket with plastic, filling it with soil, and planting grass seed at the beginning of Lent results in real Easter grass and is a visible sign of new life coming after the “death” of the seed.

Weaving the palms from Palm Sunday and placing them with crucifixes or images of Jesus, Mary and the saints is a yearly custom in my home. A friend of mine and I usually pray the steps in Mt. Adams in Cincinnati on Good Friday, and a highlight is receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation when I reach Holy Cross-Immaculata Church at the top.

The end of the Lenten fast comes at noon on Holy

Saturday according to the practice of my father’s family; I can indulge in the things I’ve given up. This year it will be listening to an entertaining novel or eating something sweet.

The lay ecclesial movement to which I belong recommends reading the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ Passion during Holy Week: Matthew on Holy Wednesday, Mark on Holy Thursday, John on Good Friday, and Luke on Holy Saturday.

In addition, I am encouraged to forgo entertainment, parties, sporting events, etc. during the Triduum. That’s not always easy to do in today’s world, but at a minimum I try to observe silence from noon to three o’clock on Good Friday and to keep my family’s focus on the “reason for the season” by substituting regular TV with faith-based movies. We are accustomed to watching “The Ten Commandments” either on Good Friday or Holy Saturday. I know of other families who watch Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” every Good Friday.

The practices above are only a few ways to observe the remaining weeks of Lent, Holy Week and the great feast of Easter. There are probably as many customs as there are families in the Church. When we create these kinds of traditions, we build a Catholic culture in our homes and our communities which helps us grow in our faith and share it with others.

What are some of the traditions you follow? What new traditions would you like to start?

*Jamie Schroeder is chancellor for the Diocese of Covington, Ky*

The integrity that roots our modern Catholic heroes

Somewhere in Nicaragua, a Catholic bishop languishes in prison because of his outspoken opposition to the policies of an unjust government.

Bishop Rolando Álvarez, a handsome and youthful 56-year-old, has been accused of “treason” and “undermining national integrity” by the Ortega regime. Earlier, 222 political prisoners, including priests, were released to the United States. Bishop Álvarez was among them at the airport.

But according to a National Public Radio opinion piece by Scott Simon, the bishop “stopped at the aircraft stairs.”

In “A Bishop of Immense Courage,” Scott recorded Bishop Álvarez’s words: “Let the others be free. I will endure their punishment.”

For someone like me, who generally acknowledges being a chicken, this is breathtaking bravery.

But some of the people I admire most are the ones who simply remain faithful, who hear some call perhaps only

they can hear. Even the journalist Simon seemed a bit puzzled by why Álvarez would not get on that airplane.

In 1980, four women, Maryknoll Sisters Ita Ford and Maureen Clarke, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and laywoman Jean Donovan were brutally slain by the military in the midst of a civil war in El Salvador. They didn’t have to be there.

Father Frans van der Lugt, a Dutch Jesuit, spent 50 years of ministry in Syria. But when the Syrian government, aided by Russia, began a vicious war against rebel forces, he had every opportunity to leave. Instead, he was the last European left inside the Old City of Homs as fighting destroyed it. Speaking fluent Arabic, he served as a spokesperson for those caught in the destruction.

Then someone came for him, and he was shot in the head in the garden of his residence.

Our Catholic tradition has a long line of martyrs, those who won’t leave even when the average person would be on the next plane. And it always has something to do with fidelity to the poor; that preferential option for the poor at the heart of our faith.

So here’s one more. Father Stanley Rother (now Blessed Stanley Rother) was a farm boy from Okarche, Oklahoma. He was accepted to the seminary, but was sent home because he couldn’t handle the academics, especially Greek and Latin.

Fortunately, his bishop gave him another chance in another seminary and he was ordained for the

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. This country priest volunteered for a missionary assignment in Guatemala. Again, war. As always, hardest on the poor, whom Rother served in a remote village. Where, we add with a nod to his first seminary, he easily learned the Mayan dialect.

Knowing he was on a death list, he returned to the U.S. But something called him back to the village. Like Frans van der Lugt, he eventually heard the knock at the door and was killed. (For a compelling biography of Blessed Stanley Rother, read Maria Ruiz Scaperlanda’s “The Shepherd Who Didn’t Run.”)

I can think of many rationalizations for why they could leave. Álvarez could speak publicly and educate us about the issues facing Nicaragua. Frans van der Lugt was 75 when he was shot — surely he deserved to die in his own bed?

But it’s Lent. So, we cast our eyes to Jesus, and watch him set his face toward Jerusalem. He knew what lay in store for him there. His disciples were confused; Peter remonstrated with him.

But Jesus had the kind of integrity that propelled him to answer a call he could have escaped.

Let’s pray to know Jesus and ask him how he wishes to send us. And let’s pray for Bishop Álvarez.

*Effie Caldarola is a wife, mom and grandmother who received her master’s in pastoral ministry from Seattle University. Her commentary has been provided by OSV News.*

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COMMENTARY

Lent — a time for attitude adjustments

Lent is such a beautiful, grace-filled time of year, and it’s already more than halfway over. It’s usually about this time when I start to assess how I’m doing. Honestly, it can go either way; some years I’m standing up straight with my shoulders back, but often I feel like a failure who can’t give up the littlest things for Jesus.

VIEWPOINT



David Cooley

This year I’ve tried to approach things a little differently. I’ve come to realize that, when it comes to fasting during Lent, there are a few traps I tend to fall into. I often try to give up something that is difficult to give up, proving my love for Jesus. This does not go well for me, or for the people around me. I do pretty good for the first week or so, then, as I continue to deny myself whatever little treat or comfort that I’m used to, my attitude goes in the opposite direction of that I’m striving for: I get cranky with those I love, which doesn’t create the proper atmosphere for true conversion. So, I let myself cheat a little bit — or indulge — just to take the edge off. Then I feel guilty because I feel like I’ve let the Lord down, eventually giving up the whole endeavor and feeling worse at the end of Lent than I did at the beginning.

I’ve come to realize that I’m trying to give up things that I have no intention of giving up forever; and, in moderation, they’re not necessarily sinful. I also sometimes treat fasting in Lent like it’s a New Year’s resolution, which is more about me than God. If I leave God out, I’m going to fail every time.

I’ve come to realize that I am being childish as opposed to child-like. I am an adult, and a sinful man; there are

plenty of things that I can work on to improve my relationship with God and others. These are the things that Lent is calling me to face.

Every year on social media I see these beautiful lists posted about possible things to do or give up during Lent and beyond. I’ve really tried to take these lists seriously this year. They talk about giving up things like negativity, anger, gossip and selfishness, and replacing them with things like gratitude, patience, hope and compassion. These are attitude adjustments that can be very difficult but are also very important.

The Church prescribes three disciplines in Lent that are ultimately meant to aid us in our battle against sin — prayer, fasting and almsgiving. However, we are not supposed to let go of these things once Lent is over, returning to our old ways. We are supposed to try and instill good habits and a holy lifestyle. Each Lent we should grow closer and closer to the Lord, and to the person he is calling us to be. If what we do each year pulls us farther away from that goal, that is when it’s time to reassess how we are approaching Lent.

I am a firm believer that every individual needs to decide for themselves what they need to remove from their lives to overcome sin and grow closer to God. We are all at different places on our journey. In our land of excess, I don’t think any sacrifice for the Lord is a bad thing. However, our spiritual lives always need to be at the forefront of our minds. Who are we striving to be at the end of Lent and, ultimately, at the end of our lives?

It is never too late to get ourselves back on the right track. It doesn’t matter if Lent hasn’t gone the way you wanted it to so far, or if you haven’t even given it much thought this year. We always have the time the Lord gives us. We always have the sacrament of confession and the Lord’s physical presence in the Eucharist. This is why we are an Easter people filled with hope, even in a desert.

David Cooley is co-director and office manager of the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization, Diocese of Covington, Ky

At the consecration, my kids had something to say to Jesus

When you bring young children to Mass your heart rate goes up, your blood pressure rises, and sometimes you find yourself in fight or flight mode from the moment the opening hymn sounds until you hear the words “Go in peace.” Even if your parish has gone to great lengths to make families feel welcome (as mine has), there is always a spike of anxiety when your little one starts to make noise.

GUEST



Joel Stepanek

changes. They can talk.

For me, nothing is more unnerving than the over-loud chatter of my 4-year old during Mass.

So, imagine how flustered I was when both our 4-and-5-year-olds started talking during the elevation — that beautiful moment when the priest holds up the consecrated Eucharist and everyone bows in reverent silence. It’s a moment of profound silence, when many silently acknowledge, “My Lord and my God.”

And then there were my kids. Talking. Loudly. At first, I didn’t even realize what they’d said; I’d simply heard their voices and registered “volume.” I anticipated in dread the looks I’d be getting from the people around me. You know the looks. But when I turned to apologize, I was surprised.

One woman had tears in her eyes. Another man smiled and nodded in a childlike and almost giddy way. Another fought back tears and buried his head into his hands, returning to deeper prayer. A teenager quietly said, “Whoa,

that’s cool.”

Suddenly, it sunk in, what my children had said. As the priest held up the host, both of them had said, “I love you, Jesus!”

They were loud enough for people around us to hear; and sincere enough for hearts to be convicted of a profound reality affirmed from the mouths of children. We hear the priest say, “This is my body,” and “This is my blood,” but overfamiliarity can render us disconnected from those words and the reality they pronounce.

But in that moment, my children reminded all of us of who we were there for and what that God-man — Jesus Christ — was offering us: a gift of love, a gift of his body, blood, soul and divinity.

Too often, we parents are so busy trying to keep our kids focused, or wrangling 6-month-olds, that we adults get distracted; our minds wander and we lose sight of the love poured out for us at Mass. We flub our responses to that love. This is why Jesus desires revival for us; he wants us to fall in love again. He wants us to, with childlike faith and full hearts, be with him, and to welcome him in the Blessed Sacrament and say, “I love you, Jesus.”

After Mass, I learned that my wife had taught our children that simple prayer, so they could begin to learn the life-long lessons: that the Eucharist is not merely a symbol but truly “is” Jesus Christ, and that in the Blessed Sacrament Jesus initiates a dialogue. When the priest holds up the consecrated host, there is Jesus saying to us, “I love you.” My children, learning to speak to Christ, responded in the very best way by saying, “I love you” in return.

My blood pressure lowered that day, and I was convicted of my need for a savior; and to fall in love again. I was convicted by my own children who, by the grace of God, were loud at Mass instead of quiet. I was convicted by those around me who encountered the Lord in a new way that day.

It was a moment of revival and, if we can remain childlike in our faith, I believe the Eucharistic Revival moving across our country will occasion many more like it —

Have faith enough to see

The readings for the fourth Sunday of Lent — Cycle A — are: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ephesians 5:8-14 and John 9:1-41.

In the Gospel this weekend, it is easy to focus on the surface story, Jesus bringing physical sight to someone — in fact, we usually identify this story as “the Gospel of the man born blind” (“The Rites of the Catholic Church,” Volume I, n. 143, for example) — and pass over three other infinitely more important things — one Jesus is able to accomplish, one he is not, and one he still desires to accomplish.

Although the Gospels record many physical healings by Jesus, it is clear that he does not understand that to be his purpose. Rather, he considers his purpose “to preach the good news of the kingdom of God” (Luke 4:43), and to bring people to faith in him. This he accomplishes in the man born blind through the man’s physical healing: “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” Jesus asks the man after he is healed. “I do believe, Lord,” he eventually answers, and Jesus’ true mission is accomplished — to bring the man, not to physical sight, but to spiritual sight, to belief and faith in Jesus.

There are others Jesus would like to bring to faith in him as well. We hear of “his neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar” and the man’s parents. The knowledge that the man or son they knew as a blind beggar had been given his sight could have brought them to faith in Jesus; whether it did or not we do not know from the story.

The other part of the group Jesus would have liked to bring to faith was “the Pharisees.” It is hard to love the Pharisees as they are portrayed in the Gospels, but we need to remember that no matter how they felt about Jesus, Jesus loved them and wanted them to come to faith.

You will recognize this passage from the book of Ezekiel, “As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.” (Ez 33:11) Unfortunately, the Pharisees resist the offer of faith, and the saddest words in this story are for them: “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, ‘We see,’ so your sin remains.” Because the Pharisees refused to see their blindness, Jesus could not bring them to faith, and so could not heal them of their sin.

This brings us to a third group, whom Jesus still desires to bring to faith or to deeper faith — ourselves. Especially in this time of Lent, the way he offers us faith and deeper faith is through seeing the ways in which we reject him, the areas of our lives where we choose ourselves or other things over him. In short, he invites us to see and admit our sin, our blindness of soul.

This is even more poignant in these third, fourth and fifth weeks of Lent, when we celebrate the scrutinies with the elect. The scrutinies “are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective or sinful in the hearts of the elect” (Rites, n. 141), but we who are already initiated into the Church should let them be for us as well an opportunity to grow in Christian perfection. Let us be willing to have uncovered in us all that is weak, all that is still defective and sinful in us.

Jesus could not heal the Pharisees because they were unwilling to admit to their blindness; let us not be like them. Let us be open to being shown our imperfections and admit our imperfections, so that Jesus may accomplish in us what he accomplished in the man born blind.

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

becoming something transformative for our families, parishes and our world.

Joel Stepanek is chief mission officer for the National Eucharistic Congress Inc. and is responsible for guiding the teams that empower and energize the grassroots efforts of the Eucharistic Revival. His commentary has been provided by OSV News.



# We Choose Life



## Pro-Life Office

of the Diocese of Covington

### Mission Statement

The Pro-Life Office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, guided by our bishop, promotes the sanctity and legal protection of human life from conception to natural death through prayer, pastoral care, public policy and education.

## Catholic End of Life Resources

**“Catholic Health Care Ethics: A Manual for Practitioners,”** edited by Edward Furton and distributed by the NCBC.

**“The Conversation Project”** an advance care planning tool to help speak with loved ones about care, values and preferences. Online at <https://theconversation-project.org/>.

**“Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services,” 6th Edition 2018,** United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**“Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel of Life,” On the Sanctity of Life from Conception to Natural Death) 1995,** encyclical by Pope St. John Paul II.

# Palliative care: Intensive caring when it is needed most

Natalie King, M.D., M.A.

Contributor

Growing up, I had never heard of palliative care. If you are like I was and are not familiar with it, I would like to introduce you.

The Center to Advance Palliative Care defines the field as “specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness ... to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.”

Palliative, derived from the Latin “pallium,” means “to cloak.” Cloaking patients and families with support encourages living the best life possible despite chronic or incurable illness. Studies show that people live longer — and better — with palliative care than without.

Palliative care can be helpful and appropriate at any stage of a serious illness. It works to provide relief from stress and to creatively reduce suffering, in whatever form it takes, physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually. Palliative care can be found in hospitals and clinics or embedded in other sub-specialty practices, like oncology. There is palliative care for adults, for children, even perinatally — helping parents cope when their baby is found to have a serious diagnosis during pregnancy.

I have found that there are many misperceptions of palliative care, and I will highlight a few here.

### Myth #1: Palliative care means one is “giving up.”

Truth: Palliative care only adds a layer of support. Patients can continue with all other medical care, like dialysis, chemotherapy and hospital visits.

### Myth #2: Palliative care is synonymous with hospice care.

Truth: Hospice is a small subset within palliative care and is most appropriate when the treatments and hospitalizations directed at the disease are more burdensome than able to provide meaningful benefit. With hospice, the focus is patient comfort, most often where the patient lives, surrounded by loved ones, continuing medications and treatments to manage symptoms.

### Myth #3: Hospice hastens death.

Truth: Hospice (and palliative care) should never do anything to prematurely hasten death, but instead should support the patient and relieve their suffering around a natural death. As Dame Cicely Saunders, the founder of the modern hospice movement, said to patients: “You matter because you are, and you matter to the last moment of your life. We will do all that we can not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.”

Today, the “end of life” period can be challenging to define and predict. With medical technologies, people are living longer with chronic illnesses. Life-supportive advances like ventilators and dialysis machines are often able to ward off death much longer than before.

Modern medicine may excel in offering treatment possibilities, with seemingly endless options of experimental medications to try or clinical trials in which to enroll. Yet modern healthcare may fail patients by not having the necessary conversations when ailments prove incurable or refractory to treatment.

As Catholics, we accept that death is a part of life, and we pray for the respect of life “from conception to natural death.” But while we are called to protect and defend life, we do not believe that human life must be preserved at all costs.

Because we find dignity in all human life, we highly value the frail, disabled and infirm and accompany the sufferer. We see our crucified Christ as the model for how to make suffering redemptive. Yet secular society increasingly views suffering as a difficulty to avoid

at all costs, even if — as physician-assisted suicide (PAS) and euthanasia demonstrate — this means killing the sufferer.

How should we as Catholics respond to PAS and euthanasia? I had to confront this question early on, as the day after I took my palliative medicine medical boards, PAS became legal where I had just moved to start my first job.

I wept. What did this mean for me as a Catholic? As a doctor? What did this mean for my hospital? For the patients I would be serving? The gravity of this, and my experiences in the next five years of practicing in a state where PAS was legal taught me how necessary it is to provide awareness that PAS is abortion at the end of life and to advocate for the pro-life alternatives.

In PAS, a physician prescribes a lethal dose of a medication which the patient takes with the intent of prematurely ending their life. PAS is currently legal in 11 jurisdictions (California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Montana, Maine, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Vermont and Washington). More states are actively taking efforts to advance it. Eligibility varies by state, but typically the patient must be 18 years of age, have an advanced illness that is terminal and have an estimated prognosis of six months or less. In some states psychological screening is required.

Euthanasia (coming from the Greek “eu,” good, and “thanatos,” death), notably differs from PAS in that a physician actively administers a lethal agent to a patient with the intention of ending their life. While illegal in the United States, it is currently legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, New Zealand, Australia, Colombia and Canada. The Netherlands became the first country to legalize euthanasia in 2002, and coverage now extends to those with “unbearable suffering,” including children, neonates and those who have diseases like depression or dementia.

Although PAS and euthanasia are not currently legal in the Tri-State area, it is important to realize what they are and that these practices are becoming more widely used and accepted around the world, even, tragically, in the medical community. The Catholic Church, as affirmed in the 2020 Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith letter “Samaritanus bonus,” opposes PAS and euthanasia and promotes life-affirming palliative care.

In the words of Pope Francis (March 2015 address to the Pontifical Academy for Life), palliative care’s goal is to “to alleviate suffering ... and at the same time to ensure the patient appropriate human accompaniment.”

To me, as a palliative care physician, this accompaniment is a true privilege. I find myself in awe of the beauty I witness in caring for patients in the intense and intimate times I encounter them. I think of the leaf in autumn, which is the most lovely before it falls. The autumn in physical life can be a true springtime for the soul.

As Catholics, we must advocate for pro-life palliative care that is the antidote to PAS. We must help others from falling into societal traps where debility is viewed as a burden that diminishes our worth; where our value is based on what we are doing, rather than our inherent being; and where misguided compassion and radical individualism may lead us to think of PAS or euthanasia as valid options.

May we pray that everyone’s lifelong dignity will be upheld through wider awareness of ways to accompany each life to its natural end.

*Dr. Natalie King is a palliative medicine physician and has a master’s degree in bioethics. She writes and speaks nationally, providing education and advocacy for authentically Catholic end-of-life care and against physician-assisted suicide. She lives in Cincinnati with her husband and attends St. Cecilia Parish in Oakley.*

For more information about the Pro-Life Office or to be added to our e-mail newsgroups, visit us online at [www.covdio.org/prolife/](http://www.covdio.org/prolife/) or call (859) 392-1500.



# Xavier Society for the Blind helps visually impaired Catholics experience the faith

Maura Baker  
Staff Writer

Paula Seiter is a parishioner and lector at Holy Cross Parish, Covington. To help her in her in this ministry, Ms.

Seiter receives braille materials, in particular Mass Propers, which she uses to lector at Holy Cross, from the New York-based Xavier Society for the Blind.

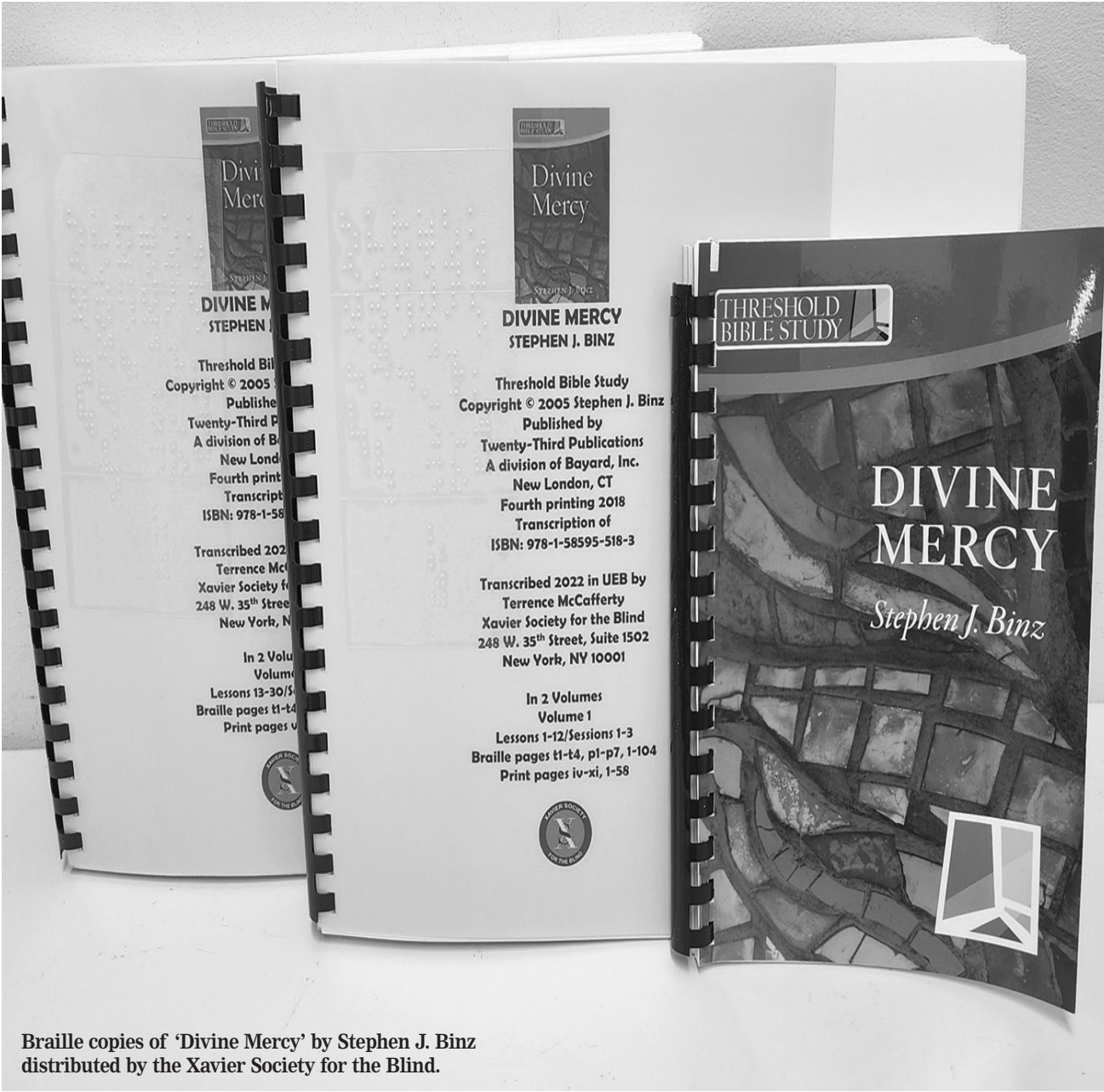
Founded in the year 1900, the Xavier Society for the Blind was started when blind educator for blind children, Margaret Coffey, and Father Joseph Stadelman recognized a need for religious books and worship materials for individuals with sight-related disabilities. In a single room at the College of St. Francis Xavier, the Society became the first Catholic publishing house to make these publications available, free of charge, to the blind.

“We say in our mission statement to provide the Word of God and the best in Catholic spiritual writing and materials to people who are blind or visually impaired,” said the Society’s executive director, Malachy Fallon. From that small mission in New York, the Xavier Society for the Blind now provides materials in braille and audio formats to visually impaired individuals in 22 nations and across the United States, including in the Diocese of Covington.

In the 1980s, Paula Seiter came across an advert for the Xavier Society for the Blind in the now out of publication “Matilda Ziegler” braille magazine. From that first moment she sent a letter requesting materials from the Society, Ms. Seiter has continued to make use of the Society’s offerings both for personal reading and spiritual growth, as well as for lectoring. She receives materials in braille, as well as audiobooks, and uses them in her daily life.

“I’m really thankful to be able to receive all this information,” said Ms. Seiter, “because it’s another tool to be able to do it like sighted people do... if I didn’t have Xavier, I would feel lost because there’s nothing else around that publishes the Mass or other books or periodicals, so they’re an important part of my life.”

“A lot of what we take for granted,” such as daily missiles and Mass propers, says Mr. Fallon, “is readily made available to people with disabilities,” thanks to the efforts of the Xavier Society.





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PEOPLE AND EVENTS



Homeroom patron

Every year, each homeroom at St. Pius X School, Edgewood, chooses a saint that they think represents their classroom. During Catholic Schools Week a representative of each homeroom dressed as that saint for the all-school Mass. After Mass, the students paraded through the church so all of the students could see their homeroom’s saint representation.

**The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, noon to 1 p.m.** Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

**Year-round Flea Market, Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home,** Ft Mitchell, Nov.—May, 8:30 a.m.– noon, Monday, Thursday, and every 3rd Saturday; June–Oct., 8:30–noon, Monday, Thursday and every Saturday. Donation drop-off during Flea Market hours.

**“The Book of Wisdom” a workshop hosted by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization and presented by Father Timothy Schehr,** March 18 and April 22, 9–11:30 a.m., at the Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington. Father Schehr is a retired biblical scholar and former professor at Mount St. Mary’s School of Theology at the Athenaeum of Ohio. This book encourages readers to seek wisdom. But where do we begin such a search? Cost \$35. Register online <https://covdio.org/oce/catholic-bible-study/> or call (859) 392-1529.

**The St. Cecilia Altar Society annual Spring Craft Bazaar,** March 19, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Table rental, call (859) 356-8235. Tables are \$35 for a 9’x9’ space, which includes a table and electricity (first come, first served).

**Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, Art Gallery will host the Elementary School Art Show,** March 19, noon-4; March 24 and 25, before, during and after the Senior Play; and March 26, noon–4.

**The Bishop Mulloy Knights of Columbus (Council 1301) is conducting a blood drive** at Holy Spirit Parish March 31.



Happy retirement

After 35 years of faithful service Sharon Meyer is now going to enjoy retirement. Mrs. Meyer served over 30 years for St. Michael School, Bellevue and then Holy Trinity School in Bellevue and Newport. For the past four-and-a-half years, Mrs. Meyer has served in a vital role to the daily operations of Holy Spirit Parish Child Development Center, Newport. Pictured is Mrs. Meyer (left) and Michele Mabrey, director of Child Care.

Register at [www.hoxworth.org/groups/holyspiritkofc](http://www.hoxworth.org/groups/holyspiritkofc) or call (513) 451-0910.

**Thomas More University will host its 25th Bishop William A. Hughes Award Dinner,** March 29, 6 p.m., Drees Pavilion, Covington. Three awards will be presented to individuals who have shown leadership in the community and made significant impact on Catholic education: Alan Pickett, executive director of Catholic Charities; Raymond G. Hebert, Ph.D., executive director of the Wm. T. (Bill) Robinson III ’67 Institute for Religious Liberty (IRL); and Wilbert Ziegler ’53, J.D., honorary chair of the Thomas More University Second Century Campaign Steering Committee.

**A personal Lenten Pilgrimage of five historic churches of the Diocese of Covington,** April 1, rain or shine. Walk (or drive) any part of the 4.3-mile pilgrimage route. Start at any church on the route, any time. The churches: Cathedral Basilica of Assumption, St Benedict, St Augustine, St John Evangelist and then Mother of God — open at 9 a.m. for Eucharistic Adoration, with closing Benediction, 2 p.m. Mother of God offers Mass at noon. An informational booklet will be available at the church where you start your journey. RSVP [CovLentenPilgrimage@gmail.com](mailto:CovLentenPilgrimage@gmail.com).

**“A New Manna Retreat: Dining in the Desert” with Father Thomas Picchioni,** April 1, St. Cecilia Church undercroft, Independence. This one-day retreat will explore the four different faces of the Real Manna come down from heaven, how with each face comes a different understanding, a different response, and a different relationship. Registration: 7:30–7:55 a.m.; retreat 8 a.m.–3 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch provided. No cost to attend, free will offering

Fish Frys

- Our Savior Parish, Covington, March 31, noon–6 p.m.
- St. Benedict Parish, Covington, March 17 and 31, 5–7 p.m.
- St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, March 17, 4–7:30 p.m.
- St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, March 24, 31, 5–8 p.m.

All Fridays of Lent — Mar 17-Mar 31

- Holy Cross District High School, Covington, 5–8 p.m.
- Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger, 4–8 p.m.
- St. Augustine, Augusta, every Friday through March 31, 5 p.m. until fish runs out.
- St. Augustine Parish, Covington, 4–7 p.m.
- St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, 4:30–8 p.m.
- St. Bernard Parish, Dayton, 5–7 p.m.
- St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas, 4:30–7:30 p.m.
- St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.; 5–7 p.m., (859)-298-5932
- St. Francis Xavier Parish, Falmouth, Knights of Columbus, 4–7:30 p.m., (859) 321-9733
- St. James, Brooksville, 4:30 p.m–6:30 p.m.
- St. Joseph Academy, Walton, 4:30–8 p.m.
- St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs, 4–7:30 p.m.
- St. Matthew Parish, Morning View, 4:30–7 p.m.
- St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill, 4:30–7:30 p.m.
- St. Timothy, Union, drive-thru, credit card only, 4:30–7 p.m., Dine-in 5-7:30 p.m.
- St. William Parish, Williamstown, drive-thru only, 4:30–7 p.m.

accepted. RSVP: e-mail [psr@stcindependence.org](mailto:psr@stcindependence.org).

The Thomas More University Observatory and Professor Wes Ryle invite you to the next two lectures/night sky view-ings: **“Fusion Power: Energy Savior or Hopeless Dream?”** on March 25 and “JWST: At Work At Last!” on April 29. Lectures are at lecture in Steigerwald Hall – Saints Center; with a 9 p.m. night sky viewing at the Thomas More Observatory. Event is free and open to the public, no reser- vations required.



Our boxes are overflowing

Susie Kahmann’s junior high Art Elective class at St. Joseph School, Cold Spring, decided to create art for a purpose. They created over-sized cereal boxes for each homeroom and challenged the students to fill the boxes with packages of real cereal for St. Vincent de Paul Pantry. Over a four-day period, 425 cereal boxes were collected. Our hearts were over-flowing like our boxes.



*‘What a great favor God does to those  
He places in the company of good people.’*

St. Teresa of Avila



Boston Public Library, Unsplash

SENIOR LIVING

SPECIAL SECTION OF THE MESSENGER  
MARCH 17, 2023



# Catechesis on Old Age: 4 — Farewell and inheritance: memory and testimony

In the Bible, the account of the death of the elderly Moses is preceded by his spiritual testament, called the “Canticle of Moses”. This Song is first and foremost a beautiful confession of faith, and it goes like this: “For I will proclaim the name of the Lord / Ascribe greatness to our God! / The Rock, his work is perfect; / for all his ways are justice. / A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, / just and right is he” (Deut 32:3-4).

But it is also the memory of the history lived with God, of the adventures of the people formed from faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And thus, Moses also remembers the bitterness and disappointments of God himself: His faithfulness continually put to the test by the infidelities of His people. The faithful God and the response of the unfaithful people: as if the people wanted to put God’s fidelity to the test. And He remains always faithful, close to His people. This, precisely, is the core of the Song of Moses: God’s fidelity, which accompanies us throughout our whole life.

When Moses pronounces this confession of faith, he is on the threshold of the promised land, and also of his departure from life. He was one hundred and twenty years old, the account notes, “but his eye was not dim” (Deut 34:7). That capacity to see, to really see, also to see symbolically, as the elderly do, who are able to see things, [to see] the most radical significance of things. The vitality of his gaze is a precious gift: it enables him to hand down the legacy of his long experience of life and faith, with the necessary clarity. Moses sees history and passes on history; the elderly see history and pass on history.

An old age that is granted this clarity is a precious gift for the generation that is to follow. Listening personally and directly to the story of lived faith, with all its highs and lows, is irreplaceable. Reading about it in books, watching it in films, consulting it on the internet, however useful it may be, will never be the same thing.

...There is a tone and style of communication to direct, person-to-person storytelling, that no other medium can replace. An older person, one who has lived a long time, and receives the gift of a lucid and passionate testimony of his or her history, is an irreplaceable blessing. Are we capable of recognizing and honoring this gift of the elderly? Does the transmission of faith — and of the meaning of life — follow this path of listening to the elderly, today?

... How is the faith handed on? “Ah, here’s a book, study it”. No. Faith can’t be handed on like that. Faith is passed on in dialect, that is, in familiar speech, between grandparents and grandchildren, between parents and their children. The faith is always handed on in dialect, in that familiar dialect and experience learned through the years. This is the reason dialogue in a family is so important, the

dialogue of children with their grandparents, who are the ones who have the wisdom of the faith.

Sometimes I reflect on this strange anomaly. Today, the catechism of Christian initiation generously draws on the Word of God and conveys accurate information on dogmas, the morals of the faith, and the sacraments. What is often lacking, however, is a knowledge of the Church that comes from listening to and witnessing the real history of the faith and the life of the Church community, from the beginning to the present day. As children we learn the Word of God in catechism classes; but the Church is learned, as young people, in the classrooms and in the global information media.

The narration of the history of faith should be like the Canticle of Moses, like the testimony of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. In other words, a story capable of recalling God’s blessings with emotion and our failings with sincerity. It would be a good thing if the courses in

catechesis were to include, from the very beginning, the habit of listening to the lived experience of the elderly, to the candid confession of the blessings received from God, which we must cherish, and to the faithful testimony of our own failures of fidelity, which we must repair and correct.

The elderly enter the promised land, which God desires for every generation, when they offer to the young the beautiful initiation of their witness and pass on the story of the faith, the faith, in dialect, that familiar dialect, that dialect of the old to the young. Then, guided by the Lord Jesus, the old and the young together enter into his Kingdom of life and love. But all together. Everyone in the family, with this great treasure that is the faith passed on in dialect.

*Adapted from the March 23, 2022, General Audience of Pope Francis, Paul VI Audience Hall, Vatican.*

## Kenton County Library provides programming for seniors in the community

Maura Baker  
Staff Writer

The Kenton County Public Library provides a multitude of free programming and activities for community members of all age groups, with libraries in Covington, Erlanger and Independence. Some of the activities presented at the library are specially tailored for retired individuals and seniors, providing opportunities to connect with their community and try new activities in their day to day lives.

—The Senior Social at the Erlanger branch is a biweekly endeavor. Starting at 10:30 a.m., the social is a “long running program” that has gained a lot of traction in the past year, according to coordinator Mary Burkey, with new faces every time the social is held. “It’s super casual,” says Ms. Burkey, “We have coffee and donuts, sometimes other snacks, and we play games.” While the exact activities for the morning are decided by the attendees of the social, Ms. Burkey cites UNO and dominos as some of the favored activities, while others use the time to chat and socialize with other seniors.

—Also twice a month, at the library’s Covington branch, Senior Arts and Crafts presents unique opportunities to try new craft projects at the library. Snacks and conversation are offered, as well, of course, with



Volunteers stand behind booths at a past Senior Services Alliance Food Truck Party. The next of these events will be held May 5 at the library’s Erlanger Branch.

upcoming activities including Easter egg wreaths, mosaic tile art and “DIY” tie-dye. These particular events are by RSVP only, and can be reserved online at the library’s website, <https://www.kentonlibrary.org/>.

—Upcoming on May 5, the Senior Services Alliance Food Truck Party will be coming to the library’s Erlanger Branch. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., the front lot of the Erlanger branch will be host to a variety of different organizations brought together by the Senior Services Alliance, a group designed to cater to the different needs of the senior community. “It’s an opportunity for people to learn about the different organizations in the Senior Services Alliance,” said Mary Burkey. A food truck will also be present for lunch.



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# Local shrines and pilgrimages to make in Kentucky

Messenger Staff Report

Northern Kentucky offers a number of little-known shrines and inspiring pilgrimages to be made by the faithful. Here are just a few to consider visiting. Before you go, consider reading up on these saints and find out what draws people to these devotions.

## Our Lady of Knock Shrine, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill

The parish is designated as a shrine to Our Lady of Knock and holds a large novena every year August 14-21 leading up to the feast day on Aug. 21. The message of Our Lady of Knock, when she appeared in 1879, is a certain sign of God's love to a people in need and a statue of Our Lady of Knock faces the windows of the tabernacle in the adoration chapel. For nine days, pilgrims have a chance to attend Mass and pray the novena, light candles, write petitions and venerate a first-class relic of St. Faustina Kowalska's bone. The intentions stay on the altar during the length of the novena and the parish also usually hosts informative talks on the weeknights of the novena.

## Diocesan Shrine of the Little Flower, St. Therese Parish, Southgate

This shrine inaugurated a perpetual novena to the Little Flower on Tuesdays after morning mass. The reliquary also hosts a first-class relic on public display of St. Therese presented by Mother Agnes, her sister, to the parish through Father Borgias Lehr in 1928. The walls of the parish hold ten restored paintings by Leon Lippert of Newport depicting the life of St. Therese. The parishioners celebrate St. Therese's October 2 feast day with 40 hours before the Blessed Sacrament before the feast and sing a few special hymns on the day itself to honor their patron.

## Shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt, Relics, All Saints Parish, Walton

The back of the sanctuary features a shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt, a devotion with origins in Germany and centered on the image of the Mother Thrice Admirable. Visitors can light a candle before her image and pray a consecration prayer or an exorcism prayer through her intercession. She is known for her intercession for the family, and Schoenstatt youth movements exist across the world. The

inside of the church is lined with statues of recent saints along the walls, such as St. Gianna Molla, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, St. Padre Pio, St. Faustina Kowalska and St. Teresa of Calcutta. Three of these have relics beneath the statue and all have the saint's story written and framed below.

## Abbey and Basilica of Our Lady of Gethsemani

Home to Trappist monks, this community is a place to remove oneself from the world. The abbey hosts retreats and day visits, providing meals (call ahead) and nature trails as well as a chance to attend services and pray with the brothers. The Welcome Center features a film about monastic life, books and products handmade by the brothers such as fudge, fruitcake and honey.

## The Relic Shrine of St. Paul at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption

The relic collection of the Diocese of Covington is comprised of over 300 relics. The Relic Shrine of St. Paul, established in 2021, located beneath the Baldacchino of the

Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, displays a large selection of relics from the Diocesan collection. The heart of the collection are two skull relics taken from the 11,000 companion martyrs of St. Ursula donated by the Shrine in Cologne, Germany, to Bishop Maes in the early 20th century. Decades later, Bishop William T. Mulloy, would expand the collection further, obtaining dozens of relics from Rome. Many of the relics incased in small thecas (cases) came from Covington's former St. Pius X Seminary. Under Bishop Foys and through today, relic collection is expanding and includes some of the Church's newest saints and blessed: Pope St. John Paul II, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Bl. Solanus Casey, Bl. Stanley Rother, Bl. Miguel Pro, Bl. Carlo Acutis, St. Theresa of Calcutta, St. Damien of Molokai, Bl. Franz Jägerstätter, St. Oscar Romero, St. Katharine Drexel, Bl. Anna Maria Taigi, Bl. Clelia Merloni, Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin, St. Edith Stein, Bl. Mariam Teresa Demjanovich and St. Conrad of Parzham. To the right of the relic shrine is a beautifully illustrated book explaining the relics on display.



The shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt at All Saints Parish, Walton, is one of many lesser-known devotions easily accessible to parishioners in the Diocese of Covington.

The St. Paul Relic Shrine located in the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, features an ever expanding collection of relics ancient and contemporary saints and sacred items.

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# Madonna Manor opens more award-winning, senior living residences

Contributed

CHI Living Communities recently opened additional Brownstone residences for seniors on its scenic Madonna Manor campus. Located at 2344 Amsterdam Road in Villa Hills, the new units are situated along the Ohio River on a serene, 28-acre campus that's less than 20 minutes from Cincinnati.

Thirteen of the new one-and two-bedroom residences — ranging in size from 800 to 1,200 square feet — remain available. Each pet-friendly unit features modern kitchen appliances, quartz countertops, a washer and dryer and numerous safety features, such as an emergency call pendant, bathroom grab bars, a fire detection system, and underground parking.

“From the start, we wanted these new residences to satisfy the more sophisticated tastes of baby boomers by offering plenty of amenities and safety features,” said Tim Dressman, vice president of Business Development, CHI Living Communities.

“To help meet the rapidly growing demand for independent living, we embarked on the Brownstone project, which consisted of three phases of residences,” said Mr. Dressman, who oversaw the multimillion-dollar project.

Phase I was completed in 2020 and consists of a two-story Brownstone with 24 residences and 10 two-bedroom, condo-style duplexes with two-car garages. Phase II units included two additional Brownstones, totaling 48 more independent living residences. Seventeen additional duplexes, totaling 34 residences, are part of Phase III, with the remainder of these units anticipated to be completed in 2024.

“Proving our success in providing what seniors want both now and in the future, soon after we completed Phase I we earned accolades in Senior Housing News’ 9th annual Architecture and Design awards in the Active Adult category,” Mr. Dressman shares proudly.

“Receiving this national award recognized our innovative design, which is a nice blend of trendy, yet comfortable lifestyle features that aging adults are increasingly seeking,” he says.

“Several people have already moved into these latest units, and among the many things they love is having so many on-site amenities within walking distance,” said Denise Corrou, executive director of Madonna Manor. “That includes our beauty salon, a 24-hour fitness center, and lots of planned social events and special outings.”

A major convenience of many independent living communities is never having to shovel heavy snow or mow grass and do other tedious yard chores.

Not only do the new Brownstones offer comprehensive exterior and interior maintenance, but what’s unique at Madonna Manor is that residents also can still take advantage of the outdoors by using the campus’ beautiful nature trails to walk or bike, its private picnic areas, and the fully stocked pond for fishing.

“Another attraction that many of our independent living residents find comforting here is that we also offer assisted living, skilled nursing and memory care,” says Ms. Corrou. “That means if they or their spouse ever need a different level of care due to a serious illness or sudden injury, they can remain part of our friendly campus community without having to move elsewhere. Current residents are given priority admission.”

Established in 1964 by the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery, the Sisters’ original vision for the



campus was to provide health care and housing for area seniors; so, they built a nursing home and apartments on the original site, adjacent to the Monastery.

For more than 40 years they faithfully cared for a growing number of residents. In 2007 the Sisters chose the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio to be the campus’ sponsor in order to continue the Benedictine Sisters’ health care ministry at Madonna Manor. The Franciscan Sisters built a new facility — housing skilled nursing, assisted living and memory care — that opened in 2011. CHI Living Communities — which currently operates 13 senior living campuses in seven states, including Madonna Manor — then purchased additional property from the Benedictine Sisters to use for new independent living residences culminating in the three-phase Brownstone project.

“These new Brownstone residences are a combination of convenience, value, security, and a strong sense of community,” said Mr. Dressman, who has been with CHI Living Communities for over 20 years. “My wife and I honestly would enjoy living in one of the units ourselves ... especially on a campus as vibrant and picturesque as Madonna Manor.”

*This article was contributed by Madonna Manor, Villa Hills, Ky. For information or to schedule a tour, contact [madonnamanor@commonspirit.org](mailto:madonnamanor@commonspirit.org).*



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# The Victorian at Riverside offers a relaxed, comfort-centered home to senior residents

**Messenger contributor**  
The Victorian at Riverside is a state-of-the art Senior residence with a 137 consecutive year history of providing compassionate care.

With its campus located in the picturesque tree-lined heart of the Historic Licking Riverside District of Covington, Kentucky, The Victorian at Riverside welcomes Senior men and women to its Residential Assisted Living, Memory Care and Senior Respite Care options.

Last year, The Victorian opened its spectacular 40 room, \$6 million new residential wing, offering its residents a modern, comfort-centered home, all on a single floor. Amenities abound — spacious private bedrooms, all with a window view and each with ensuite private safety bath, as well as multiple common living rooms with TVs, a well-stocked craft room, a movie-style theater room with giant screen and a beautiful light-filled dining room, with self-playing baby grand piano, are just the start.

Unique to The Victorian, the campus boasts an enclosed brick courtyard, with fountain, trees and gazebo, where — weather permitting — residents can safely, under supervision, enjoy the outdoors with friends and family.

Residents at The Victorian at Riverside enjoy a relaxed and pampered lifestyle. Delicious chef prepared meals are served, restaurant style, at residents’ dining tables on china plates. There is a spa room, an on-site beauty salon, a host of on-campus activities and entertainment to enjoy and fun local daytrips for those interested in sampling area cultural opportunities. Crafts and activities are designed to be fun and stimulating, as well as an opportunity for residents to work with one another and make friends.

Because The Victorian at Riverside wants to truly become a “home” for its residents, it was important to develop a continuum of care plan, allowing those seniors from its Residential Assisted Living plan to stay, as they move through the aging process. In 2023, The Victorian opened its on-campus Memory Care Unit, staffed by specially trained care workers and with the added monitoring, security and activity program required for this level of

care. Whether it be long-time residents needing to transition to the next level of care while retaining their home on The Victorian’s campus or new residents, with memory issues needing to go directly to special care, The Victorian at Riverside’s new Memory Care Unit will provide loving, safe and compassionate care, in a thoroughly modern,

viding that extra peace-of-mind, not found with large, corporate-driven facilities.

Living at The Victorian is a tremendous economic value for residents because everything offered is part of the all-inclusive price, no hidden fees, everything made clear upfront at a more than competitive price. Included with the monthly charge: private bedroom with private bath, all meals and snacks, 24-hour care team assistance under the supervision of a director of Nursing, medication assistance, laundry, housekeeping service, activities on-and-off campus, entertainment and much more. The

non-profit business model allows for maximum resident benefit at a simple competitive fee structure. The 137 years of continuous operation attest to the strength of The Victorian’s values and structure.

The Victorian at Riverside offers the rare charm of being located on a quiet, residential Covington street. This gives Victorian residents a sense of still being “home,” just on a campus. As a result, it is easier for seniors to transition into The Victorian’s care, while maintaining a sense of individuality. That is a major theme of The Victorian at Riverside, the campus is the residents’ home and the staff consider it a privilege for the opportunity to support and serve them.

Senior men and women over age 60 and their families

are invited to contact The Victorian at Riverside to set up an appointment for visiting the campus and learning about the Senior Residential Assisted Living, Senior Memory Care and Senior Respite Care services offered. The Victorian at Riverside is located at: 702 Garrard St., Covington, KY, 41011. Telephone during business hours: (859) 431-6913. The website offers a virtual tour: <https://victorianatriverside.org/>. E-mail the CEO: [cvanderzee@VictorianAtRiverside.org](mailto:cvanderzee@VictorianAtRiverside.org)

*Article submitted by the The Victorian at Riverside, Covington, Ky*



One of the rooms available at the Victorian at Riverside.

high-tech setting.

The Victorian at Riverside is unique in the senior care world, being an independent 501 (c ) (3) non-profit organization, self-governing through its managerial leadership and Board, without any big-corporate parent company. This has given The Victorian the wonderful opportunity to be resident and resident-family centered, with easy managerial contact and support for families with loved ones in its care. The CEO of The Victorian at Riverside, Carrie VanDerzee, knows each resident by name, meets with them daily, and is in close contact with their families, pro-



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# Forget-Me-Nots — celebrating the love of grandparents



Anna Rozwadowska, Unsplash

### Messenger Staff report

According to The Farmers’ Almanac, the flower Forget-Me-Not symbolizes “true love and respect. When you give someone these tiny blooms, it represents a promise that you will always remember them and will keep them in your thoughts. They are also considered a symbol of fidelity and faithfulness.”

Given this symbolism it is easy to understand why Forget-Me-Nots are the official flower of Grandparents.

In his enthusiasm for history and research, Nicholas A. Ferrell, administrator and editor of The New Leaf Journal, a general interest online writing magazine, stumbled across a poem about the little blue flower. He included the poem in his 2021 article “How the Forget-Me-Not Flower Found Its Name.”

The poem, “The Forget-Me-Not,” is attributed to Ethel Ridley and was first published in the March 11, 1899 issue

of a British women’s magazine, *The Girl’s Own Paper*; and is reprinted below:

**The Forget-Me-Not**

*“It’s said that ages, long ago, when God had formed the earth and heaven,  
“He called the flowers one by one,  
until to all sweet names He’d given:  
“To one, pure Lily, other Rose, another Violet, or Daisy fair;  
“As each bright flower before Him passed, to wear anew its Father’s care.  
“But oh! one day a tiny flower, with pale blue eye and little tear,  
“Came back to Him and said, ‘Dear Lord, I’ve forgotten quite my name, I fear.’  
“Then looking down upon the flower, which trembling stood, with bended head,  
“Without reproof or look unkind, ‘Forget-Me-Not,’ he gently said.”*

The Forget-Me-Not is also September’s flower — another nod to grandparents as Fall begins in September. In 2021, Pope Francis established throughout the Church the celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and Elderly on the fourth Sunday of July, near the liturgical memorial of Sts. Joachim and Anne — the grandparents of Jesus (July 26). In the United States, the Bishops approved the transfer of the celebration of World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly from the Sunday before July 26, to the first weekend after Labor Day in September to coincide with U.S. National Grandparents (and the Elderly) Day — a day that many local communities, schools and parishes had celebrated for some time.

# ‘A Grandparent’s Gift of Memories: A Pilgrimage With the Saints’

Mary Ann Paulukonis  
Contributor

Nancy Groves’ inspiration to write and publish *A Grandparent’s Gift of Memories: A Pilgrimage With the Saints* seems to come from two sources. Groves was a medical social worker who counseled patients with life-threatening illnesses. She saw how life reviews helped people affirm the value of their time on earth. Another inspiration seems to be Pope Francis, whom she quotes in the front of her book:

“How precious is the family as the privileged place for transmitting the faith. How important grandparents are for family life, for passing on the human and religious heritage which is so essential for each and every society!” (Angelus, 26 July 2013, quoted on p. vii.)

*A Grandparent’s Gift of Memories* is a kind of workbook for passing on personal memories that reflect the grandparent’s values and faith. Yet workbook is not an apt description unless the work is understood as a labor of love. This “work” is the pleasant exercise of responding to simple questions by recalling the past and writing down recollections within the book. While this is not a scrapbook in size or design, a grandmother or grandfather could paste photos and memorabilia illustrating her or his memories on the lined pages designated for reflections.

“Pilgrimage” might seem an unusual word in the book’s subtitle, but it is apt. A pilgrimage is a religious journey, especially one to a shrine or sacred place. Life memories are precious, sacred even, and a person’s travel back through time can be a holy journey to a sacred place. Sharing blessed memories with a grandchild is like traveling with the young person to a holy place, and rightly called a pilgrimage. Merriam-Webster adds an alternative definition for pilgrimage as “the course of life on earth.”

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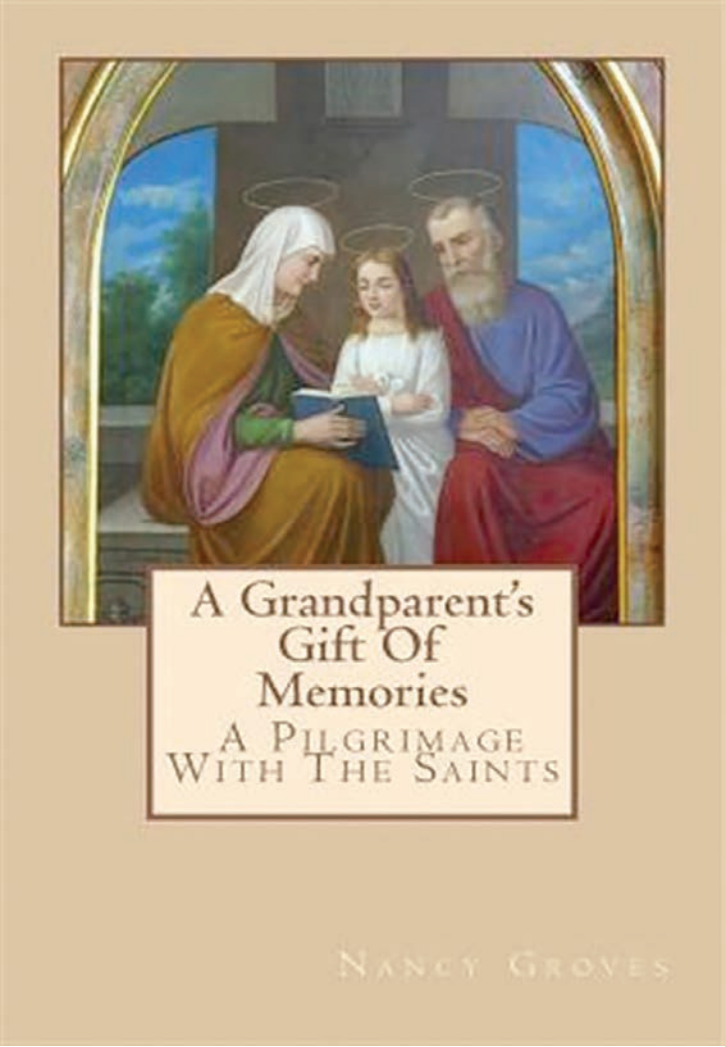
This book fosters a grandparent’s reflection on his or her course of life as a prelude to retracing major steps with a grandchild. The book presents one or two saints for each

stage of life as companions for both generations on the journey.

Instead of a Table of Contents, the book lists “Chapters of My Life.” Chapters include Beginnings, Childhood, Youth, Education & Vocation, Marriage, Family, Friendships, Joys & Challenges, Beliefs & Virtues, and On Becoming a Grandparent. Each chapter opens with a brief story, pertinent dates, and an illustration of the model saint (or two) for a significant life moment or theme. The page concludes with one or more quotations from Scripture. Subsequent pages, headed “Reflections,” pose questions such as “Where were you born?”; “What are favorite memories of your youth?”; “What memories do you have of your wedding day?”; “What virtues in your Catholic faith do you hold dear to your heart?”; “What is the greatest gift of faith you hope to pass on to your grandchild?” Lengthy answers are not required and space allowed ranges from half to a full (6” x 9”) page.

This is Nancy Groves’ second book. She does not advise how to use this book, but I know how I intend to use it. I am going to spend prayerful time reflecting on the questions and writing my responses in the book. As each of my grandchildren becomes old enough, I will spend special time sharing from what I have written down and conversing about their own experiences, their dreams, and the saints they want as friends.

Mary Ann Paulukonis shares her faith and her love of books, art, cooking, and gardening with six grandchildren. Her article has been republished from the USCCB’s For Your Marriage website, [www.foryourmarriage.org](http://www.foryourmarriage.org). Disclaimer: Book reviews do not imply and are not to be used as official endorsement by the USCCB of the work or those associated with the work. Book reviews are solely intended as a resource regarding publications that might be of interest to For Your Marriage visitors.



Ignatian Volunteer Corps invites retired persons to serve their community

Maura Baker  
Staff Writer

Since its founding in 1995, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps, named for St. Ignatius Loyola and founded on Jesuit principles, set forth on its mission to “provides men and women, most aged 50 or better, with opportunities to serve others — to address social injustice — and to transform lives.”



Founded by Jesuit priests Father Jim Conroy and Father Charlie Costello, the corps spread from small groups of retired men and women in DC, Baltimore and Philadelphia to now serve over 20 regions across the US, with more than 500 volunteers within the corps.

The Greater Cincinnati Ignatian Volunteer Corps was founded by the Chicago Province of Jesuits in 2006 after their feasibility study in 2005 found the “need for non-profits serving the poor to be great enough to recruit and sustain volunteers,” according to IVC Cincinnati’s webpage.

IVC Cincinnati serves both sides of the river, says Tom Conway, IVC Cincinnati’s current region director, which operates the corps in both the Diocese of Covington as well as the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

“We currently have 15 service corps members or volunteers, and they work at different nonprofits,” said Mr. Conway, with some associated agencies for IVC Cincinnati being Lydia’s House, Santa Maria Community Services and Tender Mercies.

“IVC places retired persons with nonprofit organizations where their skill set will do the most good,” he said.

Retired adults are invited to reach out to Tom Conway, if interested in serving alongside the corps, either by e-mail via [tconway@ivcusa.org](mailto:tconway@ivcusa.org), or by phone (910) 685-5084.

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# Rosedale Green provides ‘person centered care,’ enhancing resident dignity and autonomy

Messenger contributor

Rosedale Green has been a provider of senior care for many years in Northern Kentucky. As a nonprofit board led organization, Rosedale has been blessed with a strong commitment to serve the greater community in providing the very best care our area seniors deserve.

Throughout the years Senior Care by Rosedale Green has evolved and changed to meet the needs of older people. In 2017 Rosedale’s campus expanded with the opening of a second location, Emerald Trace on Turkeyfoot Road, which primarily provides short-term rehabilitation and

nursing care for individuals recovering from a hospitalization or acute illness. Later that year, Rosedale Green located in Covington completed an over 12-million-dollar renovation which totally transformed the flagship building.

Executive Director,



Rosedale residents participate in gardening.

Londa Knollman, supported by Rosedale’s volunteer board members, created a strategic plan a decade ago to offer “person-centered care” at both locations. This concept represented a paradigm shift from the traditional medical model to a holistic approach that considers each individual’s values, preferences, goals and abilities in order to overcome institutionalization and enhance dignity and autonomy. Working with consultants and an architectural firm to create an atmosphere that breaks down the walls of typical nursing homes and provides residents with “households” which provide smaller groups of resident’s “homes” within the building, “a home within the home.”

By 2019, residents were enjoying their beautiful new environment as well as engaging in an organizationally led culture change which was driven by “person centered care” practices. In the early spring of 2020, everyone was taken aback by the pandemic and the enormity of the risk to seniors, especially the oldest of the older population. Restricted by policies and procedures aimed to protect individuals, providers had to follow guidance that created the total opposite of “person centered care.”

Now during a moderate resumption of life since the height of the Covid-19 crisis, Rosedale Green has refocused and re-evaluated its care model to move forward with reaching goals to educate and enhance residents, team members and families experience every day at either location, as recipients of a grant which allows our leadership and staff to be trained in the Eden Alternative approach to senior care.

The Eden Alternative approach helps empower care teams to disrupt loneliness, helplessness and boredom with strength-based solutions that focus on what we CAN do, not on what we can’t. It helps empower cultures and upholds one’s right to choose for oneself which is called “person-directed care.” This directive will go even further to help Senior Care by Rosedale Green live out the values held dear and continue to stand out in NKY as one of the most desired locations for Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation care.

Rosedale Green offers long-term nursing home care, Personal Care and short-term rehabilitation and skilled nursing. Rosedale Green located on Glenn Avenue in Covington is Medicare and Medicaid licensed. Emerald Trace, ranked by U.S. News and World Reports as one of the nation’s best Skilled Nursing Facilities for short-term rehabilitation two years in a row, provides an excellent option for recovery care as well as offering a dedicated household featuring all private suites for private-pay long-term care residents.

*This article was submitted by Rosedale Green, Covington, Ky*

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### LOCALLY AND FAMILY OWNED



# St. Charles Community’s Resource Center — leader in service to seniors

Messenger contributor

St. Charles Community has been a leader in providing services for Northern Kentucky’s seniors and their families for over 60 years and has recently expanded beyond its Farrell Drive campus with the establishment of the Senior Resource Center in Latonia, Ky.

A continual focus of the St. Charles’ ministry has always been to give back to the greater community and to respond to the needs of our times. By moving the Senior Resource Center to Latonia, St. Charles has been able to expand this focus.

Since its October 2021 opening, the Resource Center’s social workers have seen an influx of persons seeking help in navigating the maze of today’s aging services. Knowing the available services and understanding the intricacies of how these services and care levels are accessed is not something one thinks about until it is an immediate need.

The Center is available, free of charge, to guide seniors and families through the process and to help them make tough decisions with as much information as possible.

It is the Center’s goal to connect seniors with the variety of resources available in our area, become true partners in ministry with other area service providers and, through compassionate listening and education, continue Jesus’ call to service.

The Center is open Monday through Friday and is located at 3705 Winston Avenue in Latonia. They can be reached by phone, e-mail or by stopping in to visit. Call, (859) 261-0746 or e-mail at [seniorresource@stcharlescommunity.org](mailto:seniorresource@stcharlescommunity.org), and remember there is no charge for services.

*This article was submitted by St. Charles Community, Latonia, Ky*

# Have you been to the club?

Messenger contributor  
Have You Been to the Club? Charlie’s Club that is!

If you haven’t, you really should stop by, especially if you’re looking for a place to spend a day or two with other folks who come here to enjoy the warm, friendly environment including breakfast, lunch and lots of attention. And while folks are enjoying themselves at the Club, their family members are running errands or going to work.

By the way, did you know that Charlie’s Club has been providing day-time care for senior adults and much needed respite for their full-time caregivers since 1986?

That’s right — Charlie’s Club has been here on the St. Charles Campus, just off Kyles Lane, for 37 years. So, if you think you, a family member or friend might find Charlie’s Club to be just what you have been looking for — call us at (859) 331-3224 and ask for Charlie or maybe you should ask for Misty Marcum (Charlie is having too much fun to come to the phone.)

*This article was submitted by St. Charles Community, Ft. Wright, Ky*



Charlie’s Club members play a game of Bingo.



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# Colonial Heights and Gardens offers community for all kinds

Messenger contributor

As we age, we discover that owning our home may have more pitfalls than rewards.

Our roof leaks, plumbing gets old, fixtures become worn, appliances and furnaces need to be replaced or updated. Your children or loved ones start talking to you about simplifying your life and moving to a senior living community. This can be a very positive move with much less to worry about and one worth embracing.

Most senior communities have Independent Living, Assisted Living or Licensed Personal Care and Memory Care. If you are moving straight from the house or condo, often Independent Living is the starting point. Independent Living usually provides meals and dining options as well as housekeeping, so you can concentrate on things that bring more joy to your life.

Everything can be found right on the premises so you can stay as busy as you want to be. Independent Living has been likened to life on a cruise, but with a larger apartment. You have many choices and many different activity options. There are book clubs, theatre groups, choral groups, art classes, pottery classes, jewelry making classes, knitting groups. A favorite among current residents are card games — Euchre, Pinochle, Bridge, Hand and Foot, Shanghai Rummy, Uno, etc.

In addition to card games, there are traditional games to participate in: Chase the Ace, Bingo, Bunco, Left Right and Center to name a few. Also included are cooking classes, exercise classes, walking clubs, live music shows, lecture series, happy hours; the list is almost endless.

You can pursue all of your passions and establish new ones. There are many opportunities for social encounters and you can still be the master of your own space, it just is much easier to care for it.

If you need a little more assistance with your medica-

tions, or maybe need more supportive services, and/or a few daily reminders, Assisted Living and/or Licensed Personal Care could be your best option.

Senior living today can be a wonderful experience. Choose a community that hosts the levels of care and kinds of people and activities that you enjoy. Choose one with the kind of food you like to eat, and one with living options that make sense for you. Ask questions and don't be shy about your preferences.

For example, if you like "home cooking" do not choose

a community that boasts a gourmet chef. If you like libraries and lounge spaces, choose a community that can accommodate those wishes.

There is something out there for everyone, it is up to you to find the community that fits your needs. Ask questions, talk to the current residents, and make an informed decision. Then embrace your decision and live your best life with less worries and more joy.

Article submitted by Colonial Heights and Gardens, Florence.

## A little bit of planning can go a long way

Chadwick Seiter, Attorney at Law  
Messenger Contributor

During Lent, we are reminded that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. Among other themes, contemplating our own mortality looms large over Lent. The Latin phrase *memento mori* (remember your death) seems particularly apt for these 40 days before Easter.

As an elder law and estate planning attorney, I encourage elders, as I am always encouraging everyone, especially seniors, to use this period of reflection to consider end-of-life wishes, to determine preferences for medical care, and to make clear how they may want their worldly possessions to be distributed after they pass away. By beginning these conversations with loved ones, they can certainly reduce the burden on their family members in what will already be a difficult time for them.

Estate planning documents worthy of your contemplation include a Last Will and



Chadwick Seiter

Testament, a Durable Power of Attorney, a Power of Attorney for Health Care and a Living Will.

Medicaid or nursing home planning is equally important to estate planning. The typical long-term care facility costs in Northern Kentucky range from \$10,000 to \$15,000 a month. The costs of long-term care can rapidly deplete life savings, leaving nothing for heirs. Medicaid planning allows those to create a strategy for arranging and structuring assets to allow for Medicaid eligibility while also preserving as many of

assets as possible for them and their family.

Most Medicaid planning involves taking advantage of what is called the Medicaid Five-Year Look-Back Period. When someone applies for long-term care Medicaid benefits, the Medicaid office will examine a Medicaid applicant's financial transactions over the past five years to determine if any of the applicant's assets (and those of a spouse) have been transferred for less than fair market value. Transfers made within the Five-Year Look-Back Period are subject to a penalty period, which can result in a period of time when the applicant is ineligible for Medicaid benefits and will need to pay his or her long-term care facility out of his or her own funds.

However, even if the Five-Year Lookback is not feasible for someone being admitted into a long-term care facility, it is crucial to work with an experienced elder law attorney who can help navigate the complex rules and regulations surrounding Medicaid eligibility and planning. There are last-minute strategies available even when someone is being admitted into a skilled-care facility that can save at least some of their life savings.

This Lent, consider preparing for the future. A little bit of planning can go a long way. *Memento mori*.

Chadwick Seiter is an estate and elder law attorney in partnership with Matthew L. Darpel at Darpel Elder Law in Crestview Hills, Kentucky. A native Northern Kentuckian, Chad is a graduate of St. Henry District High School, University of Kentucky, and Chase College of Law. This article was submitted by Darpel Elder Law.



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# A season of change, a time of hope



Greg Erlandson  
OSV News

There are a lot of joys about being a grandparent, but for starters, it lets us relive those first months and years of being a parent.

We’ve got a lot of mileage on our odometer now, but at one time, all of us grandparents held a precious new life for the first time in our arms when our own children were born. We wondered what he or she would become, what tales they’d tell, what adventures they’d have.

A grandchild lets us relive the same experience. It evokes the same dreams, yet now we know that whatever way forward, it is not without risk. This makes that grandchild in our arms even more precious, and our desire to protect even stronger; no matter how far away we are or how frequently we are able to visit.

This mix of feelings is the juxtaposition of the crib and the cross. Any parish Nativity scene is in the shadow of the crucifix. That shadow is the sword piercing Mary’s heart even as she stares in plaster rapture at her new child. All of us can share that confluence of joy and apprehension, knowing the promise and the pain that lie ahead. Like the Ukrainian babies born in bomb shelters or migrant babies born on perilous journeys to a new land, birth arrives with both promise and peril.

And yet knowing all those risks, we are still overcome by the birth of a child. As we gaze at this new human, this little creature with a whole lifetime before her, our thoughts may turn to our own life, to the roads taken and not taken, the “yeses” we gave, the “nos” we may regret.

Part of the aging process is that our long-term memory may feel as if it is getting stronger while our short-term memory may not feel as sharp. We can remember all the words to the Byrds’ “Turn! Turn! Turn!” when it comes on the radio, but we can’t remember the name of the actor whose movie we just saw.

Perhaps, as with the arrival of a grandchild, this is God’s way of having us reflect on our lives, on our choices, our loves, our failings. Likewise, when we are gazing at our granddaughter and thinking of what is to come, our thoughts turn to what has happened in our own lives.

What is constant is change, both subtle and abrupt. Marriages start. Jobs end. Loved ones are born and loved ones die. To everything there is a season, the psalm and the song say. Even that sweet baby we are holding in our arms becomes in a blink an energetic toddler racing around the living room with no time for embraces, and in another blink heads out the door.

This is the season of new birth. We celebrate the arrival of the Christ Child. We celebrate the arrival of a new year, a time of changes wished and fresh resolutions. In the darkest days of winter, we are filled with new hope, just as

when we hold that new child.  
And the lesson for all of us is Emmanuel: “God is with us.” Amid the births and deaths, the losses, the changes, the new beginnings and the last chapters, God is with us. Some of us greet change with excitement, some with trepidation. Our faith tells us we are not alone.  
And holding that little child swaddled in our arms, having her wrap her tiny fingers around our own finger, we tell her she is not alone either. Whatever the future holds, she is loved and welcomed and precious in our sight.  
*Erlandson is director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service.*

CNS photo/Paul Haring  
(left) Pope Francis greets an elderly woman as he meets with people in Asuncion, Paraguay, in this July 12, 2015, file photo. The pope has chosen the theme, “In old age they will still bear fruit” (Psalm 92:15), for the second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly July 24.



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# Traditional Irish dance is individual and communal, much like faith, priest says

George P. Matysek Jr.  
OSV News

As a lilting Irish hornpipe blared from his smart phone, Jesuit Father Brian Frain’s hard shoes repeatedly smacked a wooden floor with rapid-fire precision. The hypnotic rat-a-tat-tat-tat that echoed in the empty room seemed like the perfect percussive accompaniment to the Celtic tune.

When the music changed to a jig, the priest’s feet flew even faster as he floated across the floor — arms rigidly held alongside his torso.

The music ended, and a smile engulfed the clergyman’s face as he leaped about three feet and kicked.

“You know, I should really have the 911 button ready to go,” said the 59-year-old pastor of St. Ignatius Parish in Baltimore, his breathing slightly heavy after several minutes of high-energy dance. “I’m out of shape.”

Traditional Irish dance has been an important part of Father Frain’s life ever since he was a boy. His father was born in Ireland, as were his maternal grandparents. His aunt, who first taught him to dance when he was about 5, learned the art form while attending an Irish boarding school. He later studied in an Irish dance school.

Born in Philadelphia and raised in New Jersey, Father Frain remembers falling in love with the beauty of the movement. He won several regional Irish dance championships and once competed at the national level. From 1987 to 1992, he ran his own school of Irish dancing before giving it up to enter religious life.

Father Frain, who earned his dance licensure from An Coimisiún Le Rinci Gaelacha in Dublin, the world’s premier Irish dance commission, also taught with Irish dance groups at Fordham University in New York, St. Joseph’s

University in Philadelphia and Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri.

Now just under a year into his new pastoral assignment in Baltimore, he plans to offer Irish dance classes at St. Ignatius this Lent. Over the years, he has helped three people earn their certification to teach Irish dance.

Irish dance is both individual and communal, Father Frain said, much like the practice of the Catholic faith.

“It takes a lot of coordination and perfection with others,” he told the Catholic Review, the news outlet of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. “You are no longer just a self, but you’re part of a community and you can’t do what you want. You have to lift your leg exactly at the same height that the others lifted. You have to lift your hands at the precise millisecond that the others lift their hands. It requires you to stop thinking individually and start thinking of who’s around you.”

Father Frain, who has visited Ireland seven times, also plays the accordion and enjoys monthly Irish jam sessions in the rectory with a cousin. He recently began serving as chaplain to the Baltimore-area Lady’s Ancient Order of Hibernians.

“There’s a joy that’s expressed in Irish dancing,” he said. “I just love it when I see kids dancing and they know what they’re doing and that they can do it. It’s a beautiful thing.”

*George Matysek Jr. is managing editor of the Catholic Review, news outlet of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.*

OSV News photo/Kevin J. Parks, Catholic Review

(right) Jesuit Father Brian Frain, pastor of St. Ignatius Church in Baltimore, shows a traditional Irish dance step Feb. 6, 2023. He is a former competitive Irish dancer and avid accordion player who first learned Irish dancing at age 5. His father was born in Ireland, as were his maternal grandparents.



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## Prayer for the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

*In 2021, Pope Francis designated July 26, the feasts of Sts. Joachim and Ann, as the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. Each year, Pope Francis releases a message for the day celebrating the elderly and the Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life releases a prayer. Here is the prayer from that first World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.*

I thank You, Lord, for the comfort of Your presence: even in times of loneliness,  
You are my hope and my confidence,

You have been my rock and my fortress since my youth!

I thank You for having given me a family and for having blessed me with a long life.

I thank You for moments of joy and difficulty, for the dreams that have already come true in my life and for those that are still ahead of me.

I thank You for this time of renewed fruitfulness to which You call me.

Increase, O Lord, my faith, make me a channel of your peace, teach me to embrace those who suffer more than me, to never stop dreaming and to tell of your wonders to new generations.

Protect and guide Pope Francis and the Church, that the light of the Gospel might reach the ends of the earth.

Send Your Spirit, O Lord, to renew the world, that the storm of the pandemic might be calmed, the poor consoled and wars ended.

Sustain me in weakness and help me to live life to the full in each moment that You give me, in the certainty that you are with me every day, even until the end of the age.

Amen



# To be an apostle is to serve, not move up church’s hierarchy, pope says

Justin McLellan  
Catholic News Service

Being an apostle does not mean climbing up the church’s hierarchy to look down on others but humbling oneself in a spirit of service, Pope Francis said.

During his general audience in St. Peter’s Square March 15, the pope explained that apostleship as understood by the Second Vatican Council produces an equality — rooted in service — among laypeople, consecrated religious, priests and bishops.

“Who has more dignity in the church? The bishop? The priest? No, we are all Christians at the service of others,” he said. “We are all the same, and when one part (of the church) thinks it is more important than the others and turns its nose up (at them), they are mistaken.”

Vatican II, the pope said, did not focus on the laity’s relationship with the church’s hierarchy as a “strategic” move to adapt to the times, but as “something more that transcends the events of that time and retains its value for us today.”

The Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity states that collaboration between the hierarchy and the laity is essential for the church to fully live out its mission.

Viewing Christian life as a chain of authority “where the person on top commands the rest because they were able to climb up (the ladder)” is “pure paganism,” said the pope.

Reflecting on the passage from St. Luke’s Gospel in which Jesus sends out 72 apostles ahead of him two-by-two, Pope Francis said that service is the vocation Jesus gives to all, including “to those that seem to be in more important positions.”

“Listening, humbling yourself, being at the service of

others: this is serving, this is being Christian, this is being an apostle,” he said.

The pope encouraged Christians to pray for members of the church’s hierarchy who appear conceited since “they have not understood the vocation of God.”

Pope Francis also asked that all members of the church reflect on their relationships and consider how that impacts their capacity for evangelization.

“Are we aware that with our words we can harm people’s dignity, thus ruining relationships?” he asked. “As we seek to dialogue with the world, do we also know how to dialogue among ourselves with believers? Is our speech transparent, sincere and positive, or is it opaque, ambiguous and negative?”

“Let us not be afraid to ask ourselves these questions,” the pope said, because examining the responses can help lead Christians toward a more apostolic church.

In his greetings to the faithful, Pope Francis also asked that religious sites in Ukraine be respected in the midst of the war. He expressed his closeness to the Ukrainian Orthodox religious community at the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra monastery complex after the Ukrainian govern-



CNS photo/Vatican Media  
Pope Francis greets a group of young people after his general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican March 15, 2023.

ment said it would not renew a lease for the monks who belong to the Orthodox community related to the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church declared its independence from Moscow May 27, 2022, yet members of its senior clergy have since been accused of openly collaborating with the Russian army in Ukraine.

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St. Mary is located at 8246 East Main Street in Alexandria. The Parish office phone number is 859-635-4188.

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# Experts see hope for pastoral inclusion of Catholics with disabilities, also lingering challenges

**Gina Christian**  
*OSV News*

At his home in Saginaw, Michigan, 45-year-old John Kraemer spends hours each day at his craft and vocation — building elaborate models of Catholic churches, then filling them with figures for display at various parishes.

His materials are simple ones: brightly colored LEGO plastic building blocks (about 25,000 of them) that have delighted children for decades.

But the message offered by Kraemer — who has a mild form of cerebral palsy, along with visual and hearing impairments — is a profound one.

“My work is a prayer,” Kraemer told OSV News. “I’m sharing my passion for the faith through the (LEGO) bricks. And the figures in the church include people in wheelchairs, power chairs ... older people, service dogs.”

The point, said Kraemer, is to show that “all are welcome in this church. ... People often see themselves sitting inside the project, (which) ... is not a reflection of the past, but a prayer for the future.”

And those seeking to better include persons with disabilities in the life of the Church say the horizon is a hopeful one, despite lingering challenges.

“We’re going in the right direction,” Charleen Katra, executive director of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, told OSV News. “There has been a lot of movement (forward) over the last couple of decades.”

“I feel like we are making pretty good progress, and what makes my heart happy is to see parishes (aware) that this effort to include people with disabilities is part of the everyday mission for the Church,” said Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Kathleen Schipani, director of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Office for Persons with Disabilities and former chair of the NCPD board of directors.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), some 26 percent (or 1 in 4) of adults in the U.S. have some type of disability. Overall, 11.1 percent have serious difficulty with mobility, 10.9 percent experience significant issues with cognition, 5.7 percent are deaf or hard of hearing, 4.9 percent have a vision disability and 3 percent have a self-care disability that impedes dressing or bathing.

Both Katra and Sister Schipani told OSV News the continental phase of the 2021-2024 Synod on Synodality, with its various listening sessions, helped to highlight the concerns and insights of this significant demographic within the church.

“The synod was a good first step,” said Sister

Schipani. “The process was particularly helpful, especially listening to the stories of people with disabilities and to how they see the efforts of the Church. The only way we make progress is by listening to the stories.”

When voices of persons with disabilities are heard, pastoral approaches “(move) from inclusion to belonging,” said Katra.

She has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops asking them to embrace that perspective by issuing a new pastoral statement on persons with disabilities, one that updates the bishops’ original document in 1978.

“My suggestion for the new one is to focus more on abilities than disabilities, and ... a sense of belonging, at every level of human feeling and experience,” said Katra.

Instead of being an initiative for a few qualified specialists, pastoral ministry to persons with disabilities should involve “every member of the church (so that) ... all people have access, feel welcome and specifically know they belong within the Church, and have access to the life of the Church,” said Sister Schipani.

From that viewpoint, persons with disabilities can be seen as “agents of evangelization, not a subject of evangelization,” said Katra. “Their vocation is to serve the Church, not to be served.”

Both she and Sister Schipani pointed to several areas where pastoral ministry to those with disabilities requires greater investment.

Catechetical and faith formation materials still need to be made more accessible, said Sister Schipani, who is 2017 developed and released the “Religious Signs for Families” app to help deaf children and family members learn to pray in American Sign Language (ASL).

“We still see that some prominent publishers don’t caption their multimedia,” she said, adding that simply relying on adaptive technology to bridge the gap is insufficient.

“Ask someone who is actually using adaptive technology,” said Sister Schipani. “For people who are deaf, you can use automatic captioning, but it doesn’t do a good job with the religious terms. So taking that extra step expresses that we’re keeping in mind people who are deaf and hard of hearing, and that they’re cherished members of our community.”

The Word on Fire Institute’s creation of the Venerable Jerome Lejeune Fellowship — designed to raise awareness of the importance of those with intellectual and physical disabilities in both the Church and the culture — was a positive sign from a key provider of faith formation content, she said. Named after the French scientist who identified the genetic cause of Down syndrome, the inaugural fellowship is currently held by Mark Bradford, founding president of the U.S. branch of the Paris-based Jerome Lejeune Foundation and the parent of an adult son with Down syndrome.

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### VIRTUS Training:

■ Tuesday, March 28, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Wednesday, March 29, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Tuesday, April 16, 1:30–4 p.m., Catholic Charities, Training Room, Covington

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## NEWS BRIEFS

## National/World

## Attacks on Nicaragua's Catholic and civil society entities must stop

UNITED NATIONS — Nicaragua's assaults on Catholic and other educational institutions, its stripping political opponents of citizenship, and its arrest of political opponents must stop, said Human Rights Watch's acting executive director, Tirana Hassan. "The situation in Nicaragua has been getting progressively worse. What we have been seeing is there has been an attack on political opposition, on civil society, on Catholic institutions and the church itself," Hassan, told OSV News March 9. She was speaking two days after Nicaragua's government-run newspaper, *La Gaceta*, announced the cancellation of the legal status of the country's Universidad Juan Pablo II and Universidad Cristiana Autónoma de Nicaragua "for being in breach of their obligations under the laws that regulate them." Hassan said HRW has seen "attacks all across the board on civil society, freedom of religion, and ... on political participation," by Nicaragua's government. Asked about the cancellation of the universities' legal status and the reported widespread abuses, Stéphane Dujarric, the spokesman for U.N. Secretary General António Guterres said, "We've been following this closely." He told OSV News March 10, "It is another example of the shrinking space for civil society that we are seeing in Nicaragua."

## Pope: Liturgical elements must foster prayer, sense of communion

VATICAN CITY — The aesthetic and artistic elements surrounding the liturgy must foster prayer and a sense of communion, Pope Francis said. “The space, light, acoustics, colors, images, symbols (and) liturgical furnishings constitute fundamental elements of that reality, that event, human and divine at the same time, which is precisely the liturgy,” he said in a written message to members of the pontifical academies. The message was read March 14 during the academies’ 26th public session, which was organized by the Pontifical Academy of Fine Arts and Letters of the Virtuosi al Pantheon. The awards this year were dedicated to sacred architecture. The issue of sacred architecture and spaces “is as significant and timely as ever, since there is always a lively, and sometimes even heated, debate on proposals for the renewal of sacred

architecture, which has the arduous task of creating, especially in new neighborhoods, both on the outskirts of cities and in small towns, adequate spaces in which the Christian community can celebrate the holy liturgy with dignity according to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council," he wrote.

## Maryland bill to remove civil statute of limitations on abuse called ‘unfair’ to private groups

**BALTIMORE** — Calling it “unconstitutional” and “unfair,” the Maryland Catholic Conference expressed its continued opposition to legislation approved March 10 by a state Senate committee that would treat private institutions such as the Catholic Church differently from public institutions in civil liabilities faced for child sexual abuse. The Child Victims Act, which passed the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee on a 10-1 vote, would remove the civil statute of limitations for lawsuits and allow a “lookback window” for survivors to take legal action no matter when the abuse occurred. Currently, the law in Maryland allows victims until age 38 to file such claims, an extension — from age 25 — that was supported by the church in 2017. “The draconian provision of an unlimited window for currently time-barred civil cases to be filed, regardless of when they occurred, is nearly unprecedented among similar laws passed in other states,” the Maryland Catholic Conference said in a March 10 statement. The legislation “creates blatant disparity in its treatment of victims, with much lower monetary judgments available to victims of abuse in public institutions than those of abuse in private settings,” the conference said. The legislation will now move to the full Senate for a vote.

## Catholic, labor leaders raise concerns as Arkansas revises child labor law

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — In a legislative development that has drawn concern from both Catholic and labor leaders, Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, R-Ark., signed into law March 8 the Youth Hiring Act of 2023 which eliminates state age verification for children younger than 16 seeking a job. Arkansas law previously stipulated the Arkansas Department of Labor issue an official employment certificate for minors under 16 seeking to work, which included parental or guardian permission, a job description and schedule — measures considered a deterrent to

potential child labor law violators. Dennis Lee, diocesan chancellor for administrative affairs, told OSV News the Little Rock Diocese “is concerned about the exploitation of children and youth under the age of 16 to perform dangerous jobs.” He said removing the “reasonable, non-burdensome law” means they will have to rely on enforcement of remaining state and federal laws to protect children. Benjamin Smith, senior child labor specialist at the International Labor Organization, said the law’s removal “only heightens the risk that children will become involved in child labor.” The law’s revision also increases risks to migrant children as parental permissions on file with the state are no longer required. The U.S. Labor Department reports it has 600 ongoing child labor investigations, while witnessing a 69% increase in children illegally employed since 2018. The department called for Congress to take action, noting Feb. 27 “the challenge of child labor exploitation — particularly of migrant children — increases nationwide.”

## Advocates for immigrants say they're disappointed over Biden border proposals

WASHINGTON — In a word, Adrian Dominican Sister Attracta Kelly voiced the frustration a lot of immigration supporters would throw to the Biden administration: “disappointed.” One recent lockdown came Feb. 21, when the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice announced a proposal that could significantly limit asylum to the U.S. Worried about a potential wave of migrants heading to the U.S.-Mexico border as the U.S. announces an end to pandemic restrictions in May, officials said they would turn away people who showed up to apply for asylum without first using “new and existing lawful processes” to enter the country, according to the proposal. One program will allow nationals from countries that include Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Haiti to enter the U.S. if they have a financial sponsor. The government also wants migrants to submit online an asylum petition whose merits will be considered before they are allowed to enter the U.S., and to seek asylum in other countries before applying for it in the U.S. The proposal was published in the Federal Register Feb. 23, opening a period for public comment that ends March 27. Comments can be submitted at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/02/23/2023-03718/circumvention-of-lawful-pathways>.

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# Ten years as pope: Pushing the Church to bring the Gospel to the world

Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — For a decade, even when discussing the internal workings of the Vatican, Pope Francis has insisted the Church is not the church of Christ if it does not reach out, sharing the “joy of the Gospel” and placing the poor at the center of its attention.

Signals that his papacy would be different started the moment he stepped out on the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica the evening of March 13, 2013: He was not wearing a red, ermine-trimmed cape, and he bowed as he asked the crowd to pray that God would bless him.

His decision not to live in the Apostolic Palace, his invitations to Vatican trash collectors and gardeners and other employees to join him for his daily morning Mass, his insistence on going to the Italian island of Lampedusa to celebrate Mass and pray for migrants who had drowned in the Mediterranean captivated the attention of the media.

But not everyone was pleased with the seeming ease with which he set aside pomp and protocol. And tensions within the Catholic community grew as he expressed openness to LGBTQ Catholics and to those living in what the Church considers irregular marriage situations and when he said in an interview in 2013 that the Church cannot talk only about abortion, gay marriage and contraception.

One kind of summary of his first 10 years as pope can be found in numbers: He has made 40 trips abroad, visiting 60 countries; in eight consistories he created 95 cardinals under the age of 80 and eligible to vote in a conclave and paid tribute to 26 churchmen over the age of 80; and he has presided over the canonizations of 911 new saints, including a group of more than 800 martyrs, but also Sts. John Paul II, John XXIII and Paul VI.

In his first major document, the apostolic exhortation “The Joy of the Gospel,” he laid out a program for his papacy, looking inside the Church and outside at the world to see what needed to be done to “encourage and guide the whole Church in a new phase of evangelization, one marked by enthusiasm and vitality.”

The document included a discussion of the need to reform Church institutions to highlight their missionary role; to encourage pastoral workers to listen to and stand with the people they were ministering to — his famous line about having “the smell of the sheep”; to deepen an understanding of the Church as “the entire people of God” and not as an institution or, worse, a club of the elect; to integrate the poor into the Church and society, rather than simply see them as objects of assistance; and to promote peace and dialogue.

For Canadian Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the agenda of Pope Francis is the original agenda of the Second Vatican Council.

Unlike St. John Paul II and the late Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis did not attend any of the council sessions. And, in fact, because he was ordained to the priesthood Dec. 13, 1969, he is the first pope to be ordained a priest after Vatican II.

“After Scripture and tradition, the council is the significant foundation, and I would say, characteristic orientation of this papacy,” the cardinal told Catholic News Service. “He has taken the council not from a collection of decrees, but from the lived experience of the council as implemented, as lived, as tested, as developed, you might say, in the Church of Latin America.”

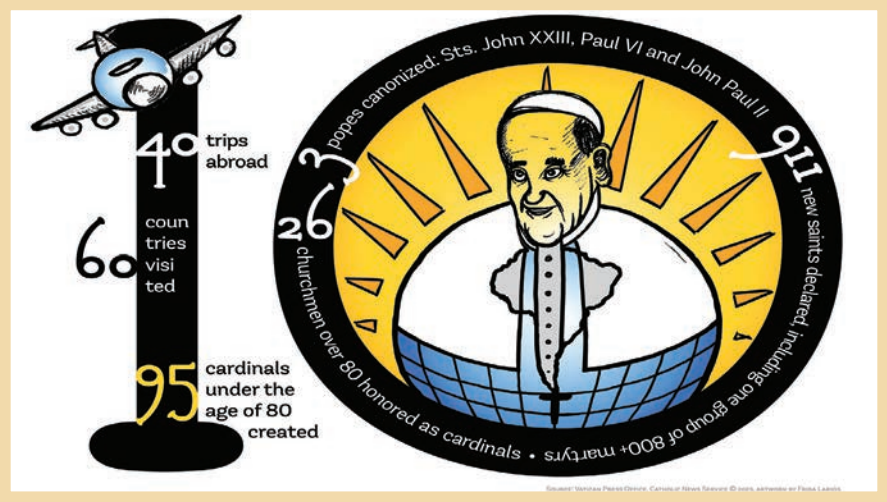
St. John XXIII launched the council with a pastoral focus on what it means to be the Church in the modern world, he said. The papacies of St. John Paul and Pope Benedict, he said, “reverted to a more doctrinal understanding of the

council” with “some very good results and with some massive, unfinished business.”

While the work of Pope Francis’ predecessors was important, he said, “I don’t think it picked up the primary agenda (of the council), which was implementing a new understanding of Church in the modern world, a new way of evangelizing because the world is so different from how it was, let’s say, at the end of World War II.”

Emilce Cuda, an Argentine theologian and secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, agreed that a key to understanding Pope Francis’ pontificate is knowing

(Continued on page 26)



## Stewardship and Mission Services

Due to a planned retirement, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY ([www.covdio.org](http://www.covdio.org)) seeks candidates for the position of Director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services. The message of stewardship has been part of the salvation history of the Church. All of the teachings of stewardship come directly from the Gospels, the Old Testament, and the letters of the New Testament. Stewardship is the way God expects us to live, with gratitude and with awareness that everything we have is a gift. The goals of this office are straightforward and include: stewardship formation and education; research and planning; development of diocese-wide support for parishes, ministries, and schools in areas of programs; and business and fund development, especially the Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal which makes so many diocesan services possible. This office also works to spread the message of Mission through prayer, education, works of justice, and providing financial support to activities and organizations such as the Seminarian Education Fund; Religious Retirement; International and Domestic Needs; Peter’s Pence; and Operation Rice Bowl. The Director represents the Bishop of Covington and the Office throughout the Diocese and the community at-large to develop relationships and support. S/he provides a wide variety of services to pastors and parishes, including stewardship conferences, programs for school children, and estate planning seminars. We seek an outgoing, creative, faith-filled Catholic individual with a servant’s heart and the expertise and experience to lead, manage, and inspire others to support diocesan initiatives. We require an individual with significant experience in comprehensive fundraising at a senior level, including experience with planned giving, major gifts, and annual giving programs. Those interested in this opportunity may submit a letter of interest along with a comprehensive resume or C-V, including compensation history and a list of references that includes contact email addresses, by email or by fax to **Stephen Koplyay, SPHR**, at [skoplyay@covdio.org](mailto:skoplyay@covdio.org) or 859-392-1589.

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# Ten years as pope

(Continued from page 25)

how Vatican II was lived in Latin America with respect for popular piety and culture, and trust in the “sensus fidei,” the notion that the baptized together have a “sense of faith” and an ability “to understand what God says to us, to his people, in every moment.”

“There in the popular culture, in the peripheries, and in all the people of God, we can hear what God wants from us, or what God tells us to do in response to social problems and in the Church in each moment,” she said. “We are in history and history is a movement, and the situation is not the same (as) in the 20th century or in the 21st century.”

As for disagreements with or even controversies about the papacy of Pope Francis, Cardinal Czerny warned against confusing “loud with representative or loud with majority. Loud doesn’t mean any of those things; it means loud.”

But, he said, “the patience of Pope Francis” leads him and encourages others to recognize that the pope’s critics “are not 100 percent off beam,” or off track; there usually is a grain of truth in what they say or an important value they hold dear that is being overlooked.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, told CNS he believes the first 10 years of Pope Francis’ pontificate have been preparation for “what’s happening right now, and that’s the synodal conversation.”

The Second Vatican Council called Catholics to read the “signs of the times” and respond. And, the cardinal said, “this notion that we don’t have automatically prepared prescriptions for every challenge that faces us leads us to a fundamental tenet of our belief,” which is belief “in the Holy Spirit, the lord and giver of life.”

The synod process, which began with listening to people around the globe and will move toward two assemblies mainly of bishops, is about listening to the Holy Spirit.

While the synod involves meetings, Cardinal Tobin said, “synodality is a way of being church. It’s an ancient way of being church that is being recovered and lived in the circumstances in which we face ourselves today. And so, to my mind, that’s sort of the capstone of what Pope Francis has been working for over the last decade.”

“I’ve called synodality his long game,” the cardinal said. “He’s convinced that the changed circumstances of our world and our world going forward demand a new appreciation for the role of the Holy Spirit and a way to access that gift that is given to all of us by virtue of our baptism.”

Pope Francis has been laying the foundation for the new synod process since the beginning of his pontificate, said

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago. “There’s an organic whole to all of this.”

“I just wonder if, from the very beginning, he had in his mind that this would be the trajectory of his pontificate, and the synod on synodality I think is, in some way, the opportunity for him to pull everything together,” he said. “There are people who want him to go faster, but he wants things to be held together and the Church to be held together.”

Asked what he thought was the most significant aspect of Pope Francis’ pontificate, the cardinal cited his predecessor, the late Cardinal Francis E. George, who participated in the 2013 conclave, and said the best description of Pope Francis was “He’s free.”

“He’s free in the sense of wanting to listen to different voices in the life of the Church,” Cardinal Cupich said. “He’s free in being imaginative, but also he has the kind of freedom that really allows him to be joyful in this ministry.”

“John Paul II told us what we should do. Benedict told us why we should do it. And Francis is saying, ‘Do it,’” the cardinal said. Pope Francis is leading by example in how he cares for the poor; sees God at work in people’s real lives and reaches out to people often overlooked by the Church.

“I think history will look back on this pontificate as historic, as pivotal in the life of the Church,” Cardinal Cupich said.

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## Pope penned major documents on reform, evangelization, caring for creation



CNS photo/Vatican Media

**Pope Francis meets with cardinals at the Vatican Aug. 29, 2022. The meeting was to reflect on the apostolic constitution “Praedicate evangelium” (Preach the Gospel) on the reform of the Roman Curia.**

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In documents issued his first 10 years in office, Pope Francis covered topics as diverse as strength-

ening one’s faith, evangelization, caring for creation, accompanying families and young people, and respecting indigenous peoples.

He wrote a major document on reforming the Roman Curia, three encyclicals and five apostolic exhortations. Here is a list of his major texts:

### Apostolic constitution:

— “Praedicate Evangelium” (“Preach the Gospel”). The pope’s long awaited apostolic constitution on the reform of the Roman Curia was released in 2022. It replaced St. John Paul II’s 1988 constitution, “Pastor Bonus,” and reorganized the Roman Curia to highlight its role in promoting the Church as a community of missionary disciples, sharing the Gospel and caring for all those in need.

### Apostolic letters:

— “Desiderio Desideravi” (“I have earnestly desired”). In this 2022 letter, the pope insisted that Catholics need to better understand the liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council and its

goal of promoting the “full, conscious, active and fruitful celebration” of the Mass. He reflected on the power and beauty of the Mass, emphasized the need to limit celebrations of the liturgy according to the rite in use before the Second Vatican Council and called for greater awareness of the sacrifice of Christ and his real presence in the Eucharist.

— “Traditionis Custodes” (“Guardians of the Tradition”) was published in 2021 and declared the liturgical books promulgated after the Second Vatican Council to be “the unique expression of the ‘lex orandi’ (law of worship) of the Roman Rite,” restoring the obligation of priests to have their bishops’ permission to celebrate according to the “extraordinary” or pre-Vatican II Mass and ordering bishops not to establish any new groups or parishes in their dioceses devoted to the old liturgy.

— “Vos Estis Lux Mundi” (“You are the light of the world”). The document, published in 2019, revised and clarified norms and procedures for holding bishops and religious superiors accountable when accused of abuse or of covering up for priests or other churchworkers accused of sexually abusing minors or vulnerable adults. It requires all priests and religious to report suspected abuse or cover-ups and encourages any layperson to report through a now-mandated reporting “system” or office that must be set up in each diocese.

### Encyclicals:

— “Lumen Fidei” (“The Light of Faith”) was Pope Francis’ first encyclical, published in 2013. It was built largely on the work of his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, completing a trilogy of encyclicals on the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. The encyclical on faith encouraged Catholics to embrace their faith more fully.

— “Laudato si’, On Care for Our Common Home” was published in 2015. He said his encyclical on the environment was a means of entering into dialogue with all people about humanity’s responsibility toward “the common home that

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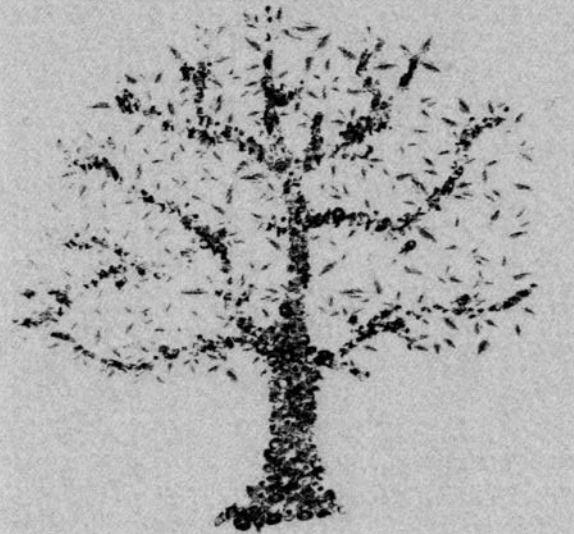
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— “Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship” was published in 2020. It highlighted what the pope said were urgent social, political and religious issues and the need to address them together based on the truth that all people are brothers and sisters, leading to greater solidarity and concern for the poor and the Earth.

**Post-synodal apostolic exhortations:**

— “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”). The



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis presents a copy of his apostolic exhortation, “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”) to Paraguayan President Horacio Cartes during a private audience at the Vatican in this April 29, 2014, file photo. In the exhortation the pope laid out his vision for his pontificate. He said he prefers a church that reaches out to people on the streets rather than a church that is confined to its own concerns.

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document on the proclamation of the Gospel in today’s world was published in 2013 with the aim of encouraging ongoing the missionary renewal of all members of the Church. Calling for a new chapter in evangelization, the pope also provided a clear guide to joy of the beatitudes, the grace of discernment and the signs of holiness that express a person’s love for God and neighbor.

— “Amoris Laetitia” (“The Joy of Love”). The pope’s 2016 post-synodal exhortation on marriage, love and family life brought together the results of the two Synods of Bishops on the family, looking at the challenges experienced by families and affirming the importance of accompaniment when providing pastoral care, particularly to people seeking to regularize their marriages.

— “Gaudete et Exsultate” (“Rejoice and Be Glad”). The 2018 apostolic exhortation on the call to holiness challenged Christians to take the dignity of all human life seriously, viewing it in light of Christ’s incarnation. The pope offered a

road map for simple ways that everyday people can be holy.

— “Christus Vivit” (“Christ is Alive”), published in 2019, was the pope’s response to the 2018 Synod of Bishops on young people, the faith and vocational discernment. In the text, the pope told young people they are loved and valued and needed by the Church and he pleaded with older members of the Church not to stifle the enthusiasm of the young, but to offer gentle guidance when needed.

— “Querida Amazonia” (“The Beloved Amazon”) was a 2020 post-synodal exhortation in response to the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon. It called for an end to exploitation of the Indigenous peoples and the natural resources of the Amazon and for greater efforts to organize regular pastoral care of Catholics in the region, including by recognizing the role women play in Catholic communities, respecting popular forms of piety and working to inculturate the faith in Amazonian cultures.

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# Vatican stamps commemorate pope’s 10th anniversary

**Catholic News Service**  
VATICAN CITY — The Vatican Philatelic and Numismatic Office is marking the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis’ election with a series of four postage stamps. “We want to celebrate some of the most significant moments of Pope Francis’ pontificate,” the office said in a statement announcing the stamps would go on sale Feb. 27, just about two weeks before the anniversary of the pope’s election March 13, 2013.

The 1.20-euro stamp features a photo of Pope Francis

praying during the Mass he celebrated to inaugurate his papacy March 19, 2013. The photo on the 1.25-euro stamp shows Pope Francis kissing the Book of the Gospels and, the office said, was chosen to celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God, a celebration Pope Francis decided in 2019 to add to the church’s calendar. The third stamp, carrying a value of 2.40 euros, shows Pope Francis smiling during the sacrament of reconciliation and marks his institution of the “24 Hours for the

Lord,” a Lenten observance in Rome and at the Vatican focused on making confession widely and easily available. The final stamp, with a face value of 3.10 euros, features a photo from Pope Francis’ first pastoral trip outside of Rome. He flew to the Italian island of Lampedusa July 8, 2013, to pray for the thousands of migrants who had lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean, to offer words of hope to the asylum seekers who had made the crossing and to encourage everyone to help the newcomers. © Catholic News Service / U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops.



Four Vatican postage stamps marking the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis’ election. (from left) Pope Francis praying during the Mass to inaugurate his pontificate March 19, 2013. Pope Francis praying for migrants who drowned in the Mediterranean during a visit to Lampedusa, Italy, July 8, 2013. Pope Francis smiling as he greets a penitent while hearing confessions. Pope Francis kissing the Book of the Gospels.



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