Bambinelli blessing returns to St. Mary’s Park for its second year

Maura Baker

Last Advent, the Diocese of Covington held its first ever Bambinelli blessing at St. Mary’s Park, Cathedral Square, Covington. This year, the blessing returns after positive reception by the community for its second event.

The blessing of the Bambinelli, also called Bambinelli Sunday, was instituted by Pope John Paul II in 1969. In Rome, the tradition falls on the Third Sunday of Advent, and children and their families are invited to bring with them their baby Jesus (Bambinelli) from their home nativity scene. The pope then blesses the Bambinellis following his Sunday Angelus address. Pope Francis continues this tradition to this day, and parishes worldwide have also adapted the Bambinelli blessing into their Advent season, reinforcing the birth of Christ as the true meaning of the Christmas season.

This year’s event will feature a menu of sandwiches, cookies and hot chocolate — as well as music sung by school and parish choirs to accompany the evening. The featured choirs this year are Blessed Sacrament Parish Children’s Choir, the Cathedral’s Bishop’s Choir and the St. Henry District High School Chamber Choir. New to the event, a reading of the children’s book “Bambinelli Sunday: A Christmas Blessing,” by Amy Welborn; narrated by David Cooley, will be featured, as well.

The décor for this year’s blessing will be different as well, according to Jamie Schroeder, chancellor of the Diocese of Covington and one of the many people assisting in preparing for the event. Theming will be moving towards Advent as a season of preparation as opposed to Christmas— with “focus on the fact that we’re still in the Advent season,” she said.

“We just hope that a lot of people will come — those who attended last year loved it and said they wanted to make it a family tradition and come back this year. So, we’re hoping that the word has spread and that more and more people will come down and join us for the celebration,” said Mrs. Schroeder.

Everyone is welcome. An RSVP is not necessary to join in on the festivities.
Sometimes called ‘little Lent,’ Advent zeros in on preparation, which can include penitence

Katie Yoder

For Kendra Tierney, a Catholic author and mother of 10, the Advent season leading up to Christmas is like preparing to give birth.

“There’s such a unique character to that time where you can’t rush it and that you’re trying to prepare every-thing,” said the founder and CEO of Catholic All Year. “I think that Advent gives us all that opportunity to really dive into that sort of feeling, where we want to use that time to prepare our homes and to prepare our families to welcome Christ into our lives.”

Advent marks the beginning of the church’s liturgical year, starting four Sundays before Christmas. The name “Advent” hints at its meaning: It comes from the Latin word “advenire,” which translates to “to come to” or “to arrive.” The season begins Dec. 3 this year.

While Advent is sometimes called “a little Lent,” Catholic experts observe that there are important similarities and differences between the two, both of which lead up to major feast days and liturgical seasons: Christmas and Easter, respectively. Advent, they agree, is primarily a season of preparation.

“Lent has that penitential character where … we are trying to focus on exercising those muscles of being penitent. I think that the character of Advent is intended to be a little different than that — that it is really, actually a wait-ing for a birth,” said Tierney, who writes about living the liturgical year in the home.

In a 2019 blog post, she describes the difference from Lent: “Advent is PREDOMINANTLY preparation, and Lent is PREDOMINANTLY penance.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church uses similar wording in describing Advent. “When the Church cele-brates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior’s first coming, the faith-ful renew their ardent desire for his second coming,” it says.

In contrast, the Catechism calls Lent one of the “intense moments of the Church’s penitential practice.”

Father Agustino Torres, a Franciscan Friar of the Notre Dame in Indiana and the academic director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy, emphasized that much of the Church’s year has historically been penitential.

“Advent takes on a penitential spirit inspired by the three-fold advent of Jesus Christ,” he said. “The Christ who comes at the end of time, who will judge the world. The Christ who comes into the heart of every believer longing for his pres-ence. The Christ who comes as the newborn babe.”

He added: “It is penitential insofar as we have to ask ourselves if we’re ready for these various presences.”

Luke Lent, Advent in the Roman Catholic Church his-torically included fasting, O’Malley said.

“Advent develops as a fasting period preceding the cele-bration of Christmas, likely connected to initiation of Christianity,” he said. “But the Roman rite was later to adopt this period of around four weeks — it’s Gregory the Great that tells us of the four weeks. We know in Milan, it was six weeks (and still is).”

Advent is also marked by the use of the Advent wreath, which O’Malley said was adopted as a practice of popular piety from Germany, and the O Antiphons, descriptions of the Messiah drawn from the Book of Isaiah which are used in the liturgy of the Hours’ evening prayer Dec. 17-23.

Father Torres also pointed to fasts, vigils, wreaths and readings of the Prophet Isaiah. And in many countries, he said, the period between Dec. 17 and Christmas Eve “is filled with prayers, processions and devotions followed by a celebration and song.”

He noted, however, that “in the East, the monks would take it to Lenten levels.”

Some Eastern Catholic churches, such as the Byzantine Catholic Church, still traditionally observe the “Nativity fast,” or “St. Philip’s fast,” which begins Nov. 15, the day their liturgical calendar observes the Feast of St. Philip the Apostle. Like Lent’s 40-day fast before Easter, the Nativity fast begins 40 days before Christmas, but its requirements are not as rigorous as those in Lent.

Father Torres noted that Lent was added to the Church’s liturgical calendar before Advent.

“Initially, only Easter had a preparatory season, but later Christmas developed its own similar period called Advent,” he said. “Both Advent and Lent share common features, such as violet liturgical color, omitting the Gloria at Sunday Masses, and having a Sunday of ‘joy’ during both seasons — Gaudete Sunday and Laetare Sunday.”

The seasons also have notable contrasts. Father Torres added. “While Lent lacks flowers, Advent features them moderately and Lent has images of going into the desert, Advent has a voice coming from the desert. Lent has readings of conversion of life, Advent has readings of fulfillment of prophecy in our lives. Advent has a joyous anticipa-tion feel, because it is meant to embody the expectation for the Messiah with delightful devotion, whereas Lent has penitential practices like the Way of the Cross,” he said.

He noted that the current expectations of Advent are that it is a time of joyful anticipation.

“If your home is getting ready to receive a lovely guest, there is a time of cleaning, cooking and prepping,” he said.

“We are readiness our hearts for Jesus in Advent in similar ways.”

In her home, Tierney says she pushes back against the pressure to rush into Christmas decorating. Her family spends time cutting paper snowflakes and stringing pop-pcorn, among other things.

“Just to lean into the season by slowing it down and tak-ing the decorating step-by-step has been really meaningful for us,” she said.

Remembering loved ones

For the month of November, St. Augustine Parish, Covington, has set up an ofrenda, or “altar of rememberances,” commemorating the deceased family members of parishioners as a way of incorporating the faith into the season of All Saints Day and All Souls Day. A Mexican tradition associated with the Day of the Dead, the ofrenda displays photographs of loved ones, alongside candles lit by parish families on the feast of All Souls and marigolds — a traditional flower displayed on Day of the Dead ofrendas.

“We call on people to pray for the dead, especially in November,” said Father Daniel Schomaker, pastor of St. Augustine, “to remember the faithful departed in a unique and special way.”

“It’s been a joy as the pastor to watch from afar as new parishioners are there and pointing to other parishioners, and sharing in a real way their life with the other members of their parish family,” he said.
Meet Raven as she shares how her foster family saved her life

November is National Adoption Month and Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home Center for Children and Families is changing the lives of children through foster care and adoption services. Below, Raven, one of the children who has received services at DCCH, shares her story.

My name is Raven. I am a junior at the University of Kentucky and I am studying to be a Social Worker. If you were to observe me from the outside looking in, you would think I had the perfect life. I have two loving parents, three family dogs, all Boston Terriers, I live off campus with two of my friends, and have two cats who live with me in Lexington. However, once upon a time not too long ago, my life looked completely different.

The first 11 years of my life were very traumatic. Not every day was bad, but most days were bad. My biological parents were just kids when they had me and my siblings. They were drug addicts, and my home life was a very dark place. I was not safe, I did not feel love, I was neglected and my therapy was very traumatic. Not every day was bad, but most days were bad. My biological parents were just kids when they had me and my siblings. They were drug addicts, and my home life was a very dark place.

I was not safe, I did not feel love, I was neglected and abused. Being the oldest of three siblings, I often got the brunt of the trauma. I tried my best to shield my siblings from the daily abuse and neglect. I was a child though, so I could only do so much.

When I was eleven, the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) finally stepped in and removed us because the trauma I faced made it impossible to find a placement for me with them. I stayed connected with them. If you would have told 11-year-old me that I would be a junior in college, she would have laughed you off the planet. Being in foster care completely changed my life. I was placed in Holly Hill Residential Home as an 11-year-old. I attended Campbell County School. That would place me in a path to meeting the man who would become my dad. I found myself in the principal’s office one day over starting a food fight in the cafeteria. The principal asked me if I would start a food fight if I were out to dinner with my family. When I blurted out that I did not have a family, he said he felt like a complete jerk. I was a foster kid living at Holly Hill. That conversation led him to have a conversation with his wife and the rest is history. I was adopted by them, and that principal is now my principal. Hesitation led to him to have a conversation with his wife and the rest is history. I was adopted by them, and that principal is now my principal.

He and my mom went through training and became certified to be foster parents through DCCH Center with the intention to foster me. They could not have kids of their own and something I said that day led them to know in their hearts that I was what their family needed. My mom says she always questioned why she could not have kids until the day she met me. I had never been wanted by anyone in my life. I was a hopeless child who had been discard ed by every adult in my life. I did not make life easy on them and sometimes I still don’t. They definitely had to earn my trust and it would take years for them to earn it.

Being fostered by a great set of parents did not erase my trauma, but they provided me with an atmosphere where I learned how to work through it, believe in myself, and gave hope to a hopeless kid. DCCH Center was the perfect foster agency for me. My case worker, Mel, felt like an older sister and not a social worker. She was young and fun. She would braid my hair, take me for coffee, jump on my trampoline with me and just listen. DCCH matched me up with the perfect therapist. I still see her although now via Zoom since I am in Lexington most of the time. They were there the first day my DCCH social worker introduced me to the Smiths as my foster family. That was the day when I was adopted. On November 3, 2017, the therapeutic atmosphere that DCCH provided me was what I needed to learn to trust my parents and heal from the trauma I experienced. They are still there for me today even though I have been adopted almost 6 years. I am doing my class volunteer hours with them and will do my professional internship with them for my senior year. I truly feel DCCH is a part of my family and played a significant role in my story.

I love telling people that I was adopted. Not many people get to say their parents chose them. If anyone reading this is thinking about fostering or adopting a child, I urge you to take a chance and try it. I was twelve when I was placed with my parents. Foster cares saved my life and because of that it has inspired me to be a social worker. There are so many kids out there that are just like me when I was eleven who need to be loved, cared for, and given hope.

If you would like more information on DCCH Center for Children and Families and how you can help, contact Amy Pelciano at APeleciano@DCCHcenter.org.
Simple gifts become the greatest gift in the world

The good Deacon was preparing the altar in the normal fashion for Mass. Usually, I will bow my head and say a short prayer, or I think about what I want for breakfast, but today was different. As I sat down after the prayers of the faithful, I looked toward the altar. The simple sight of a chalice and paten, and a book laying on the altar brought me a few tears.

When saying Mass, it can be overwhelming to look down and see that simple sight of bread and wine, that becomes the Body and Blood of Jesus. It is hard to imagine how it is possible for us to honestly say we believe this? If we cannot, perhaps meditating on the servants in this Sunday’s Gospel parable can teach us how it is possible.

As the parable goes, a man going on a journey “called his servants and entrusted his possessions to them,”ParticleB. In his servants and entrusted his possessions to them,” ParticleB. As the parable goes, a man going on a journey “called his servants and entrusted his possessions to them,”ParticleB. Similarly, imagine how it must have felt for the third servant to say, Master, I buried your talent; here it is back. It is unlikely there was any satisfaction or pride in his words.

Working backwards, now let us imagine how the third servant felt when his master felt away their master’s return, anticipating a positive response from him. It is hard to imagine the same unworried anticipation in the third servant.

Again, we have no way of knowing, but it does not seem a stretch to imagine hearing at least some satisfaction, and perhaps even pleasure or joy or pride, in the words of the first two servants: Master, you gave us this much; see, I have made this much more.

Finally, still working backwards, how did the third men feel as they went about their tasks? The words of the third servant, as he returns his master’s talent, hint at the possible difference between the feelings of the first two men and the third.

The third servant says to his master, “Master, I knew you were a demanding person, harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter; out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground.” If fear made this man bury his master’s talent, what motivated the other two men to try to increase their master’s money? Is it possible that they also were motivated by fear, but not in the same words of the parable?

The Master says to the first two men, “My good and faithful servant.” It does not seem unreasonable to decide that these men were motivated by something other than fear—at the very least, duty, possibly loyalty or a desire to please. Even love is not out of the question.

Now let us go back to the Collect: is it likely that the third servant would say that it was “full and lasting happiness to serve the Lord? How many of us can honestly say we believe this? If we cannot, perhaps meditating on the servants in this Sunday’s Gospel parable can teach us how it is possible.

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Family dynamics (Gen 37-45)

Memories of early family life are filled with joys, experiences of being cared for, laughter around tables with a zany uncle or cranky relative. Since no family is perfect, there are also memories of hurtful incidents.

The account of family dynamics in the narrative about Joseph and his brothers early in the human story reveals the complexity of our life together. Favoritism, jealousy, retaliation, guilt, sympathy, forgiveness are all prominent human traits. It was quite a feat to include all of them in the story of one family as the author of the Joseph narrative does.

What family has not experienced favoritism and jealousy? The judgment that one sibling is the "pet" is common. The favoritism may be real or merely imagined. In the case of Joseph, because of his being the child of Jacob’s old age, the favoritism was real (Gen 37:2-4) and jealousy followed. The story of Joseph, the spoiled child, with its invitation to envy is a familiar tale.

How prevalent is the temptation to get even. The evening news is replete with stories of revenge in one form or another. The author of the Joseph narrative, in touch with this human tendency, relates how Joseph’s brothers plot to punish him for the favors he has received. They consider ways to put him out of their lives (Gen 37:13-53).

Even in this plotting we see moments of delay and consideration of a father’s grief. If at first the scheming is playful fantasizing rather than a serious option, as they consider ways to put him out of their lives, Joseph does not remember our sins but we often do.

Base inclinations of the human heart are not the end of the story as the narrative reveals. Recollections of our human experience of family is replete with joy-filled and loving moments — moments of deep sympathy, of forgiveness and kindness. The brothers’ concern for their father fills their hearts as they consider whether to return to provide more supplies (Gen 42:24-30, 43:16-20).

As they have matured, their disregard for the fate of Joseph and for the grief his disappearance causes Jacob have been replaced by compassion and concern. It seems that this new crisis is the occasion for them to know themselves more fully — both their strengths and their weaknesses.

Joseph allows forgiveness and compassion to move his heart as he finally embraces his father and brothers. Perhaps, this story of family dynamics invites us to examine our own experiences of envy and vengeance, of guilt and remorse, of sympathy and forgiveness as we have matured in our family relationships. Hopefully, our prayerful remembrance will lead to repentance and most importantly to forgiveness, healing, love and immense gratitude. A look at the past is part of the revelatory.

Divine Providence Sister Fidelis Tracy is a retired theologian and professor at Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Ky.

"I'm the pray-er not the pray-ee. I pray for him every day. My prayers are for his health, safety and overall well-being. In addition, I ask for the intercession of St. Joseph, a model of father and husband. But, most important to me, are prayers of gratitude for him being in my life and for what he does for our family. I never dreamed he might be doing the same for me. This was such an enlightening discovery! In over 25 years of marriage why had we never discussed this before?"

Talking about one’s personal prayer life can be difficult. Truthfully, I guess I just wasn’t sure how he would feel about it. Would he think it was strange or feel uncomfortable? I guess I was underestimating him — underestimating us.

I realized then that knowing someone is thinking of you, praying for you, is like a volt of spiritual electricity, it recharges and energizes the soul. You have someone who is putting you at the forefront of their thoughts and asking God for his favor in your life. So powerful.

Later that week I heard an old song that really hit home for me, Dionne Warwick singing, “Say a Little Prayer.” The Burt Bacharach and Hal David song from 1967, often covered, is written from the perspective of a young woman whose great love is in Vietnam. What I find especially touching about the song is that throughout the course of her day the singer is praying for her love. She doesn’t have to stop what she is doing; it IS what she is doing. As soon as she wakes, combs her hair, rides the bus, or even has a coffee break she is literally praying for his love.

Our own lives may not currently have the distance or difficulty of a loved one in a war-torn country but what a beautiful concept to have prayer as a thread in the fabric of our lives. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thess 5:16-18) How often during our day do we pray? For our spouses? For those we love? Our lives should be a prayer in the way that we live, in our thoughts, words and actions — as it says, “without ceasing.”

Want to strengthen your marriage, family and faith? Beginning is easy — just say a little prayer...

Julie Feinauer is director of the Safe Environment Office, Diocese of Covington, Ky.
Be Witnesses

“Wake up the world! Be witnesses of a different way of acting, of living!”
— Pope Francis

Religious Communities in the Diocese of Covington

Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg
Monastery www.stwalburg.org
Brothers of the Poor of St. Francis
www.brothersofthepoorofstfrancis.org
Passionist Nuns
www.erlangerpassionists.com
Sisters of Divine Providence
www.cdpkentucky.org
Sisters of Notre Dame
www.sindusa.org
Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker
www.sisjw.org

Public and Private Associations

Franciscan Daughters of Mary
www.fdmofkentucky.org
Missionaries of St. John the Baptist
www.msjb.info

Karen Kuhman
Correspondent

We owe a sweet debt of gratitude to the women religious who have labored in the vineyard of the Diocese of Covington since 1856. They are with us in times of war or peace, times of plenty or poverty, times of good or bad.

Today, we see turmoil almost everywhere we look. Concerns about local and global conflicts compound our day-to-day worries about home and family. A generalized culture of disappointment seems to permeate everything and can obscure the great good that continues to be done by the peacemakers in our midst.

The women religious are always among those peacemakers, living their vocations in service to God and his people. Their vocations are their gifts, freely given to all of us. Whether or not we fully understand the importance of those gifts, we are their beneficiaries.

The Sisters’ generosity has touched the lives of everyone who has received an education or healthcare in the Diocese. With the establishment of grade schools, high schools, Thomas More University, and healthcare systems, the Sisters laid the foundation for our futures — futures filled with possibilities. Moreover, their lives include the blessing of their prayers for all of us. And, just as we are grateful for their vocations, the women religious also share in that gratitude.

Mother Mary Christine Murray is Superior General of the Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker in Walton. The Sisters share Christ’s saving love to build up the Body of Christ through their apostolates of St. Joseph Academy in Walton and Taylor Manor Care Center in Versailles.

Mother Mary Christine is the principal of the K-9 elementary school, which also offers an academic hybrid homeschool program for students in the 3rd through 8th grades. Sharing her reflections on her vocation, Mother Christine said: “I am grateful for my consecration to God. The vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience turn everything into a prayer. I didn’t become a woman religious to just be a teacher, a nurse, a cook, or whatever my community asks me to do. My consecration allows me to help others, sometimes in ways I would never have imagined. It is such a honor when someone asks me to pray for them. Again, it is my consecration to God that helps people feel that they can come to me to ask for prayers to help them through a difficult situation. It’s during my time of prayer that I am able to bring all those requests for prayers to God. And the graces I receive from the prayer time are not for me but for those for whom I prayed. I am truly blessed and grateful that I was called to religious life. God is good, all the time.”

The Passionist Nuns of the Erlanger Monastery lead an unseen spiritual life and devote their lives to “the unceasing contemplation of Christ’s passion.” They use their gifts to bake the bread that Christ changes through the priest at Mass into Jesus’ Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity; their gift to us is their invitation to bring our prayer requests to them during our times of trouble.

Sister Mary Angela said, “I am grateful to have the opportunity to live a life consecrated to keeping the memory of the greatest work of God’s love alive; to bring that love to those who suffer, to let them know they are not alone. Christ is suffering with them and joining their pain to His suffering, making it fruitful, giving it meaning even as they work to alleviate their pain.”

Karen Kuhman is a correspondent for the Messenger and speaks to groups about the work of the Sisters of Notre Dame. She has been a member of the Community since 1987. She received her undergraduate degree in English from the University of Notre Dame, so I became a Sister of Notre Dame. I soon began to realize that I wasn’t going to be doing anything for God, but God was doing everything for me! I was blessed to share my gifts and talents with my students and their families. And I loved teaching. Later, while working in administration, I wondered what God was asking of me. I learned that God was asking me to be a companion to those trying to serve others, to walk with those involved in leadership in schools or pastoral care at Carmel Manor. I have had a unique opportunity to serve my community. Although I felt unprepared for some tasks, I let God use me and found that my spirituality grew!”

Sister Mary Elizabeth said, “I am thankful for my vocation that enables me to live in the light of Christ’s Passion, which reveals His amazing love. It is a call to return love for love in my life as a Passionist.”

Sister Aileen Bankemper, a Benedictine Sister and Prioress of St. Walburg Monastery said, “When I consider what I am most grateful for in my years of direct service in the Diocese, the 17 years that I worked as a therapist at Catholic Charities (formerly Catholic Social Services Bureau) immediately comes to mind. Working in the counseling department was a fulfilling, growthful, and wonderful experience. It was a privilege to be involved in an agency that could accommodate persons regardless of their ability to pay, an organization that emphasized healing and reconciliation and allowed opportunities for therapists to create programs to benefit the needs of the persons. I witnessed the positive changes that occurred in people’s lives — a real blessing. Recently, the Sisters have, on separate occasions, provided temporary housing in the Monastery guest house to refugee families from Afghanistan and Congo.”

Sister Shauna Bankemper, on the leadership team of the Sisters of Notre Dame, said, “Everything about my vocation is a gift! I am grateful for the call to religious life. I came to it thinking I would do something wonderful for God. That was my youthful enthusiasm! I wanted to become a teacher; I loved my teachers at Notre Dame, so I became a Sister of Notre Dame. I soon began to realize that I wasn’t going to be doing anything for God, but God was doing everything for me! I was blessed to share my gifts and talents with my students and their families. And I loved teaching. Later, while working in administration, I wondered what God was asking of me. I learned that God was asking me to be a companion to those trying to serve others, to walk with those involved in leadership in schools or pastoral care at Carmel Manor. I have had a unique opportunity to serve my community. Although I felt unprepared for some tasks, I let God use me and found that my spirituality grew!”

Sister Leslie Keener of the Congregation of Divine Providence said, “My vocation has made me a more grateful person. I am most grateful for the presence of the other sisters in my community; the bonds we share, and the connections that all Sisters have with other communities of women religious. When surrounded by people who pay attention to how providence is moving in their lives and the movement of the Spirit, I pay more attention to what God is doing in my life, too. It turns my attention to God’s presence and makes me more aware of all the things to be grateful for, for all the good things God is always doing.”

Sister Kay Kramer, a family nurse practitioner with a doctorate in nursing, said, “I am grateful for the life I am living as a Sister of the Congregation of Divine Providence, as a follower of Jesus Christ, as a daughter of the church, receiving sustenance and life from the Eucharist. Living this consecrated life brings me great joy, contentment, and peace. I am grateful to serve God and His people and to contribute to the common good in small ways. I am grateful for the simplicity of living in community with sisters who are also deeply committed; that helps me focus on what is most essential.”

One of Sister Kay’s favorite scripture verses, Colossians 3:12-15, sums up what she is grateful for in her vocation: “Put on, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, and over all these, put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts.”

Thank you, our Sisters in the Diocese of Covington, for the witness of your life and love among us. We are grateful.

In gratitude for the gift of the Women Religious

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Sister Shauna Bankemper, on the leadership team of the Sisters of Notre Dame, said, “Everything about my vocation is a gift! I am grateful for the call to religious life. I came to it thinking I would do something wonderful for God. That was my youthful enthusiasm! I wanted to become a teacher; I loved my teachers at Notre Dame, so I became a Sister of Notre Dame. I soon began to realize that I wasn’t going to be doing anything for God, but God was doing everything for me! I was blessed to share my gifts and talents with my students and their families. And I loved teaching. Later, while working in administration, I wondered what God was asking of me. I learned that God was asking me to be a companion to those trying to serve others, to walk with those involved in leadership in schools or pastoral care at Carmel Manor. I have had a unique opportunity to serve my community. Although I felt unprepared for some tasks, I let God use me and found that my spirituality grew!”

Sister Leslie Keener of the Congregation of Divine Providence said, “My vocation has made me a more grateful person. I am most grateful for the presence of the other sisters in my community; the bonds we share, and the connections that all Sisters have with other communities of women religious. When surrounded by people who pay attention to how providence is moving in their lives and the movement of the Spirit, I pay more attention to what God is doing in my life, too. It turns my attention to God’s presence and makes me more aware of all the things to be grateful for, for all the good things God is always doing.”

Sister Kay Kramer, a family nurse practitioner with a doctorate in nursing, said, “I am grateful for the life I am living as a Sister of the Congregation of Divine Providence, as a follower of Jesus Christ, as a daughter of the church, receiving sustenance and life from the Eucharist. Living this consecrated life brings me great joy, contentment, and peace. I am grateful to serve God and His people and to contribute to the common good in small ways. I am grateful for the simplicity of living in community with sisters who are also deeply committed; that helps me focus on what is most essential.”

One of Sister Kay’s favorite scripture verses, Colossians 3:12-15, sums up what she is grateful for in her vocation: “Put on, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, and over all these, put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts.”

Thank you, our Sisters in the Diocese of Covington, for the witness of your life and love among us. We are grateful.

For more information about consecrated life in the Diocese of Covington, contact Sister Marla Manahan at mmmanahan@covdio.org or (859) 392-1569.
“A Christian who is discontented, sad, dissatisfied, or worse still, resentful or rancorous, is not credible” and will not attract anyone to a relationship with Jesus and a life of faith, the pope said Nov. 15 at his weekly general audience.

After almost a year of audience talks about “zeal for evangelization” and highlighting the example of saints and other exemplary men and women from around the world, Pope Francis said his last talks in the series would focus on four points from his 2013 apostolic exhortation, “The Joy of the Gospel.”

The first point, the subject of his talk Nov. 15, was the essential role of joy in the life of Christians and in their ability to share the Gospel with others.

“The Gospel is not an ideology; the Gospel is a proclamation of joy,” he said. “All ideologies are cold, but the Gospel has the warmth of joy. Ideologies don’t make people smile, but the Gospel is a smile. It makes you smile because it touches your soul with the Good News.”

Saying the first people who need to be evangelized are Christians themselves, the pope asked those gathered for the audience to reflect on how well they preserve and share the joy of knowing that God sent his son into the world, that Jesus loves each person always, that he offered his life out of love and wants to give each person eternal life.

Especially in places where it seems most people are not interested in religion, he said, Christians must recognize that “humanity abounds with brothers and sisters waiting for a word of hope.”

People are waiting to hear the Gospel message “even today,” the pope said. “People of all times need it, even the civilization of programmed unbelief and institutionalized secularity; indeed, especially the society that leaves the spaces of religious meaning deserted. This is the right moment for the proclamation of Jesus.”

Through a relationship with Jesus, “joy is always born and reborn. Don’t forget this,” he said. “And if any of us do not perceive this joy, let us ask ourselves whether we have found Jesus.”

Departing from his prepared text, Pope Francis said, “Today each one of us should take a bit of time and think: Jesus, you are within me. I want to encounter you each day. You are a person, not an idea. You are a companion on the journey, not a program. You are love that resolves so many problems. You are the starting point of evangelization. You, Jesus, are the source of joy.”

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Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts

Father Luke Spannagel

The next part of the Mass following the Preface is called the Sanctus, perhaps more commonly referred to as the Holy, Holy, Holy. As is true with many parts of the Mass, we can find these words in the Holy Scriptures. The prophet Isaiah saw a vision of the Lord on a throne with angels singing, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!” (Is. 6:3).

In St. John’s vision of heaven, the four living creatures continuously exclaim, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God omnipotent.”” (Rev. 4:8). Perhaps we will also recognize the second part of the Sanctus from the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday: “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest” (Matt. 21:9).

Charles Belmonte recalls how the Sanctus reminds us of the beautiful presence of the angels at the Mass: “We join our own voices with those of the hosts of angels in awe, wonderment, and great enthusiasm … St. John Chrysostom describes the presence of angels during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with these words: ‘The angels surround the priest; all the temple, especially the sanctuary, is populated with celestial hosts of angels who honor God, present on the altar’” (Understanding the Mass, p. 131). Have you ever thought of this? In a very real way, the Sanctus helps to remind us that our participation in the Mass is truly a foretaste of heaven. When we gather as the Body of Christ for the Mass, united with Jesus truly present, the WHOLE Body is present there! That means everyone of the Christian faithful is present with us — all those around the world, all those from various times (including those who have gone before us), and all those who are gathered together in heaven around the throne of God … including the heavenly hosts of angels!

Imagining the angels singing a hymn with their voices is most exciting, just imagine how joyful we will be when Jesus is truly and substantially present on the altar.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts
The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CGL Sundays, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 17 or 25; Cincinnati Bell TV 157; and DirectTV 25.

Parish Kitchen needs your help. Parish Kitchen needs new sleeping bags and new blankets for guests. Many of our brothers and sisters spend these long winter nights in unheated spaces or outdoors. Your gift of new sleeping bags and blankets will not only warm their hearts and souls but may even save their lives. Donations can be dropped off at Parish Kitchen, 1561 Madison Ave., Covington, 8 to 11 a.m., Monday thru Friday. The drive is held Nov. 15–30. Any questions call 581-7145.

The next United in Prayer for Peace in the World will be Nov. 20, 6 p.m., at the Bell Tower, Goebel Park, Covington. Come in person or join online through Facebook live via the Sisters of Notre Dame or the Sisters of Divine Providence Facebook or the United In Prayer pages. Praying together is a sign of hope and unity, and a moment of peace and encouragement for others and ourselves as a praying community. This prayer is hosted by Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Divine Providence, and the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg.

The Bishop Brossart High School Boys and Girls Basketball teams host Green and White Night Nov. 24, 6 p.m. Basketball season is back Mustangs!

The Bishop Brossart High School Cheerleaders will host a Skyline Chili Spaghetti Dinner Nov. 26, 2–7 p.m. at the cafeteria. The Bishop Brossart High School Boys and Girls Basketball teams will play Alumni Night at 7:30 p.m. on Dec 2, 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 3, 7 p.m. When the ghost of Charles Dickens hijacks a local production of “A Christmas Carol,” holiday hijinks ensue. Be one of the first to see the world premiere of this brand new holiday play written by Northern Kentucky playwrights Zach Robinson and Alexx Robinson specifically for Thomas More University. Intended for audiences 15 years of age and over, General admission $10, free for current Thomas More students. Purchase tickets at mamuskyvintheatre.org.

The International Nativity Display will be showcased every Sunday in December, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., at Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, featuring nativity sets made by artists and craftsmen from 82 different countries with 200 nativities on display. Admission is free and open to the public. Handicap accessible.

Newport Central Catholic is offering a two-hour course designed to help prepare any 8th grader for the High School Placement Test (HSPT). The same HSPT prep course will be offered on two different days, Dec. 3 and Dec. 5, 4-8:30 p.m. Cost $20 and includes printed course materials. Pre-register and pay https://usfhs8.khsa.org. Day of registrations will be accepted, and payment can be made by cash or check.

NCCHS community stocks the shelves
Newport Central Catholic is pleased to partner with Jim Hills and his volunteers at the St. Bernard Pantry to host a “Stock the Shelves” collection. Approximately 1,000 food items and nearly 300 rolls of toilet paper were donated by NCCHS students, families, alumni and members of the community. The collection culminated on Nov. 11 with a drive-thru drop-off at the school. Thank you to all you shared their time and treasure to help those in the community who are in need.

A faith-based support group, New Beginnings provides separated and divorced individuals the opportunity for healing and growth. In this group, participants find new understanding of themselves and their relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Registration is required. Visit https://cndio.org/new-beginnings/cj slender than before. The next session will begin the upcoming Thursdays, Oct. 12—Dec. 7, 7–9 p.m., Holy Trinity Elementary School, Bellevue.

DCOH Children’s Home Flea Market. St. Mitchell, year-round, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. (Dec.–April, Monday Thursday and every 3rd Saturday). Donation drop-off during Flea Market hours or at drop-off box anytime.

Saint for November
St. Elizabeth of the Trinity (1880–1906) Feast day: Nov. 8
St. Elizabeth was the oldest child of a French military officer and his wife. When she visited the local Carmelite monastery at age 17, she knew that she was being called to the contemplative life. She entered when she was 21 and died there at age 26 of Addison's disease.

In her short life, she wrote numerous spiritual works, including “Heaven in Faith,” a retreat she prepared a few months before her death. She believed her purpose in life was to lead souls to a deeper union with Christ in the Trinity, and to that end, referred to herself as “Endless Glorification (praise of glory).” She was canonized by Pope Francis in October 2016.

In her memory:
She had a temper as a child. Ask for her help with anger issues.
She called the Trinity “my Three.” Spend some time before the Blessed Sacrament contemplating the three Persons of the Trinity.
Make a donation to the nearest Carmelite monastery.
Kenny Collopy, principal, Newport Central Catholic High School, invited alumnae of the Academy of Notre Dame de la Providence and Our Lady of Providence Academy to its all-school Mass, Nov. 15, at St. Thomas Church, Ft. Thomas. The Mass, celebrated by Father Ross Kelsch, pastor, was in honor of the feast of Our Lady of Divine Providence, which is Nov. 19 or, in the Traditional Missal, the Saturday before the third Sunday of November.

As he began his homily, Father A.J. Gedney, chaplain, NCCHS, reminded students that the roots of NCCHS are embedded in Divine Providence, especially the Sisters of Divine Providence, Melbourne, who built and taught at ANDP and OLP.

Mary’s title of Our Lady of Divine Providence, Father Gedney said, was attributed to her for her intervention at the wedding in Cana. Having discovered that the wine had run out, Mary asked Jesus, her son, to remedy the situation and instructed servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Her confidence and faith resulted in Jesus’ first public miracle of transforming water into wine. This event demonstrates that Mary is a powerful intercessor for all her children in need and that Jesus will not refuse his mother.

Our Lady of Divine Providence is depicted as Mary cradling the infant Jesus. In the United States, pilgrims devoted to Our Lady of Divine Providence travel to the National Shrine to Our Lady of Divine Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, and the Our Mother of Divine Providence Oratory located in the crypt of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. During the month of November, it is recommended on the Feast of Divine Providence to pray three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys for the souls in purgatory.

Please join us for our 16th Annual Turkeyfoot Trot 5k Run/Walk to benefit our neighbors in need.

Saturday, November 18, 9:00 AM at Thomas More University

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Alumnae of the Academy of Notre Dame de la Providence and Our Lady of Providence Academy gather for photo, Nov. 15, following Mass celebrating the upcoming feast of Our Lady of Divine Providence. The Mass was held at St. Thomas Church, Ft. Thomas with celebrant Father Ross Kelsch. Kenny Collopy, principal, Newport Central Catholic High School, invited the alumnae to its all-school Mass. Our Lady of Providence Academy closed in the Spring of 1983, merging with Newport Catholic High School to form today’s Newport Central Catholic.

(bottom left) Three alumnae proudly wear their former schools insignia and spirit wear.
Bishops OK supplements to ‘Faithful Citizenship,’ affirm abortion ‘preeminent’ among issues

Katie Yoder

The U.S. Catholic bishops approved supplements to “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship”—a teaching document on the political responsibility of Catholics—on Nov. 15 during their annual fall plenary assembly in Baltimore.

The purpose of these items is to address current, recent policy issues and to incorporate the teachings of Pope Francis since the last update.” Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, vice president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, explained to bishops in a presentation he gave the day before as chair of the task force charged with drafting the supplemental materials.

A new introductory note, five bulletin inserts, and a template video script supplement the document, last updated in 2015, that outlines the bishops’ guidance for Catholics in forming their consciences as they exercise their rights and duties as U.S. citizens. The bishops will reexamine the document following the 2024 election.

Archbishop Lori told bishops the materials were the result of “extensive consultation and collaboration among the chairman of the 10 committees of the conference that make up the task force.”

No bishops asked questions of clarification during the preliminary presentation or ahead of the vote.

“Two-thirds of the conference membership needed to vote “yes” for approval. A majority of 225 bishops voted yes, 11 voted no, and seven abstained.”

While quoting Pope Francis’ 2016 encyclical letter, “Fratelli Tutti” (“Brothers All”), the new supplements encourage Catholics to follow the example of the Good Samaritan and serve as neighbors to all.

In years past, the bishops have debated whether to call abortion “our preeminent priority” in the guide. The new introductory note reads: “The threat of abortion remains our preeminent priority because it directly attacks our most vulnerable and voiceless brothers and sisters and destroys more than a million lives per year in our country alone.”

The new introductory letter explains, “The threat of abortion remains our preeminent priority because it directly attacks life itself, because it takes place within the sanctuary of the family and because of the number of lives destroyed.”

At a Nov. 15 press briefing following the vote, Archbishop Lori addressed the language on abortion.

“I think that the protection of the unborn remains a preeminent priority because unborn children who are affected by this are utterly vulnerable, utterly voiceless, and there are so many of them who have died,” he said.

“And we are called to stand in radical solidarity with women in difficult pregnancies and their unborn children, and to provide them with the kind of support and services and public policies that they need.”

The bishops’ guidance in “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” dates back to 2007. At the 2012 fall plenary assembly, the bishops voted to reissue the document without revisions and include supplemental materials: a new introductory note, multiple bulletin inserts, a template video script, and a social media kit.

With “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” the bishops stress that they do not intend to tell Catholics who to vote for, instead, they identify their purpose as helping Catholics form their consciences.

Catholics, the statement reads, “are called to participate in public life in a manner consistent with the mission of our Lord.”

The document is divided into three main parts: a reflection by the bishops on Catholic teaching and political life, a summary of the USCCB’s policy positions, and challenges for citizens, candidates, and public officials.

“We urge our pastors, lay and religious faithful, and all people of good will to use this statement to help form their consciences; to teach those entrusted to their care; to contribute to civil and respectful public dialogue; and to shape political choices in the coming election in light of Catholic teaching,” the bishops say on their website. “The statement lifts up our dual heritage as both faithful Catholics and American citizens with rights and duties as participants in the civil order.”
Renewed Focus on Human Trafficking Leads Catholics To Support Related Ministries

A recent motion picture about human trafficking has left many U.S. Catholics wondering how they can become involved in protecting those at risk, particularly in the developing countries of the world. Fortunately, there are some very effective Catholic ministries now focusing on that need, and donations to support their work can go a long way to protect the girls and boys most often targeted by traffickers.

"Sadly, human traffickers have become particularly active in the poorest parts of the world. That’s because young people in impoverished communities are hungry, feel isolated and see little hope for the future. That makes them easy prey for criminals who deceptively promise them a path to a better life," explained Michele Sagarrino, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a respected Catholic relief and development ministry supporting Church-based efforts to end human trafficking threats in countries such as the Philippines.

According to Sagarrino, once a child is drawn into a trafficker’s lies about a better life, the trap is sprung and all pretense is dropped. At that point, a boy or girl becomes little more than a captive commodity to be sold on the streets or forced into slave labor. Sometimes, they are even sent thousands of miles away, making it almost impossible for them to reunite with their families.

"It’s a heartbreaking situation, and we should do everything we can to protect the vulnerable people being targeted," Sagarrino said. "To achieve that, we are empowering Catholic missions focused on breaking the influence of human traffickers — ministries such as the Laura Vicuña Foundation in the Philippines. The wonderful sisters there have developed a program to protect and nurture young people who might otherwise be susceptible to a trafficker’s lies."

In addition to offering abused girls a safe home, educational opportunities and counseling services at the foundation’s center, Managing Director Sister Mervic also sends out a mobile Child Protection Clinic to reach young people in the community through outreaches that offer them love, support and hope.

"The mobile clinic and Sr. Mervic’s roving support staff bring light into the darkness. They help children understand they are cherished by God and have great potential," Sagarrino said. "The ministry’s slogan is ‘Building a culture of protection for children,’ and they are doing an incredible job."

Because the Laura Vicuña Foundation operates on a meager budget, Sagarrino is doing what she can to empower this important ministry through Cross Catholic Outreach, and she says many American Catholics have shown interest in supporting anti-trafficking outreaches as well.

"It has been encouraging to see so many American Catholics stepping forward to help end human trafficking and protect these vulnerable children," she said. "They understand the terrible threat predators represent, and they want to do everything they can to protect the boys and girls at risk."

For the dedicated religious sisters running the foundation, this help couldn’t be coming at a better time. Economic downturns tend to increase the suffering of the poor and can push desperate parents and children to consider extreme measures.

"The Church must act now. We need to give these vulnerable children hope," Sagarrino said. "If we don’t, more innocent boys and girls will become the prey of these insidious human traffickers, and some will be lost forever in that depraved world of sin."

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach’s many relief programs to help the poor can contribute by following the directions in the ministry brochure inserted in this issue or send tax-deductible gifts to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02656, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20096-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis. Use the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write "Monthly Mission Partner" on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up these arrangements.

Unique Christmas Catalog Created To Bless Donors — and the World’s Poor

If you are like most people, your mailbox has been choked with Christmas catalogs this year. In fact, their arrival has almost become a sign of the season, like the appearance of houselights and department store decorations.

This Advent and Christmas season, Cross Catholic Outreach intends to offer a catalog too — but theirs is a very different offering with a very different purpose. It has been designed to bless both givers and receivers by using the holiday gift-giving tradition to help the world’s poorest families.

Rather than offer gimmes, gadgets, neckties and jewelry, the Cross Catholic Outreach Christmas Catalog is giving Catholics with a concern for the poor an opportunity to share the blessings in their lives with needy families by sponsoring practical and urgently needed items such as medicines, milk powder, seeds for farming, access to safe water or materials for roof repairs. Of course, it also offers blessings for children, including toys and sports equipment, so individuals can choose to sponsor both practical items suitable for families and gifts to bring children joy.

"Like most Christmas catalogs, ours offers lots of items so donors can choose to give something very specific. That said, they can also make a general gift to address the poor’s greatest needs," explained Jim Cavnar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach, the Catholic relief and development ministry offering this program. "When donors choose to give to Greatest Need, they provide us and the Catholic missions we serve with the freedom to address any urgent need. The priests and religious sisters we support really appreciate that flexibility. It’s the best way to empower their work among the poor."

This unique Christmas catalog is easy to access. Readers will find a link for it at the ministry’s website (CrossCatholic.org), or they can reach it directly by entering the web address: CrossCatholic.org/Christmas.

"Our hope is that everyone will be blessed by the experience," Cavnar said. "It’s a wonderful way for us to celebrate the birth of our merciful Lord!"
By Addressing Poverty in Developing Countries, Catholics Reduce Risks Posed by Human Trafficking

While serving the poor in developing countries, the Catholic Church often encounters problems so horrific they are hard to discuss. Human trafficking is one of those issues. It is almost impossible for us to comprehend how an innocent boy or girl could be used by an evil person or criminal group to satisfy another’s sinful lusts.

“...extreme poverty is often the reason those horrible practices exist and spread.”
Jim Cavnar, Cross Catholic Outreach

Still, as hard as it is to accept, human trafficking is real, and since that is the case, the Church and faith-filled Catholics should be doing everything they can to end its terrible spread and protect its vulnerable victims.

One of the Catholic ministries involved in this important work is Cross Catholic Outreach. Founded more than 20 years ago to support Church-based missions around the globe, Cross Catholic Outreach has made it a point to mobilize concerned Catholics in the U.S. to help end human trafficking and the threat it poses to young people, particularly children living in the world’s poorest communities. The achievement of this goal begins with a focus on poverty relief.

“When you dig deeply into the root causes of human trafficking or prostitution in countries like Haiti, Guatemala or the Philippines, you discover that extreme poverty is often the reason these horrible practices exist and spread. Young girls and boys are hungry, vulnerable and hopeless; so when unscrupulous people approach them with promises of a better life, they can easily be led astray,” said Jim Cavnar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach. “That is one of the reasons our ministry supports feeding centers, educational programs and missions that restore hope to young people. When children understand God loves them and has a plan for their lives, the human traffickers lose their power to lure them in, control them and corrupt them.”

The Church, Cavnar explained, should be light in the darkness and work toward preventive solutions. He and Cross Catholic Outreach’s president, Michele Sagarino, lead a ministry team that works through existing Catholic ministries in the developing world to help implement solutions and sustain these ministries.

“The police have a role in rescuing trafficked children — and they are trained and equipped to achieve those objectives — so we in the Church should focus on keeping young boys and girls from ever entering that degrading world of sin. That is our role, and it’s one that can have a very important impact if we work together to restore hope and offer alternatives,” Cavnar said. “One ministry we should support in that work is the Laura Vicuña Foundation in the Philippines. It offers hope to desperate and searching young people by reducing poverty in their communities and offering educational and spiritual guidance to children.” (See related story on the opposite page.)

“The children blessed in this way start on a better and healthier journey through life. They feel valued and their self-confidence grows,” Sagarino added. “Once young people come to know God, the siren song of the traffickers loses its power. Vulnerable boys and girls realize they can depend on the Church, the greater Catholic community and each other. These are the kinds of outreachs American Catholics should support if they want to end the influence of human traffickers.”

In the months to come, Cavnar and Sagarino hope to motivate thousands of U.S. Catholics to become involved in Cross Catholic Outreach’s mission to combat trafficking overseas.

Poverty in some areas of the Philippines is so severe that families resort to living in tiny shacks built under bridges. Poverty on this extreme scale leads to hopelessness in children, making them more susceptible to the lure of traffickers.

Ahmed girls living at a residential center in the Philippines create colorful masks to help themselves heal and express a new life vision.

How To Help
To fund Cross Catholic Outreach’s effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper, or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. ACK2066, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20098-7168. The brochure also includes instructions on becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify an aid project, 100% of the donation will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than is needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.
From head to heart: The turning point of St. John Henry Newman

Russell Shaw
OSV News

In his autobiography, “Apologia Pro Vita Sua,” St. John Henry Newman recalls the great turning point of his life in precise, surprisingly laconic terms: “I had begun my Essay on the Development of Doctrine in the beginning of 1845, and I was hard at it all through the year till October. As I advanced, my difficulties so cleared away that I ceased to speak of the ‘Roman Catholics,’ and boldly called them Catholics. Before I got to the end, I resolved to be received.”

A few days later, he entered the Catholic Church.

Today, Newman is considered one of the most important Catholic theologians of modern times, a thinker whose ideas strongly influenced the Second Vatican Council. His “Apologia” has a place of honor alongside St. Augustine’s “Confessions” as an account of a spiritual journey. Yet for all that, his long life was surprisingly marked by conflict and controversy.

Newman was born Feb. 21, 1801, the eldest son in a family of three sons and three daughters, and was raised an Anglican. At 15, he had a conversion experience — the “beginning of divine faith in me” — that moved him to embrace an evangelical form of Christianity with a Calvinist tinge.

He studied at Oxford, in April 1822 was elected a fellow of Oriel College, and in 1825 was ordained an Anglican priest. Several years later, he and several friends began what became known as the Oxford Movement — a loosely organized group of reform-minded Anglicans who sought adoption by the Church of England of teaching and liturgical practices with a Catholic touch. The cause was helper along by a series of pamphlets initiated by Newman and called “Tracts For the Times.”

The Oxford Movement and the tracts flourished from 1833-41. Then came Tract 90. In it, Newman argued that the 16th-century doctrine vigorously.

Pius IX in 1870 suited him, and he had declared a saint by Pope Francis in 2019.

A few days later, he entered the Catholic Church to which Newman and the principle with which it started.”

Newman also made it clear that the idea of development is not a blank check for just any sort of change. Rather, he insisted, certain conditions had to be met. “A development, to be faithful, must retain both the doctrine and the principle with which it started.”

So now at last, his doubts and hesitations had been resolved. In a “postscript” to the introduction of the first edition of the “Development of Doctrine,” speaking of himself in the third person, he notes that the writer had become a Catholic, then adds this: “It was his intention and wish to have carried his volume through the press before deciding finally on this step. But … he recognized in himself a conviction of the truth of the conclusion to which the discussion leads, so clear as to supersede further deliberation. Shortly afterwards circumstances gave him the opportunity of acting upon it, and he felt that he had no warrant for refusing to do so.”

Newman’s Anglican allegiance ended then, but he saw it differently, for he was still wrestling with changes he found to be developments of things already present in the church’s belief and teaching at the start.

That changes had taken place was obvious. But the changes found to be developments of things already present in the church’s belief and teaching at the start. Rather than leave this as simply an assertion, he carefully demonstrated how development had occurred in the case of numerous specific instances, (e.g., the papal authority; the Immaculate Conception, the canonical books of the New Testament, the two natures in Christ, infant baptism, purgatory and much else besides).

Newman’s Anglican allegiance ended then, but he saw it differently for he was still wrestling with obstacles to becoming a Catholic. These, he concluded, were largely historical in nature and concerned the fact — if fact it was — that the Catholic Church of the 19th century taught things Jesus and the apostles and church fathers hadn’t taught. And if that was so, how could the Catholic Church, as it now was, claim to be in continuity with … indeed, substantially the same as the church of apostolic times?

Steepled in the history of early Christianity, Newman now went to work to puzzle that out. The result of his research and reflection was “An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine.”

At the start he states the “assumption” he proposes to test in the book: “that the Christianity of the second, fourth, seventh, twelfth, sixteenth, and intermediate cen-
STEP 1: Contact parish/school institution leader to review the Policies and Procedures and fill out the Application and Acceptance Form.

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

STEP 3: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletins:
- Nov. bulletin posted Sunday, Nov. 5; due Tuesday, Dec. 5. www.virtusonline.org, enter your user id and password. If your account is suspended contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed.

VIRTUAL TRAINING:
- Tuesday, Nov. 28, 6:30–9 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, Dec. 5, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, Jan. 9, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, Jan. 9, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, Jan. 16, 6–8:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brtt-Hall, Burlington
- Thursday, Jan. 19, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, Jan. 26, 6–8:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brtt-Hall, Burlington
- Tuesday, Dec. 5, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Dec. 13, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Jan. 9, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Jan. 9, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Feb. 7, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Feb. 7, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, Feb. 21, 6–8:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brtt-Hall, Burlington
- Wednesday, Feb. 28, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Feb. 28, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, March 7, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, March 7, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, March 12, 6–8:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brtt-Hall, Burlington
- Tuesday, March 20, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, March 20, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, April 17, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, April 17, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, April 20, 6–8:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brtt-Hall, Burlington
- Tuesday, May 1, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, May 1, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, May 8, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, May 25, 6–8:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brtt-Hall, Burlington
- Thursday, May 25, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, May 25, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

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March for Israel draws busloads to National Mall to protest antisemitism

An estimated tens of thousands of people gathered on the National Mall Nov. 14 in a show of solidarity for Israel in the wake of the terrorist group Hamas’ Oct. 7 attacks on that country and a protest of antisemitism around the globe. Protesters also demanded the release of hostages abducted by Hamas.

Although there was no official head count for the rally organized by the Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, The Washington Post reported that a permit was issued by the National Park Service to organizers for 100,000 people. The event’s organizers later said the crowd number reached at least 290,000.

The event prompted enhanced security measures in the nation’s capital. It was designated by the Department of Homeland Security as a “Level 1” security event, the agency’s highest rating of risk assessment. That level is often given to high-profile events such as the Super Bowl and World Series, but is unprecedented for such protests, according to multiple reports.

Although security officials did not tie a specific credible threat to the event, the advocacy group the Anti-Defamation League has tracked a spike in instances of antisemitism in the wake of Hamas’ attacks on Israel, prompting concern.

A bipartisan and bicameral delegation of congressional leadership spoke at the event, while lawmakers from the Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Antisemitism, including longtime Catholic Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., led the rally in prayer.

“We pray before you, oh God of redemption, fulfilling the words of this Genesis quote: Here I am with you. I will watch over you wherever you go. And we’ll bring you back to this land. Indeed, I will not leave you until I have done what I said to you,” Smith said in his comments.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., told the crowd, “We are here united, Democrat and Republican, House and Senate, to say we stand with Israel.”

Noting he is the “highest ranking Jewish elected official in American history,” Schumer said he felt he “not only had a desire to go to Israel. I felt a special obligation to go” in the aftermath of the attack.

“When I got off the plane, Israel was still shaken from what happened,” he said of the trip he made with a congressional delegation on Oct. 14-15. “I said to the Israeli people, ‘Israel, we in America have your back. America feels your pain. We ache with you. We stand with you. And we will not rest until you get all the assistance you need.’

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., said, “There are a few issues in Washington that could so easily bring together leaders of both parties in both chambers, but the survival of the State of Israel and her people unites us together and unites all Americans.”

“Let me be very clear, the United States stands unequivocally with our neighbor, our friend, our ally Israel,” he said, calling them “neighbors in a global sense.”

Johnson characterized calls for a ceasefire as “outrageous,” arguing, “Israel will cease their counter-offensive when Hamas ceases to be a threat to the Jewish state.”

Deborah Lipstadt, President Joe Biden’s special envoy for combating antisemitism, cited George Washington’s 1790 letter “To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island,” in which the first president pledged to Jewish Americans that they were welcome in the new United States. The letter is historically notable, as it pledged more than the religious tolerance some other nations adopted, and advocated for true equality for a minority religious sect.

Over 230 years ago, “President George Washington reassured the Jews of Newport that our new nation would give bigotry no sanction, and persecution no assistance,” she said. “His meaning and his message were quite specific: In the United States of America, the bigotry of antisemitism must have no place, no quarter, no haven, no home.”

Antisemitism, Lipstadt said, “or more explicitly, Jew-hatred, the world’s longest oldest form of prejudice, has pierced and permeated too many countries, too many cultures, communities,” and can be found in “all political, religious and cultural” directions in the United States.

“Groups that agree on nothing else agree on their suspicion and hatred,” she said. “And if we needed any reminder about the validity of that claim, the past five weeks made it plain.”

She called on Americans to “echo our founding father unequivocally and unreservedly” and pledge that “today in America we give antisemitism no sanction, no foothold, no tolerance, not on campus, not in grade school, not in our neighborhoods, not in our streets of our cities. Not in our government. Not here, not now, not ever.”

Anila Ali, a Pakistani-American Muslim and women’s rights activist, told marchers that “Muslims and Jews are not destined to be enemies.”

“We are stronger together, we are blessed together; we are all the connected children of Abraham, peace be upon him,” she said. “And now today we are called upon to fulfill that historic destiny together. This is a dark time but this is also a historic moment. We will emerge stronger, and more united than ever before. And together we will have a lasting peace.”

In a post on X, formerly Twitter, the State of Israel wrote, “Thank you to each and every one of our Jewish and non-Jewish brothers, sisters and allies.”

“Your support during this difficult time means everything to us and we feel your love always, but especially today,” it said.
Sister Rosemary Lee, C.D.P. died peacefully at Holy Family Home, Melbourne, Ky., Nov. 8. Born Rosemary Francesca in 1934 to William and Adeline (Marmaccia) Lee in Mineola, NY, she worked in the business world after graduation from high school. Finding herself drawn to live deeply in relationship with God, she wanted to give herself “totally to God and to serve God’s people.” At age 34 she heard a call to religious life and moved to Melbourne, Ky., to discern her vocation. With the Congregation of Divine Providence, which she had come to know while living at the Jeanne d’Arc Residence its Sisters operated in New York City, Sister Rosemary made her first profession of vows in 1970 and perpetual profession in August 1974.

Her first ministry as a nurse aide at Holy Family Home in Melbourne awakened a desire in Sister Rosemary to pursue studies in nursing. After earning an LPN from the Northern Kentucky Vocational School in 1972, she returned to minister in that capacity at Holy Family Home for the next six years. Sister Rosemary subsequently served as a staff nurse at Frances Schrayer Nursing Home in Bronx, NY (1979-1982) and at The Madonna Residence in Brooklyn, NY (1982-1984), during which time she also became involved with her Chelsea neighborhood’s Peace and Justice Committee.

Then returned to nursing ministry at Holy Family Home in Melbourne and began studies to prepare for pastoral ministry as a chaplain. She served in this capacity at St. Joseph Hospital in Providence, RI from 1986-1990. Her beloved nursing ministry then beckoned Sister Rosemary yet again. Trusting God’s providence to guide her, she moved back to New York City and ministered at the Ronald Fraser Clinic in the Bronx as an LPN for the next seven years. During this time, she became very involved with the pro-life movement and started a pro-life organization at her parish.

After a year back in Kentucky to deal with medical issues, she returned to NYC in 1999 to help with hospitality at the congregation’s Jeanne d’Arc Residence in Manhattan. She also volunteered as a counselor at the neighborhood’s Expectant Mother Crisis Center. Sister Rosemary retired to Holy Family Home in 2000 and ministered in community service until 2019, when health issues required her move to its Health Care Center.

A gentle woman of inner strength who loved the charism she was born into, Helen and Ferdinand Lueken on Sept. 16, 1942. She was their fourth and youngest child.

Rhea attended St. Martin School in Cheviot, Ohio, where she came to know the Sisters of Notre Dame. At a young age Rhea felt called to give her life to God, and so, she became an aspirant after the eighth grade, attending Notre Dame Academy.

She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1960, made her first profession of vows in 1962, and then was assigned to teach primary grades at St. Joseph, Cold Spring, and St. Augustine School, Covington. After her final vows in 1967, pursued nursing education at Lexington Technical Institute and the University of Cincinnati.

Upon receiving her B.S.N., Sister ministered as staff nurse at St. Claire Health Care for three years and then

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Peruvian Congress approves law to ensure unborn children’s rights

LIMA, Peru — The Peruvian Congress approved a law Nov. 9 that establishes that human life begins with conception, as a conceived, unborn child must have his or her rights protected from the beginning. Until then, the legislation determined that only after birth are people subjects of law in Peru. The law establishes that the conceived, unborn child has his or her own identity — including a unique and unrepeatable genetic identity — and a personality which is independent from his or her mother. He or she has the right to dignity to life and to integrity like any individual human being. While pro-life activists celebrated the new law’s approval all over the South American country, they knew that the struggle to make it really effective will go on for a long time. Many fear it might be considered a “declarative,” ineffective piece of legislation. Susan Vargas, who heads the 40 Days For Life campaign in Peru told OSV News that “the law raises awareness about the real rights an unborn child has. It is important not only for pro-life activists, but also for physicians who face complex demands in their daily work.”

Catholics must not join Masonic groups, membership remains serious sin

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholics are still forbidden from joining Masonic organizations and, with an increasing number of Catholics joining Masonic lodges in the Philippines, the Vatican has urged the nation’s bishops to find a way to make clear the church’s continued opposition to Freemasonry.

“Membership in Freemasonry is very significant in the Catholic Church and in Masonic Lodges.” The dicastery formally enrolled in Masonic Lodges but, more generally, a “declarative,” if ineffective piece of legislation. Susan Vargas, who heads the 40 Days For Life campaign in Peru told OSV News that “the law raises awareness about the real rights an unborn child has. It is important not only for pro-life activists, but also for physicians who face complex demands in their daily work.”

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