

# NATIONAL CATHOLIC

ST. FAUSTINA FILMS ARTS, PAGE 15



NCREGISTER.COM NOVEMBER 10-23, 2019 Volume 95, No. 24 | \$3.00 USA | \$4.25 Canada

# Whither Women **Deacons?**

Pope Francis Allows Further Debate

> BY JOAN FRAWLEY DESMOND SENIOR EDITOR

VATICAN CITY — Should women be ordained to the permanent diaconate?

Delegates at the Synod of Bishops on the Pan-Amazon Region repeatedly returned to that question, communicating a desire among many synod participants for a major change in the Catholic Church's long tradition of reserving the sacrament of holy orders for men alone.

And when the synod issued its final report, the proposition on this matter called for concrete consideration of the possibility.

"In the many consultations carried out in the Amazon, the fundamental role of religious and lay women in the Church of the Amazon and its communities was recognized and emphasized, given the multiple services they provide," read Paragraph 103 of the final report. "In a large number of these consultations, the permanent diaconate for women was requested."

The synod document noted that "in 2016, Pope Francis had created a 'Study Commission on the Diaconate of Women" and that this body "arrived at a partial result based on what the reality of the diaconate of women was like in the early centuries of the Church and its implications for today."

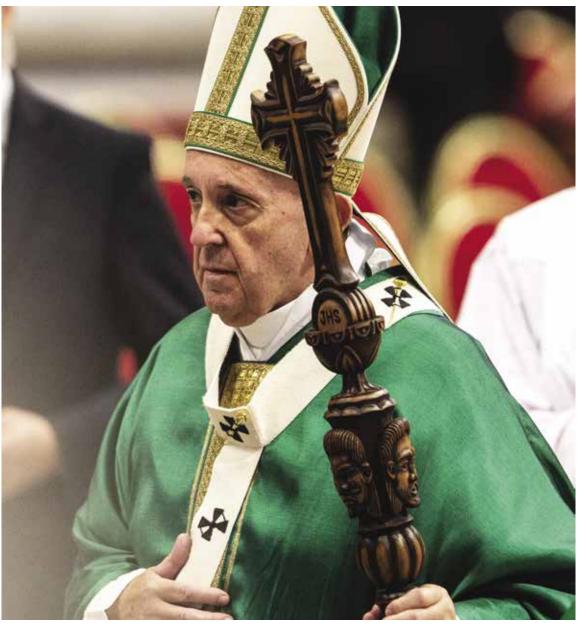
"We would therefore like to share our experiences and reflections with the commission and await its results."

During an Oct. 26 vote, this brief paragraph was approved by 137 synod fathers and opposed by 30.

Speaking shortly after the voting on the synod document, Pope Francis himself addressed the report's language on women, the diaconate, and a proposed ministry of "women community leaders," designed to help address local Church needs.

On the one hand, he suggested, the document fell short of explaining women's full role in the Church, particularly "in the transmission of faith, in the preservation of culture. I would just like to underline this: that we have not yet realized what women mean in the Church," he said. Rather, "we focus on the functional aspect, which is important," but is not everything.

Still, even though he had recently acknowledged that the deaconesses described by St. Paul in the New Testament were not equivalent to the modern sacramental under-**CONTINUES ON PAGE 12** 



CONTROVERSIAL SYNOD. Pope Francis celebrates the closing Mass of the Amazon synod on Oct. 27. Daniel

# Pan-Amazon Aftermath

Final Document Requests Married Priests, Regional Rite, 'Ecological Conversion,' Further Study of Female Diaconate

NEWS ANALYSIS

BY EDWARD PENTIN

VATICAN CITY — The Synod of Bishops on the Pan-Amazon Region wrapped up Oct. 27 with controversial recommendations that married men be ordained in the Amazon region, a study be restarted into introducing women deacons, and the "elaboration" of an Amazonian rite of the liturgy be considered.

The majority of the synod fathers also voted for the creation of a bishops' council dedicated to the vast Latin American region, the institution of a ministry for women leaders, and for "new ways of ecological conversion."

The proposals, made in a 30-page final document, were voted on by 181 synod fathers and concluded the Oct. 6-27 regional special assembly, whose theme was "New Paths for the Church and for Integral Ecology."

In addition to bishops from the Amazon's nine countries, the synod was attended by selected representatives from indigenous communities, religious orders, lay groups, charities and experts.

In his closing remarks, Pope Francis called the final document a "diagnosis" of the varied challenges facing the region and criticized "elite Christians" who try to make them apply universally.

Francis said he would reopen the Church's 2016-2019 study on women deacons and possibly add new members to the commission. He added that he hoped his postsynodal apostolic exhortation his definitive reflection on the synod that will contain measures to take forward - will be com-

pleted by the end of the year. The so-called "mastermind" of the synod, Bishop Erwin Kräutler, prelate emeritus of Xingu, Brazil, was ebullient about the results of the final doc-

ument voting, telling the Register he was pleased with the outcome, and it is "what we expected, of

Austrian-born Bishop Kräutler, who has long supported the ordination of married men and women priests (he admitted during the synod that he views a female diaconate as a possible step to ordaining women), also said that after the synod, women deacons "will come." The meeting, he said, was "a step to a new epoch," and the Church "cannot be understood without this synod."

"It's a new opening for the Amazon region, but also for the whole world," he added.

#### **Most-Contested Propositions**

The proposal to create a permanent diaconate for women, as well as the propositions on ordaining married men "of proven virtue" (the so-called *viri probati*) **CONTINUES ON PAGE 12** 

# US Bishops' Conference **Plans Fall Assembly**

Elections, Faithful Citizenship and Priestly Formation on the Agenda

BY LAURETTA BROWN

WASHINGTON — The election of a new president and vice president will top the agenda at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' fall assembly.

Meeting in Baltimore Nov. 11-13, the bishops will also vote on seven action items, which include supplementing documents on faithful citizenship ahead of the 2020 U.S. presidential election and voting on changes for a sixth edition of the "Program of Priestly Formation."

Russell Shaw, a Catholic author who served as secretary for public affairs of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/U.S. Catholic Conference from 1969 to 1987, told the Register it "would be a great surprise" if the current USCCB vice president, Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, were not elected president. Since 2016 the archbishop has served alongside the current USCCB president, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, who is retiring from the post at the completion of his three-year

term. "The bishops almost always elect the vice president as president," Shaw noted, "so I just take it for granted that Archbishop Gomez will be the next president of the bishops' conference — and a very good one, I'm sure.

"The interesting question then becomes who will be elected vice president, with a good chance of being elected president three years from now; and there, I think, it's really a toss-up."

The 10 archbishops and bishops listed on the USCCB's presidential ballot are: Archbishop Gomez, Archbishop Timothy Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, Bishop Frank Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut, Archbishop Paul Coakley of Oklahoma City, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco, Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, Texas, Archbishop Jerome Listecki of Milwaukee, Bishop Thomas Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois, Bishop Kevin Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, and Archbishop Allen Vigneron of Detroit.

**CONTINUES ON PAGE II** 

# How Funeral Rites and Devotions Help the **Faithful Face Death**

BY PETER JESSERER SMITH

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Before he had an opportunity to celebrate a baptism or marriage, Christian rites that mark the beginning of new life, the newly ordained Deacon Michael Forrest was assisting at the Christian rites that mark the end of life for two people close to his heart.

"Before I had a chance to breathe, I was serving at a dear friend's funeral, a friend who wanted to be at my ordination," he said. Soon thereafter, his own mother passed away.

"It was my mother who once told me way back in the day that I should be a minister," Deacon Forrest, a former Baptist, recalled. He had held his mother's hand on the vigil of her death, praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet before she passed away the following morning. "She held on, to just after I was ordained."

For Deacon Forrest, celebrating the Church's funeral rites was an intensely emotional experience. But their architecture, he said, conveys



em Mass is offered for the repose of a SOUL, 2016 photo, Raymond Deleon/Shutterstock.com

PRAYING FOR THE DEAD. A requi-

"the sense of God's great mercy and loving-kindness."

The Catholic Church provides beautiful rites and devotions some of them not well-known that help people squarely face death with the hope of the resurrection and turn their mourning into intercession on behalf of their loved ones.

The Church's funeral rites are divided into three main parts: the vigil service, the funeral Mass and

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 6** 

#### IN BRIEF

#### **Quote of the Week**

"As members of the Communion of Saints, we pray with hope for those who have predeceased us and hope that the blessed in heaven will pray for us." Donald DeMarco, commentary, page 9

#### The Value of Votives and Catholic Art

Lighting candles has long been a Church tradition, and Daniel Mitsui creates Gothic-style, modern drawings. Culture of Life, page 13

#### INDEX

NATIONAL NEWS	
NATIONAL NEWS	3
WORLD NEWS	4
VATICAN NEWS	7
IN DEPTH	9
PUBLISHER'S NOTE, EDITORIAL, LETTERS	10
BOOKS & EDUCATION	5
CULTURE OF LIFE	13
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT	15
TRAVEL HISTORY & SAINTS	16



**Eternity Essentials** In Depth, page 9

# San Francisco's Archbishop Cordileone Discusses The Mass of the Americas

#### IN PERSON

The Mass of the Americas, a newly composed Mass setting commissioned by Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco, will be celebrated Nov. 16 at 10am at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington and broadcast live on EWTN. Archbishop Cordileone will be the main celebrant for this solemn pontifical high Mass, the first-ever celebration of The Mass of the Americas in the Extraordinary Form. In late October, Archbishop Cordileone spoke with the Register's Joan Frawley Desmond about his decision to present the soultransforming power of beauty in unexpected places — like the 60th floor of the Salesforce Tower, the tallest building in his city, as well as



in local parishes and schools.

Last April, fire badly damaged the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, provoking shock and grief across much of the world. What did that reaction tell us about the power

Its power to touch and ennoble the soul is universal. Everyone not just Catholics, but also nonbelievers — mourned the damage to the cathedral. And that reaction shows the power of beauty to unify.

Christianity was once the wellspring of Western culture. Can it still inspire great art?

That power can be revived, and we have the resources at our fingertips. Our Judeo-Christian spiritual tradition, which sees the human person as created in God's image and likeness, views the good, the true and the beautiful as the three attributes of God. I launched the "Truth, Beauty and Goodness Project" with the goal of tapping into the spiritual energy of these attributes, so we can promote the healing and unity

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 12** 

#### **NATION**



#### **Royal Faith**

The Habsburg family, including today's generation, is rooted in Catholicism.

World, page 4



#### Home Schooling in Italy

What parents in the Vatican's native country have learned about education.

Books & Education, page 5



#### Amazon Aftermath

A look at what Pentecostalism can teach the Church in the wake of the synod — and how controversial statues cast a shadow on the meeting itself.

Vatican, page 7

# Seton Hall Silent on Seminary Allegations

STAFF WRITER

Outside Review Assesses McCarrick's Actions, 'Homosexual Subculture'

More than a year after the explosive allegations of sexual abuse of minors and seminarians by ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, one of the important unanswered questions is exactly what kind of misconduct the disgraced former bishop committed at Seton Hall University's two seminaries — and whether this misconduct was situated in the context of an alleged long-standing homosexual subculture that could still be in place today.

In August, Seton Hall released a statement regarding an outside review that the university commissioned last year in the immediate wake of the McCarrick revelations. But although that statement indicates the review has been completed and found that McCarrick had engaged in historical "sexual harassment" of Seton Hall seminarians, it conspicuously failed to discuss the issue of homosexuality directly and whether a homosexual subculture had been found to still exist at Immaculate Conception Seminary and St. Andrew's Hall College Seminary.

And the statement does not disclose what changes, if any, are contemplated to screening procedures for seminary candidates or the formation of seminarians to address the alleged homosexual subculture.

But according to some of the individuals who provided testimonies to the review, one thing is clear: The response to date by local Church authorities has been very inadequate.

In August 2018, Seton Hall University's board of regents announced that it had retained Gibbons P.C. as "special counsel to commission an

independent review of McCarrick's influence and actions at the [Immaculate Conception] Seminary. Gibbons retained the law firm of Latham & Watkins to conduct the independent, unrestricted review."

This review was commissioned shortly after a Catholic News Agency report that featured allegations from seven priests that McCarrick made sexual advances on the seminarians at Seton Hall over a period of decades, initially during his time as an aide to Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York and later as bishop of Metuchen, New Jersey, from 1982 to 1986 and as archbishop of Newark, New Jersey, from 1986 to 2000.

Priests from ordination classes that spanned 30 years, during both the period when McCarrick was the archbishop and subsequently while Archbishop John Myers served as archbishop of Newark from 2001 until his retirement in November 2016, also told CNA there was an "active homosexual subculture of priests and seminarians within Newark's Immaculate Conception Seminary."

Several priests attested to a homosexual subculture in the seminary during Archbishop Myers' tenure. One priest noted that seminarians were "scandalized by what they saw, these upperclassmen flagrantly carrying on with each other in gay relationships."

Another priest told CNA that certain seminarians often received visits from priests of the archdiocese.

"There was definitely a group of, well, I guess we're calling them 'uncles' now," the priest said. "They would come by to visit with the effeminate crowd, bring them stuff and take

them out."

A priest who is now incardinated in a different diocese told the Register that he gave testimony to the Latham & Watkins investigators regarding his own experiences at St. Andrew's College Seminary, where he studied in the early 1990s. The priest, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that before he enrolled in the seminary he had "no inkling whatsoever" about McCarrick's alleged sexual predation.

But when he arrived there for the first time at the start of the Labor Day weekend, "not 20 minutes into my time there," other seminarians "started talking about 'Uncle Ted,' his beach house and sleeping with seminarians," with one of them describing "in painstaking and disgusting detail what happened."

Following this disturbing introduction into the seminary's homosexual subculture, he learned that sexual misconduct involving seminarians was occurring at St. Andrew's, too. However, it wasn't until the following year that the problems at the seminary "really started happening in a McCarrick kind of way," following the arrival of a new spiritual director appointed by McCarrick who invited him to a weekend retreat not long afterward. But when they arrived at the retreat site in Massachusetts, he discovered they were expected to sleep in the same room, where he said he was forced to rebuff the priest's predatory sexual advances and sleep instead on a couch in an anteroom adjoining their joint bedroom.

Subsequently, during his remaining time at the college seminary, the future priest witnessed a number of other sexualized incidents involving



INVESTIGATED. Cardinal Joseph Tobin, the archbishop of Newark, New Jersey, more than a year ago launched an investigation of two seminaries in his archdiocese and has yet to announce any results. Above is a general view of the main entrance to Seton Hall University, where the Immaculate Conception Seminary is located. AP photo/Julio Cortez

the spiritual director and other seminarians, especially those from Latin America. He said he also was accosted physically in a hallway by the spiritual director and threatened with retribution for making critical comments about McCarrick's conduct.

Scarred and disillusioned by his Seton Hall experiences, he moved elsewhere after his graduation from the college seminary to complete his studies for the priesthood. "The scary thing is, I know people who went through far worse than me," the priest said. "I can't even tell you about some of the things that happened to friends

Robert Hoatson, a former Newark priest who attended Immaculate Conception Seminary in the mid-1990s and was interviewed by the Latham & Watkins investigators, told the Register about his experience with that seminary's sexualized culture.

Hoatson, who entered Immaculate Conception as a late vocation after time serving the Church as an Irish Christian Brother, said McCarrick's long-standing pattern of sexual misconduct was widely known in the seminary itself and among senior Church officials both in the Archdiocese of Newark and in the neighboring Archdiocese of New York. "When I say everybody knew about McCarrick, everybody knew about McCarrick," he said.

Hoatson recounted that, in 1996, he was propositioned for sex in the seminary. He reported the incident years later to Archbishop Myers, when the priest who had propositioned him was about to be assigned to a very "sensitive position." He said Archbishop Myers ignored his complaint, which is what he told the investigator for Seton Hall's independent review.

"I also told him that I thought that the culture of the seminary was rather strange, you know," he added.

"I remember guys going out with suit and tie on and I said, 'Where are they going?" he recalled. "And they said, 'Oh, they're going to a gay nightclub,' and I said, 'Is anybody going to challenge them on that?" He said no one did.

Dominican Father Boniface Ramsey, who served as a professor at Immaculate Conception Seminary from 1986 to 1996 and was a whistleblower who tried to alert Church authorities about McCarrick's behavior, also provided information to the Latham & Watkins investigators.

Father Ramsey told the Register in August 2018 about the culture during his time at Immaculate Conception, explaining that, in his view, "the term 'gay subculture' is a strong term, though there were certainly gay seminarians there." However, he noted in the 2018 interview, after one "egre-

NATIONAL CATHOLIC

gious, irredeemable" incident of homosexual abuse that he witnessed, he took the lead in expelling the seminarian who perpetrated the sexual abuse. As a direct consequence, "McCarrick fired me from the voting faculty, because the person I [helped to expel] was one of 'his' [seminarians]. McCarrick didn't like that."

Last month, Father Ramsey told the Register that he was "interviewed by several lawyers [investigating Immaculate Conception Seminary], and their questions are what you would expect. I have never heard anything since."

#### **Father Lavers**

Father John Lavers, who led a 2012 seminary investigation into Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut, that led to the removal of 13 seminarians and revealed evidence of a homosexual network across several U.S. dioceses, told the Register that Seton Hall was part of this network.

"We had a very large thread of our investigation that led us to Seton Hall, and it was actually from Seton Hall that led us in the direction towards McCarrick and then eventually toward the Jersey Shore beach house," Father Lavers commented. "Seton Hall did not cooperate with us at the time, so we had to go around the main administration at Seton Hall and go to people who were willing to talk to us who had gone to or passed through Seton Hall either as students, seminarians or as members of the staff. It was from them that we were able to build the picture of what was going on at Seton Hall."

"Seton Hall certainly was one of the generators of the problematic situation that was in place at the time, and we're talking 2008, 2012," he emphasized.

"Some seminarians, particularly out of Paterson [Diocese], and the ones that also were being moved up the road to Hartford [Archdiocese] were in Seton Hall and were being dismissed from Seton Hall, but in many ways records were being expunged," Father Lavers said.

"We know in certain cases that files were whitewashed and, with that, we know that certain senior clerics and bishops also had a hand in this, because we also have firsthand testimony, written testimony and interviews of people who gave us direct evidence of certain individuals having tried to influence them with certain seminarians," Father Lavers said. "The McCarrick influence at Seton Hall also touches on vocations directors, certain bishops and other senior clerics."

Seton Hall released the review update in late August, with the key findings that McCarrick "created a

SUBSCRIPTIONS

culture of fear and intimidation that supported his personal objectives" and "used his position of power as then-archbishop of Newark to sexually harass seminarians."

#### Review Update

The review also emphasized that the university's Title IX policies addressing sexual misconduct are "consistent with state and federal law," but "were not always followed at Immaculate Conception Seminary and St. Andrew's Seminary, which resulted in incidents of sexual harassment going unreported to the university." But it concluded that Immaculate Conception Seminary, St. Andrew's Seminary and Seton Hall University now are "currently fully compliant with all Title IX require-

Seton Hall noted that "pursuant to Title IX law and Seton Hall University policies, the findings of confidential reviews typically are provided only to appropriate university personnel and certain involved individuals." However, while the one-page review update summarized its "key findings" regarding McCarrick's actions, unreported sexual harassment and compliance with Title IX policies, it contained no mention of the allegations of a homosexual subculture in the seminary. And it appeared to be reviewing the seminaries solely on the basis of Title IX requirements, not on the additional basis of whether Immaculate Conception has sought to comply with Vatican directives regarding the inadmissibility of homosexual candidates to Catholic seminaries.

Asked by the Register whether the investigation was conducted in accordance with the 2005 instruction from the Catholic Congregation for Education — which stipulates that "the Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture" — Laurie Pine, the director of media relations at Seton Hall, declined to comment. Pope Francis has recently reaffirmed that instruc-

Pine also advised Seton Hall would not comment on the allegations of a "homosexual subculture," instead referring the Register to the review update as providing "all the information we have to share at this

The Register was also unsuccessful in obtaining any additional comment on these matters from the Archdiocese of Newark or from its current archbishop, Cardinal Joseph Tobin. The Archdiocese of Newark referred the Register's inquiries about the independent review and the alleged homosexual subculture to Seton Hall University, which declined to comment further.

Hoatson, who is now an advocate for sexual-abuse survivors, says he was abused starting at the age of 12 by a priest in West Orange, New Jersey. He is part of a group of survivors applying for a settlement through a new victims' compensation fund established by New Jersey's five dioceses. He said he is unhappy with the way Seton Hall is handling the seminary review.

"It is not being reported openly, honestly and transparently," he said. "The fact that they're not releasing the report publicly in a comprehensive way says to me that they're still covering it up."

He added that the review update released by the school "doesn't really say anything at all," and he is frustrated by the school's failure to men-

**ADVERTISING** 

DONATIONS

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 6** 

(800) 356-9916

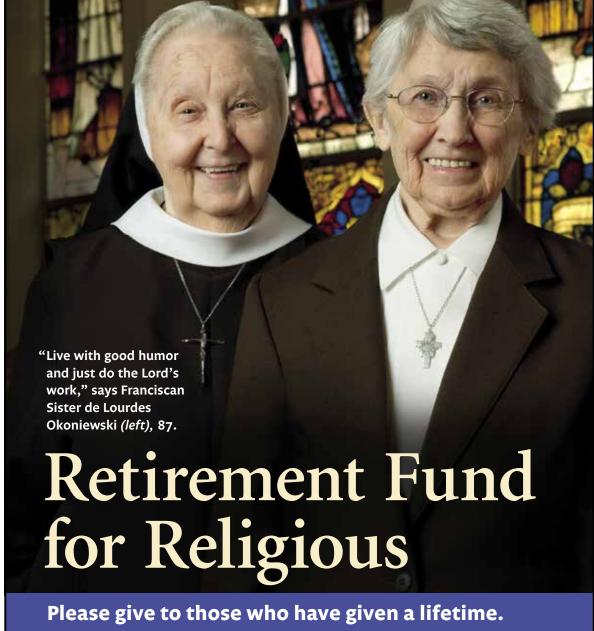
(205) 278-8415

(205) 278-8400

LETTERS The Register welcomes

your feedback. Mention which item you're responding to by headline

and issue date. Please include



Like Sister de Lourdes and Sister Florence Kruczek (right), 91, some 30,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have spent their lives doing the Lord's work. Most served for little or no pay, and now their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious offers vital support for necessities, such as medications and nursing care. Please be generous.

Roughly 94 percent of donations aid senior religious.

Please give at your local parish.

To donate by mail:

National Religious Retirement Office/NC Register 3211 4th Street NE Washington DC 20017-1194

retiredreligious.org

Make check payable to Retirement Fund for Religious.

**BULK ORDERS** (800)781-0382 REPRINTS (205) 278-8400

SUBS OUTSIDE U.S. (937)528-6180

(800) 421-3230

Please identify your first name (or, if you States) when you send your question.

your name, hometown and phor number. Address letters to Letters to the Editor P.O. Box 100699 Irondale, AL 35210

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$49.95 per year; \$89.95 two year; \$119.95 three year domestic; \$79.95 per year Canada (U.S. funds only); \$139.95 per year airmail foreign (U.S. funds only); individual copies, \$3.00 in U.S.A., \$4.25 in Canada. The National Catholic Register (ISSN-0027-8920) is published bi-weekly, 26 times per year by EWTN NEWS, Inc., with editorial and business offices at 5817 Old Leeds Road, Irondale, AL 35210. For subscription and billing inquiries, telephone (800) 421-3230. Please include the address label from this paper with all address changes. Send payments and any other subscription correspondence to: National Catholic Register, P.O. Box 293178, Kettering, OH, 45429. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the National Catholic Register, P.O. Box 293178, Kettering, OH 45429. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham,AL and at additional entry points. The editors assume no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. All submitted material must be accompanied by a self-addressed. stamped envelope if it is to be returned. Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40038153

prefer, a suitable pseudonym) and the state you live in (and country, if not the United

**DIFFICULT MORAL QUESTIONS** 

**DIFFICULT MORAL QUESTIONS** P.O. Box 100699 Irondale, AL 35210

©2019 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved

#### **NATION**

# Despite Obstacles, Daleiden Trial Shows Gruesome Side of the Abortion Industry

Civil Case of Pro-Life Undercover Journalist Is Currently Underway

BY LAURETTA BROWN STAFF WRITER

Pro-life activist David Daleiden is in the middle of a federal civil jury trial facing charges brought by the nation's largest abortion provider, Planned Parenthood, over his undercover videos, initially released in 2015, which allegedly show the organization trafficking in unborn baby body parts.

The civil trial almost immediately followed a nine-day preliminary hearing in the criminal case last month over 15 felony charges of invasion of privacy brought by California Attorney General Xavier Becerra.

Over the course of the civil trial this month, gruesome details about the harvesting and sale of unborn baby body parts have been highlighted, despite attempts by the judge to avoid discussion of the content of the undercover videos.

Planned Parenthood's lawsuit alleges that Daleiden and his associates at the Center for Medical Progress (CMP), Troy Newman, Albin Rhomberg and Gerardo Adrian Lopez, violated the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act (RICO Act), engaged in wire fraud, mail fraud, invasion of privacy, illegal secret recording and trespassing. Planned Parenthood is seeking nearly \$600,000 in damages resulting from increased security costs that its representatives argued are necessary because of an increase in violence against abortion providers following the undercover videos.

The defendants are being represented by various pro-life attorneys and legal groups, including the Thomas More Society and the Life Legal Defense Foundation.

Daleiden's attorneys with the Thomas More Society argue that he was acting as an undercover journalist attempting to expose trafficking in unborn baby body parts by Planned Parenthood. California law allows the recording of confidential conversations without consent if it is done to obtain evidence of a violent felony.

Daleiden's legal team is also arguing that Daleiden and the Center for Medical Progress should not have to pay for security upgrades on the part of Planned Parenthood, as they did not cause the problems that necessitated security upgrades.

#### **Allegations of Bias**

Peter Breen, vice president and senior counsel at the Thomas More Society, told the Register about some of the difficulties Daleiden is facing in the civil case.

Breen said that the judge in the case, U.S. district court Judge William Orrick, "tied our hands on the evidence presentation," pointing out that he is excluding the testimony of medical experts like Dr. Forrest Smith, a practicing abortionist and OB-GYN, who testified in the criminal preliminary hearing last month that Planned Parenthood appeared to be modifying abortion techniques to result in live births and more intact organs.

"The judge is still going to allow a lawyer to get on the stand and talk about all sorts of violence against abortion providers over the last 40 years," he pointed out. "We think that's outrageous; we fought that ruling. We're going to continue to challenge it, but, again, that's where we are. In the civil case we are much more limited in our evidence presentation than we were in the criminal case."

Thomas Brejcha, the president and founder of the Thomas More Society, also told the Register that Orrick has excluded a great deal of evidence in the case, including the undercover videos, because "the opposition objected that it would be prejudicial to Planned Parenthood and the other plaintiffs. The prejudice would outweigh any probative value."

"It really is an anomaly," he emphasized. "The anomaly is that while the other side testifies to the impact of the videos on Planned Parenthood — that they were scary; they were upset — our jury wasn't allowed to see them."

Daleiden's attorneys made an unsuccessful attempt to have Orrick removed from the case, based on his wife's apparent support for



BACK IN COURT. David Daleiden, shown arriving for court at the Harris County Courthouse on Feb. 4, 2016, in Houston, was in court again in San Francisco, where a civil trial is hearing arguments. Eric Kayne/Getty Images

Planned Parenthood on social media and the fact that Orrick is a founder and officer of the Good Samaritan Family Resource Center (GSFRC), an organization that partners with Planned Parenthood and had a Planned Parenthood business incorporated on its premises while Orrick served as secretary and counsel to the organization.

"Despite all these adverse rulings — the judge is no fan of ours; we moved to have him recused earlier — we are achieving breakthroughs that are having an impact on the jury," Brejcha said. "While it's an uphill struggle, we're not without hope that some degree of justice might be accomplished here."

#### **Hearts and Scalps**

Over the course of both Daleiden's civil trial, which will continue at least through mid-November, and the preliminary hearings in the criminal case, which wrapped up last month, some gruesome testimony surfaced regarding the alleged practices of abortion providers involved in harvesting fetal body parts for research.

Last week, Life Legal Defense attorney Katie Short cross-examined Albin Rhomberg, a pro-life activist who is being sued by Planned Parenthood for his role as then-CMP board treasurer. In the course of discussing his research into alleged trafficking in fetal tissue, Rhomberg referenced the use of the scalps of aborted babies in one study.

"We realized that one, for example, was research being done on baldness," he testified. "That could be just vanity. On the other hand, we do know that patients receiving therapy — there's many reasons for baldness. And they were attempting — they were using fetal — they were scalping the babies and taking their scalps and grafting them on to immune-suppressed mice, and then using various pharmaceuticals on these humanized mice to test the effect upon preventing or, I suppose you might say, treating baldness."

Brejcha told the Register that Daleiden consulted with Theresa Deisher, a stem-cell researcher with a Ph.D. from Stanford University, who told Daleiden, regarding a 2012 study that used hearts supplied by the fetal-tissue procurement company StemExpress, that, "in fact, to harvest hearts the hearts had to be beating or they were without scientific research value and they had to be moved quickly to a Langendorff perfusion machine."

"He [Daleiden] really felt that there was ample evidence that not only did physicians change the abortion methods to enhance the quality of the fetal organs, bodily organs, but Deisher's testimony indicates that, indeed, they had to be born alive, some of them, at least for heart organs," Brejcha empha-

"I handled aborted fetal tissue at two Planned Parenthood clinics during this undercover project, and I handled the actual individual body parts and organs," Daleiden testified Oct. 21.

Brejcha reflected that abortion advocates often use the word "stigma." "Stigma is a big concern of the abortion lobby," he said. "That's what they're really afraid of. They don't want these details about the barbarity and grisliness of what they do becoming openly discussed and recognized, because it'll just turn your stomach."

#### **Gosnell Parallels**

The gruesome testimonies regarding the harvesting of fetal body parts during the civil trial caused Phelim McAleer, author and producer of the Gosnell movie, to recall his past coverage of the case of abortionist Kermit Gosnell. Gosnell was convicted in May 2013 of the first-degree murder of three infants born alive after attempted abortions and the involuntary manslaughter of one woman during an abortion.

"It's kind of Gosnell 2.0, in some ways," McAleer told the Register in a phone interview shortly after attending the trial in San Francisco.

He noted that the media was largely ignoring the trial, as they did with Gosnell.

"At the beginning of the trial somebody mentioned the name Gosnell and the judge almost had a heart attack and shut them down," he said. "Gosnell was convicted: There was a trial; there was evidence. It's not like he's some tabloid person who there's no evidence about — there's evidence coming out of everywhere about Gosnell. I don't see why he couldn't be used as an example, or as a reason for Daleiden to do the work he did."

McAleer was physically pushed last week as he was attempting to question Planned Parenthood medical director Dr. Mary Gatter, featured in the undercover videos joking that she wanted a Lamborghini from fetal-tissue sales.

"Did you ever get your Lamborghini?" he asked Gatter as she left the courthouse. "In the tape you said you asked surgeons to change the method of abortion. Is that legal or ethical?" He was then pushed by someone who appeared to be a security guard for Gatter.

"They're so used to journalists asking them softball questions, or when it's really difficult, asking no questions, so I decided to ask every Planned Parenthood witness hard questions," he told the Register about the incident. "They don't like it, and they get really, really violent because they're so unused to being asked difficult questions."

#### **Abortionists' Testimonies**

Alexandra Snyder, executive director at the Life Legal Defense Foundation, told the Register that, in recent testimony, abortionists have revealed that Planned Parenthood's security measures were not prompted by any real danger caused by the undercover videos.

Life Legal Defense's Short crossexamined Gatter over her claim that she felt violated, and "that's why she needed security or that's why Planned Parenthood thought she needed security," Snyder said.

However, Short "was able to get her [Gatter] to admit that by feeling violated it meant that she was uncomfortable with the way she

Castle and Gupta acknowledged that they never received any threats and did not incur any expenses due to increased security because of the videos.

Brejcha emphasized that Castle had written an article titled, "Why I'm Proud to Provide Safe and Legal Abortions: Abortion Providers Are Heroes." Planned Parenthood is "claiming that privacy is paramount," he noted, but "she's out there publishing how proud she is to do what she does. It's hypocritical."

#### **Daleiden's Inspiration**

A key video that was permitted in the trial this week was "Body Parts for Sale," produced by 20/20 and hosted by Chris Wallace. It aired on March 9, 2000, and featured a 20/20 producer posing as a potential investor and secretly recording an abortionist talking about the massive profits he made from the sale of body parts he harvested from the bodies of babies he aborted.

Daleiden testified that he first saw this video in 2010 and was inspired by it to found the Center for Medical Progress and begin his own undercover project investigating the illegal sale of aborted baby body parts in California.

"I think for the first time since the beginning of this trial three weeks ago the jury was able to see the potential for greed to come into play and then the absolute callousness with which people who are involved in this tissue trafficking trade" exhibit, Snyder said regarding the video.

Brejcha pointed out that the video showed Gloria Feldt, the president of Planned Parenthood at the time, "on camera saying that, well, these laws [about tissue trafficking] are on the books, and this is terrible; they should be enforced."

Brejcha said that the video

"really got" to Daleiden when he saw it as a young boy, and "he couldn't understand why there was never any follow-up" investigation. "There was a congressional hearing; but apart from that, nobody in the media, no government action nothing — and that's why he started his work."

#### **An Uphill Battle**

Daleiden's attorneys face many obstacles, as they are in the midst of the civil trial at the same time as they are waiting to hear, following last month's criminal preliminary hearing, whether Daleiden and his associate Sandra Merritt will have a trial before a jury on any or all of the 15 felony charges brought by the California attorney general.

Breen noted that "they're putting incredible burdens on David and our legal team that no one else would ever have to bear. Forcing a group of lawyers to go into a sixweek civil jury trial right on the heels of a criminal preliminary hearing is unheard of. We opposed it, we tried to keep the proceedings separate and stayed, but that was rejected."

He also noted that Planned Parenthood has "one of the biggest law firms in the country representing them, and they're doing everything possible to stick it to us; but we've been giving it as good as we're getting it, at this point."

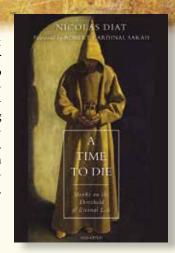
"We are going to be able to be victorious and vindicate the truth of what the Center for Medical Progress videos show, and we're going to be able to vindicate the rightness and correctness of what David and his team did," Breen concluded. "It's the most consequential undercover investigation of the abortion industry in history."

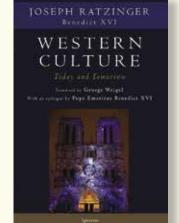
> Lauretta Brown writes from Washington, D.C.

# TIMELY NEW WORKS ON CRUCIAL ISSUES

◆ A TIME TO DIE: Monks on the Threshold of Eternity — Nicolas Diat  $B_{
m the}$  passage of death. Best-selling French author Nicolas Diat set out to find what their deaths can reveal about the greatest mystery faced by everyone — the end of life. How to die well? To answer questions on preparing for death, Diat travelled to eight European monasteries including Solesmes Abbey and the Grande Chartreuse. His extraordinary interviews reveal that monks have the same fears and sorrows as everyone else. What is exemplary about them is their humility and simplicity. When death approaches, they are like happy children who wait with impatience to open a gift. They have complete confidence in the mercy of God. TTDP . . . Sewn Softcover, \$17.95

"I am infinitely thankful to Nicolas Diat for having brought us for a moment before the mystery of death, and I recommend to all the reading of this wonderful book." — Cardinal Robert Sarah, from the Foreword





was portrayed in that video; and she

admitted that, yes, that's what she

meant — not that she was fearful,

but that she didn't like how she was

portrayed; it 'made her look bad,' in

"is all about the security upgrades

and the damage that supposedly

Planned Parenthood abortionists

incur as a result of feeling threat-

ened by the videos, and so we're

showing that they did not feel

threatened. They are used to this;

hood's director of clinical services,

and Jen Gupta, the group's director

of medical standards, also were

cross-examined by Short this week.

Jennifer Castle, Planned Parent-

they're out in the public."

Snyder emphasized that the case

her words."

#### **◆ WESTERN CULTURE TODAY AND TOMORROW** Addressing Fundamental Issues — Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI)

Well known for his important scholarly contributions to theology and biblical commentary, Ratzinger has also written penetrating observations of our times, revealing here his keen insights about the social and political challenges confronting modern Western societies.

He reminds us that Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome were the foundation stones upon which Western civilization was built. Their invaluable contributions form the basis for the Western understanding of human dignity and human rights. This book also includes the new essay by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on the clerical sex abuse crisis, which traces the moral disorder to the collapse of faith both inside and outside the Church. WCTTP . . . Sewn Softcover, \$16.95

"Benedict XVI has long been an acute analyst of the ills that beset the West. His prescription is to rediscover the human dignity implicit in its Christian roots while absorbing the best achievements of the Enlightenment. — **George Weigel**, Author, *The Fraglity of Order* 

#### ◆ THE FRAGILITY OF ORDER — George Weigel

ne of America's most prominent public intellectuals brings thirty-five years of experience in Washington and Rome to bear in analyzing the turbulence that characterizes world politics, American public life, and the Catholic Church in the early twenty-first century.

In these bracing essays, Weigel reads such events as the First World War, the collapse of Communism, and the Obama and Trump presidencies through a distinctive cultural and moral lens, even as he offers new insights into Pope Francis and his challenging pontificate. FROP ... Sewn Softcover, \$17.95

"Every page in this book shines with moral clarity, and the illumination of history. It proves once again that George Weigel is our Virgil through the dark

- Mary Eberstadt, Senior Research Fellow, Faith and Reason Institute





www.ignatius.com

(800) 651-1531

#### WORLD

### using mostly unprocessed organic ingredients! Coupon code:HEALTHY88 for \$6 off

FREE SHIPPING FOR ORDERS OVER \$79! Phone: 970 883-2600 or 970 812-8026 Email: wrightnaturalbakery@gmail.com Used, out-of-print Catholic books for sale. Send for listings to: S. Vranizan 2930 Cedar Street Philadelphia, PA 19134



Request Gregorian Masses for Souls in Purgatory! Missionaries of the Holy Family (888) 484-9945 - www.msf-america.org Please watch our 2-minute Vocation Video: tiny.cc/HolyFamilyMSF



Register ads get results. 800-356-9916

advertising@ewtn.com



Want to make a difference using your God-given talent? We have positions available. www.NCRegister.com/jobs

QUALITY CATHOLIC Books, Videos, Audio, Art, Religious Education

Bibles, Study Bibles, Children's Bibles, Conversion Stories, Apologetics, Marian Apparitions & Devotions, Evangelization, Popes, Saints, and more

ignatius press

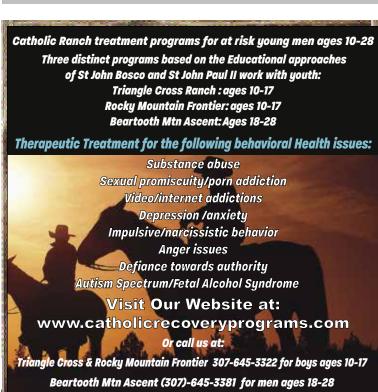
www.ignatius.com 1-800-651-1531

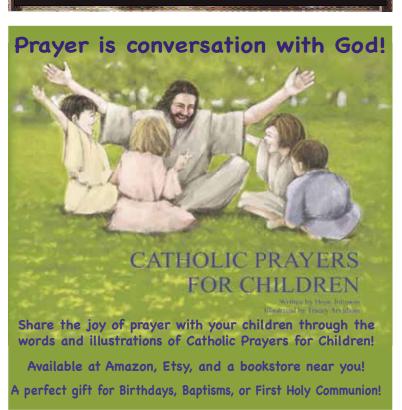
We'd like to introduce you to millions of committed Catholics worldwide. Advertising in our print and digital publications can showcase your products and services to the world's largest Catholic buying audience.

www.EWTNAdvertising.Com

#### Preschool - Age 7: Imprimatur







# Habsburgs: Prayers — and Royalty — Never Die

The Powerful Faith of a Family Continues in Today's Generation

PART 1

BY VICTOR GAETAN SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

Editor's note: The reorganization of Europe following World War I had a profound impact on many Catholic communities and on one pillar of European Catholicism in particular: the Habsburg family. Victor Gaetan's two-part interview with His Imperial and Royal Highness Archduke Rudolf of Austria is the first in a series of articles exploring the legacy of this legendary dynasty, which was founded in the 11th century.

Archduke Rudolf of Austria, 69, is a very busy man. Having worked in the financial sector for decades, he now concentrates on holiness: promoting the cause for beatification of his grandmother, Servant of God Zita, the last empress of Austria; monitoring progress toward sainthood of his grandfather, Blessed Charles I (or Karl), the last emperor of Austria and the last king of Hungary (who reigned from Nov. 21, 1916-Nov. 11, 1918); being a father to eight children, including four in religious life; and supporting favorite charities, including sitting on the board of directors of the U.S. Magnificat Foundation and cofounding the Zermatt Summit, dedicated to "humanizing globalization" and projecting the Catholic Church's social teaching as an antidote to the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland.

In a rare interview, senior international correspondent Victor Gaetan spoke to the humble paterfamilias to learn more about the enduring devotion of this legendary Catholic family, a pillar of European civilization, the Habsburgs.

Your grandfather, Emperor Charles I of Austria and king of Hungary, who reigned from 1916 to 1918, was wellknown for his devotion to God, to the Church and to his family. As a condition of ending World War I, President Woodrow Wilson demanded the empire be dissolved and your grandparents were exiled. Yet they bore this pain with dignity. Charles is the only 20th-century ruler to be beatified — by Pope St. John Paul II in 2004. How is Blessed Charles' cause for sainthood

The greatest work to establish sainthood is done before beatification. The positio is compiled, a whole 2,000-page history proving his life was heroic, and a miracle is identified. In 1960, a Polish nun living in Brazil was completely healed — she was bedridden, but after praying for my grandfather's intercession one night, she woke up and could walk. This was the first miracle. The next step is canonization, and what is needed is a second miracle; only two or three are analyzed by the postulator, Andrea Ambrosi, who is in Rome. He is hopeful regarding one potential miracle in particular, but it takes some time to make sure everything is absolutely correct before you close the file. The Church, of course, has time, so everything goes quite slowly, but it is better not to make a mistake.

We had another miracle, but, sadly enough, it was a case of terminal cancer; and although the person healed totally, the individual died four years later from another cause. The Vatican wants the person to survive five years, so it could not count in the end.

It is interesting: One of the potential miracles is a breast-cancer survivor, and that person is not a believer, does not have the faith. People around that person prayed for the healing and obtained it. So a question is: Will that person find the faith or not?

No one is born a saint. It is a work in progress, your whole life. My grandfather for sure, he was always, always deeply Christian. Even as a child, he gave away things to the poor. He was already involved in his faith and in the action linked to faith.

Blessed Charles and his wife, your grandmother, Empress Zita, were a very close, loving couple. His feast day is Oct. 21, the anniversary date of their marriage in 1911. What is the status of her cause?

For the last 10 years, on behalf of my family, I've been working on the process of beatification for my





grandmother. It is moving quite nicely. One miracle is being analyzed, and the lifetime research is finished. A total of 36 people testified about her. I was one. I was sworn in and had to answer 276 questions - 18 hours of interrogation. It is a very serious process.

At your talk at University of Notre Dame six years ago, you told a fascinating story about Pope Pius X's prophecy that your grandfather would become the emperor when he was not a direct successor at the time. Did Empress Zita tell you that story herself, or did you read it?

Both. I knew her very well because she was not only my grandmother but also my godmother. We had a close relationship.

Between the two wars, she testified for the beatification of Pius X, and one of the accounts she shared was this: In 1911, she visited the Pope to receive a blessing for her upcoming marriage. The Holy Father said, "When you and Charles become emperor and empress, you will have to do whatever you can to make peace in Europe." He added, "Charles is the present from God to Austria and your family for being faithful to the Church and the faith."

Yet in 1911, Emperor Franz Josef was on the throne and his nephew Franz Ferdinand, the heir, was still alive. His assassination in 1914, which triggered World War I, put your grandfather in the line of succession. So the Pope gave your grandmother a mission, an assignment that was puzzling to her.

Absolutely, and devotion to peace was their way of life, so it was not a problem. But at the time, when she walked out of the Vatican with her mother, the duchess of Bourbon-Palma, she turned to her mother, and said, "Thank God he is not infallible in matters of politics," because she didn't quite believe his message. It was only after the assassination of Prince Ferdinand that she realized the truth of the whole thing, you see.

Your grandfather died tragically at the age of 35 of pneumonia in 1922, leaving your grandmother to raise eight children in exile, with few resources. Yet she never lost faith and lived a long life. She died in 1989, at age 96. How did she explain why God allowed the evil that invaded Europe in the 20th century, such as communism?

She followed very closely what happened with the Church, and she knew very well about Fatima since 1917 [which occurred while her husband was emperor]. One of the mysteries of Fatima was that if the world did not convert, the communists would spread their bad ideology throughout the world, until Russia was consecrated to the Holy Virgin Mary. Finally, it was Pope John Paul II who did that. And then, obviously, communism fell.

Please don't quote her because she did not say this specifically, but knowing her, she knew very well: If you obey what God tells you, even through children [as in Fatima], you are on the right way; but if you don't, the consequences are the ones you chose because you did not follow the will of God.

Empress Zita died in spring 1989, at age 96, in Vienna, Austria, before the fall of the Berlin Wall. With tens of thousands of Soviet troops in Hungary, the country's communist government allowed about 50,000 Hungarians to cross the border into Austria for Zita's funeral in Vienna. Some 250,000 people participated in the funeral. What did her funeral say about the way your family is perceived in Hungary?

They absolutely realized that our family tried to stop the war [World War I] to help them and to do what we could as king and queen, because [being] queen and king is a holy service to a country. It's not ruling only; it is a service to a country and its people. So I think people realized that, but it did not translate into a movement either religious or political. The family is still very respected.

After the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989, Hungarian parliamentarian elections were held for the first time in May 1990. I understand that your uncle, Archduke Otto von Habsburg, the eldest son of Karl and Zita, the last crown prince (1916-1918), was asked by the new parliament, which elects the president, to stand as a candidate for the presidency. Is that so?

Yes. A majority of the parliamentarians who wanted him were from the Smallholders Party, I think, and some conservative groups. They asked my uncle Otto if he would accept to be elected president. And he said No, not unless he is called back because he should be king. And that ended that. I know many people were a little bit sad that he didn't say Yes, because probably the next step would have been to change the constitution to a kingdom again. This was in 1990.

FAITHFUL FAMILY. The Habsburgs pose for a family photo in 2018; At left, Cardinal József Mindszenty met with Empress Zita in 1972. Courtesy of the family of Archduke Rudolf Habsburg

Yet his devotion to Hungary was so strong, he asked that his heart be interred at the Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma, outside Budapest, while his body is buried in the Habsburg family crypt in Vienna.

Yes, and the hearts of Emperor Karl and Empress Zita are enshrined together in the Loreto Chapel at Muri Abbey, Switzerland.

I read that Cardinal József Mindszenty met with your grandmother, Empress Zita, after his departure from Hungary in 1971. Did you ever meet Cardinal Mindszenty?

I met Cardinal Mindszenty once at the 80th birthday of my grandmother in 1972, in Switzerland. We celebrated on the Monday after Pentecost and always had a bishop or a priest attending her birthday celebrations. That year Cardinal Mindszenty came. I remember my grandmother speaking with him in fluent Hungarian. She was happy, and he was happy. He was a very young chaplain and participated in the crowning in 1916, so they had a lot of common memories.

Did your grandmother and Cardinal Mindszenty talk about the

I don't know because my grandmother was always very discreet. I think if she spoke to the cardinal both of them, without even making a deal, knew that they would not tell other people what was said, so they could talk freely. What I know is that the regent, Miklos Horthy, who had betrayed his king [my grandparents], came to Brussels to ask my grandmother to pardon him, and she did it.

When was that, approximately? I don't know when exactly. All I know is my father told me that story because he was living in Brussels at the time. I suppose it was after he [Horthy] was overthrown by the Nazi regime in 1944.

Had Emperor Karl stayed in power, it was his intention to implement the following reforms: Develop the ministries of social affairs and of health; develop his monarchy into a federal state; implement agrarian reform for Bohemia and Hungary; create social-assistance programs and medical insurance; protect youth from vulgar literature; and grant autonomy to the different nationalities. My grandfather discussed autonomy with Archduke Franz-Ferdinand [the heir to the Habsburg throne whose assassination in Serbia led to World War], and they both agreed to implement this reform after the death of Emperor Franz Joseph.

In Part 2, Rudolf Habsburg shares the secrets to raising and keeping children in the Catholic faith.

Victor Gaetan is an award-winning international correspondent and a contributor to Foreign Affairs magazine and The American Spectator.

#### **BOOKS & EDUCATION**

# Home Schooling Gains Ground in Italy

More Families, Inspired by US Example, Choose Alternative to Public Instruction

BY SOLÈNE TADIÉ

ROME — Home schooling is a relatively new phenomenon in Europe, compared to how widespread the educational method has become in the United States over the last 40 years. Recent estimates indicate that more than 2.3 million students are being home-schooled in the United States (against an average of 850,000 in 1999 and 1.5 million in 2007), and there are, reportedly, an estimated 48,000 students in the U.K. (against approximately 20,000 in 2009), 30,000 in France (its number has doubled over the past seven years), 4,000 in Spain (although home schooling is not yet officially legal there), and approximately 1,000 in Italy.

The phenomenon has been constantly gaining ground in all the countries where legislation provides for freedom of education and has gradually emerged as an alternative to public school's shortcomings, whether concerning the collapse of the quality of education or the spreading of ideologies of which parents disapprove.

In Italy, numerous new initiatives have contributed to the rise in alternative educational methods. Associations promoting home schooling and home-school cooperatives or home-school academies are flourishing in the country and are being led by parents who are inspired by the success of such methods in the United States.

Freedom of education is guaranteed by the Italian Constitution, and under the law a student can finish his entire educational journey without ever having set foot in an elementary and secondary school building. The parents that choose to instruct their children themselves or through home-school cooperatives are required to notify the local school authorities every year, certifying that they have the necessary technical and economic resources to do so.

Further, as of June 2018, students must be tested at the end of each academic year to advance to the next grade, until the fulfillment of the obligatory education level (age 16). This new measure was taken by the Ministry of Public Education (Miur) to provide a legal framework for the growing homeschool phenomenon throughout the country. Such a test can be administered in a school of the parents' choice and is based on a personalized curriculum provided by the family to the school in the months before the exam.

"Until a few years ago, there wasn't great freedom in Italy, but it has changed," Maria Allen, a mother of eight children and a homeschooling parent for 20 years, told the Register. She started educating her children at home in the U.S., where she lived for a few years with her husband, and then decided to continue upon their returning to Italy in 2007.

"I think that mentalities are changing, thanks to active networks of home-schoolers," she said. "This practice is becoming more and more known, and parents are increasingly searching for alternative solutions, so there are less oppositions and prejudices [to home schooling]."

#### Dissatisfaction With Schools

According to the parents interviewed, the growing number of families looking for educational alternatives for their children is primarily motivated by the recognition that public schools are not adequately preparing students for the demands of the workforce or adult life. Learning methods are often singled out by parents, backed up by numerous studies demonstrating the collapse of the quality of education in Italy, as well as in many other Western countries. Indeed, according to recent figures, one in every three Italian children leave primary school without being able to read, to write and to count.

"In many different places and situations, the state school offers excellency in one place while it



**HOME-SCHOOLING FAMILY.** Erika Di Martino believes in the benefits of home education and is committed to helping parents in 'playing their role as primary guides in this crucial phase of their children's life.' Courtesy of Erika Di Martino

shows serious deficiencies in another context," said Nili Santoro, a home-schooling mom, speaking to the Register on behalf of parents from Scuole Parentali Cattoliche, a cooperative of Italian Catholic families who have chosen home schooling or a home-schooling academy.

"The situation of Italian schools is patchy, and it doesn't play in favor of the educative coherence that the state used to guarantee until 50 years ago."

One concern is that public schools have pushed the trend of "inclusiveness," which tends to favor a leveling down of the quality of education by refusing to acknowledge different aptitudes and skills for the sake of fostering equality. The outcome has been an overall decline in students' performance.

"Honestly, such policies are not the role of schools, especially in the first years of instruction, where one lays the foundations of real knowledge and true freedom of thought," Santoro said.

An increase in the number of class hours mandated by public education, as well as a significant amount of homework, has paradoxically done little to raise Italian students' test scores. Thus, those who turn to home-school education are generally drawn by the possibility to completely rethink the learning framework for their children, whether they use the services of a third party or they decide to teach them personally.

In the face of increasing demand for home schooling, new leaders have emerged in the educational panorama, offering innovative learning methods.

A pioneer in this field is Erika Di Martino, who has become a point of reference in Italy and beyond.

The mother of five children who have never attended a traditional school and the founder of Italian network edupar.org, Di Martino has dedicated the past few years to sharing her experience and expertise with parents throughout the

Her book Homeschooling: L'Educazione parentale in Italia (Homeschooling: Parental Education in Italy, 2017) is the first on this topic in Italy and came as a response to growing interest in the educational method.

"Nowadays, children live immersed in an exhausting routine made up of hours and hours of school, followed by homework, sports classes, support classes, and God knows how many other things," Di Martino told the Register.

According to her, the current school system is by nature restrictive for a child.

"Sadly, even the best schools, with the best teachers, are made of classrooms of 20 children or more, in reduced spaces, with obsolete curriculums and little possibility to personalize educational pathways,

which brings the negative results that all of us see," she said.

sion, her Christian faith, as well as

her husband's, has been a decisive

a more creationist education, made

of sound Christian values. We

didn't want to transmit a too evolu-

tionistic vision of life to them," she

said. "The public schools only talk

about evolution, and we wanted to

show them both sides of the coin,

without removing God from the

"We wanted to give our children

#### Renewing Parents' Role

For Di Martino and those she has worked with, one of the issues underlying the collapse of public-school quality is the gradual estrangement of parents from their children's education and the replacement of the parents' role with that of the state.

"The misleading notion of 'compulsory school' still makes parents believe they have no right in their children's education, while it would be enough to read the [Italian] Constitution to know our rights and exercise them," Di Martino said, calling Italian parents to rediscover the essential mission of "taking care of their children and see them growing up, playing their role as primary guides in this crucial phase of their children's life."

The recent emergence of initiatives and associations promoting home schooling has helped parents gain new awareness of their legal right to govern what their children are taught.

For many parents, the effort to find an alternative to public schools is fueled by the desire to renew their primary role in the education of their children, especially when they disagree with the direction of government-run institutions.

In particular, the spread of gender theory in school curriculums in recent years has strongly boosted parents' decisions to have their children instructed at home or in homeschool cooperatives, such as Scuola Libera G.K. Chesterton, which draws inspiration from the U.S. educational model. Although there are no official figures or studies on this new social resistance in Italy yet, the religious motivations of many parents for removing their children from public schools have been cited in virtually all articles on home schooling in the Italian press over the past five years.

"We cannot deny that today, school has become a place for secularist propaganda that, by systematically denying the 2,000-year roots of Christian culture, inevitably ends up flouting a priceless and unparalleled heritage," said Santoro, who noted that the number of children joining Scuole Cattoliche Italiane is increasing every year.

The current ideological approach of many public schools, according to Santoro, is an open door to the totalitarian mindset of secular society that increasingly "sacrifices true culture in favor of experiments whose bad results can be seen by anyone."

It is the same reason that led Maria Allen to continue home schooling after she left the U.S. to go back to Italy in 2007. While the desire to provide her children with a fully bilingual education in Italian and English influenced her deci-

picture, from life." Beside home sc

Beside home schooling or parental schools, Italian Christian families often decide to entrust the education of their children to religious organizations.

#### **Overcoming Challenges**

While home schooling is on the rise, Italy's home-schoolers still face challenges sometimes stemming from the prejudices of public officials.

Although most families report a sensible tolerance from Italian local authorities, some have experienced hostility from those who see home schooling as an act of defiance toward the government. In these instances, bureaucratic obstacles become a deterrent measure against home-schooling families.

Gabriella Severance, an inhabitant of Albano (Latium) who has been educating one of her three children at home for the last four years, reported to the Register that she initially received a summons letter from social services, as well as from the head of the local public-school system, which she interpreted as an attempt at intimidation. She was then ordered to have her son take the admission test at the end of the academic year, which was not yet obligatory.

"We were fortunate enough to meet a woman at social services that took up the cudgels for us," she told the Register.

According to those interviewed, initial prejudices are usually swept away by home-schoolers' results on admission tests, which are generally more than satisfying. "Most of our students have very good grades and a high intellectual preparation;

they are average — and sometimes above-average — compared to their peers who go to public schools," said Santoro, speaking of the students of Scuole Cattoliche Italiane.

"Our friends in the U.S., where home schooling started 30 years ago, tell us that universities there have great feedback from students who enjoy a high level of sociability and an excellent preparation," Santoro said. "It encourages us to pursue our initiatives."

She said these results can be explained by the fact that such an educational system allows children to follow a more child-friendly schedule, in harmony with their needs, thus providing the opportunity to go deeper into the subjects they naturally excel in and more frequently do activities (such as visits to museums, weaving, reading and memorizing poetry) they would not normally have time to do in school.

Allen has seen the results of such a tailor-made education.

"My two daughters went to scientific high school, and the eldest graduated the equivalent of *summa cum laude*. It is the proof that I am not doing anything wrong," she told the Register, noting that people are often inspired by her children's testimony. "My children are very independent and mature for their age, and they always accomplish what they want with serenity."

She added, "I wish that more parents could have the same opportunity of enrichment for their children"

Solène Tadié is the Register's Europe correspondent. She writes from Rome.

# Clergy and Religious Order Priests

Food For The Poor has opportunities for English and Bilingual (English and Spanish) Priests to speak on behalf of the destitute poor as you continue to share the Gospel.



"But He said to them, 'You give them something to eat..."
(Luke 9:13)

Visit www.FoodForThePoor.org/speakers for more information or call 877-654-2960 or email us at speakers@foodforthepoor.org to learn more about how you can serve the poor by becoming one of our speakers.

#### FOOD FOR THE POOR, INC.

6401 Lyons Road, Coconut Creek, FL 33073 • 800-487-1158 www.FoodForThePoor.org

### **Funerals**

the Rite of Committal (for burial or

internment).

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the vigil service is a special Liturgy of the Word, or it can take the form of praying the Office of the Dead from the Liturgy of the Hours. It can be held in the funeral home (at the wake), or in the church itself where the funeral Mass is to be subsequently held.

"Having the vigil service allowed loved ones to come forward," Deacon Forrest said, explaining it offers opportunities for prayer and for loved ones to offer reflections on the life of the person who has died.

Deacon Forrest said that many people today have a "Celebration of Life" when their loved one dies. He said that while there is an important place for that, the Catholic funeral rites help a person come to grips with the full ramifications of death and what it means for their lives.

"The Catholic rites, whether it is the funeral Mass, the Office of the Dead, the vigil service, they resonate with us on some level precisely because we know it is true and we need this," he said.

"We see this ability to face the reality, face the fear, face the brokenness, and to say, 'No, we have an answer. You can trust your God who is going to deliver," he said.

#### **Symbols and Meaning**

The funeral Mass is also heavily laden with symbolism, but it is stressed in different ways in the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the Roman Rite. Father Robert Schmid, parochial vicar at St. Paul Catholic Church in New Bern, North Carolina, told the Register that the ordinary form of the Roman Rite makes more explicit connections between deceased person's baptism and the funeral rite, such as having the Paschal candle, which is a reminder of the hope of the resurrection. It also has prayers of thanksgiving for that person's life.



### The Prayer of St. Gertrude

Eternal Father, I offer thee the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal Church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.

The laying on of the funeral pall is also reminiscent of one's baptismal garment. The Church in the U.S., he said, has an indult to use white at funerals.

He said traditionally the Church ordinarily uses black or purple for funeral colors for a deceased Catholic who has attained the use of reason. These traditional colors intend to affirm the person's experience of the desolation of death, while having white or gold trim on the vestments is to remind people of the hope of the resurrection.

Father Schmid said the funeral rites of the extraordinary form have far less variability in the prayers and put a far greater stress on the expiatory prayers for the deceased, that they may be delivered from eternal punishment.

"There's an emphasis of the Church praying for and mourning, with a definite sense of loss and uncertainty with whether a person is in heaven," he said, something that is reflected in the *Dies Irae* (Day of Wrath) and *Libera Me* (Deliver Me). These are not in the new rite, but can be requested as

However, he said the old rite also stresses "the hope" that a per-

son may be delivered from his or her sins into paradise with God.

The incensing and sprinkling rites at a Catholic funeral, he said, also remind people that this person was baptized and anointed as a temple of the Holy Spirit. At the graveside committal, the resurrection is invoked in the prayers.

"The resurrection is ever present as we invoke God's mercy for this person," he said.

One of the rarely seen features (outside religious life) in Catholic parishes is the Office of the Dead contained in the Liturgy of the Hours, which is the public prayer of the Church and available to all the baptized faithful.

"The Office of the Dead is a beautiful part of the Church's liturgy," Father Schmid said.

The Latin Church's Office of the Dead goes back to the Church's first millennium.

#### Office for the Dead

According to Knud Ottosen in The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead, vespers (Evening Prayer) from the Office of the Dead would precede the vigil service, which would be followed by lauds (Morning Prayer) from the Office of the Dead. These offices would be prayed again on the third, seventh and 30th days following the funeral.

However, Father Schmid said these offices are rarely requested. Without the Liturgy of the Hours, such as lauds or vespers, being regularly prayed in the parish church, "which Vatican II called for," people are not going to have vespers or lauds for the dead "in their field of vicion"

"They don't think about it, they don't know about it, and they don't think to ask," he said.

Deacon Forrest said between the devotions and public rites of the Church, a Catholic does not have to sit with their grief, but can "transform it through faith, hope and love in concrete ways."

He added, "These are all things a person can do to harness that grief and, through faith, turn that into an engine of salvation and healing."

Read a longer version of this story at NCRegister.com.

# **Seton Hall**

CONTINUING PAGE 2 STORY

tion the homosexual subculture he witnessed. "When I saw that, I said: 'Wait a minute — you didn't do an investigation just because of McCarrick. You were investigating the seminary."

Like Hoatson and Father Ramsay, the priest who spoke with the Register about his experiences at St. Andrew's College Seminary said he has never been contacted by Seton Hall since he gave his testimony and characterized the measures that have been taken as a "whitewash."

And the priest suspects that, right from the outset, university officials and Cardinal Tobin had communicated to investigators that they shouldn't probe deeply into the issue of the existence of an entrenched and long-standing homosexual subculture at Seton Hall's seminaries. He said at the conclusion of providing nearly three hours of testimony to the Latham & Watkins investigators that one of the investigators thanked him but then pointedly commented, "You know, Father, this all can't be about homophobia."

The priest stressed that he agrees that efforts to address sexual misconduct at seminaries should not be misused to unjustly target same-sexoriented priests who are living integrated, chaste lives. But he said he took vehement issue with the investigator's remark downplaying the homosexual character of the Seton Hall misconduct.

Father Lavers said that from what he has seen of the Seton Hall review, the scope of the investigation was "very, very narrow" and "only focusing on McCarrick."

"In many ways, it's kind of easy to do that type of an investigation because the person has already been removed from the clerical state," he said. "He has already had the full weight of both the public and the Catholic media placed upon him and the scrutiny — and, of course, all of that has taken place almost after the

Father Lavers emphasized that McCarrick did not operate alone and said that a full investigation needs to be conducted into McCarrick's net-



Cardinal Joseph Tobin, archbishop of Newark, New Jersey 2016 photo by Franco Origlia/Getty Images

work and the atmosphere in which his behavior was tolerated.

According to Seton Hall's review update, one of five key areas the university has identified as needing improvement is "the structural relationship among the university, Immaculate Conception Seminary (an affiliated yet separate corporate entity) and the Archdiocese of Newark (an affiliated yet separate corporate entity) to enhance oversight, control and compliance to prevent recurrence."

However, it appears that under the existing governance structure, the archbishop of Newark already has the formal authority to make whatever changes he judges necessary. Seton Hall University is a diocesan university with a unique affiliation agreement with the Archdiocese of Newark. Under its provisions, Cardinal Tobin serves as chairman of the university's board of trustees and as president of its board of regents.

And because Immaculate Conception is the archdiocesan seminary, the cardinal is also in charge there, appointing its faculty and administration.

The Register asked Maria Margiotta, the director of communications for the Archdiocese of Newark, if Cardinal Tobin, given his oversight role, could comment further on the investigation or on steps the archdiocese is taking, aside from a Title IX-based review, to address the allegations of homosexual behavior in the seminary.

Margiotta said that "the Archdiocese of Newark cannot comment further on this ongoing process. We continue to focus on transparency and accountability and to reinforcing established reporting and prevention policies and programs to protect the faithful and support victims in our parishes, schools and ministries. We continue our full and proactive collaboration and transparency with state and local law enforcement officials and with the attorney general's office, which remains a priority."

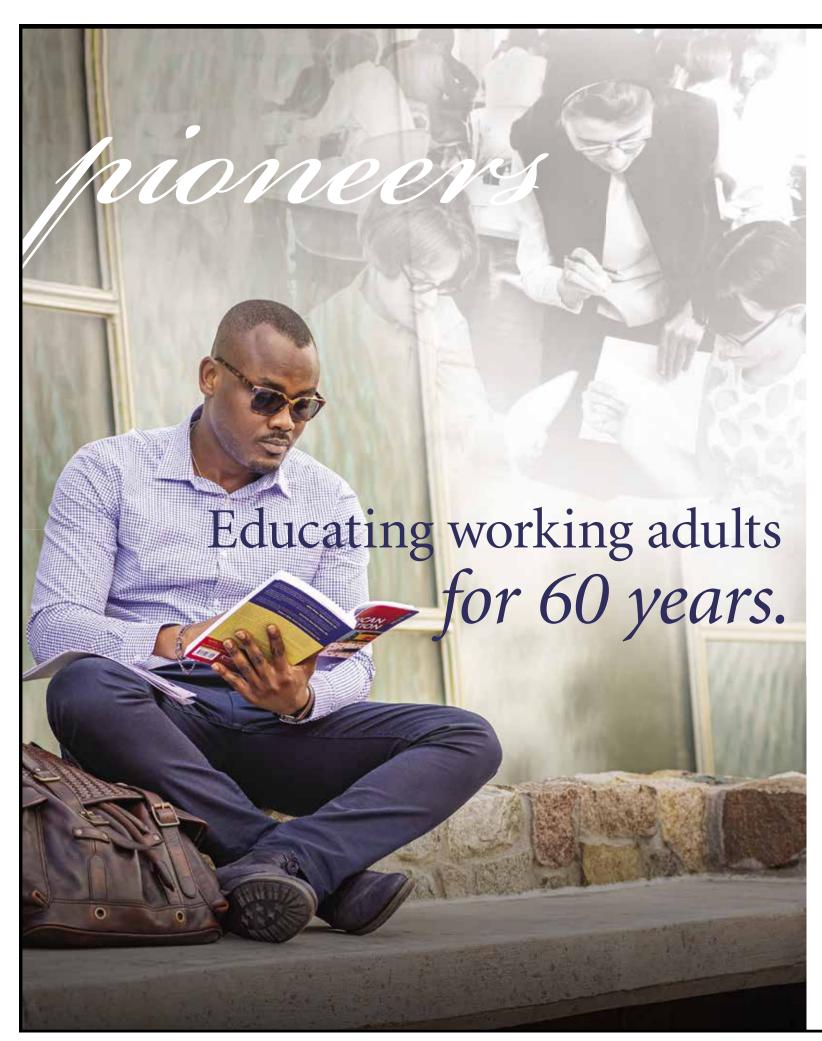
With respect to the administration of Immaculate Conception Seminary itself, Hoatson pointed out that he told the investigators that the current rector is Msgr. Joseph Reilly, who was a priest secretary to McCarrick in 1994 when he was archbishop of Newark. Consequently Msgr. Reilly "should have known about what was happening with McCarrick," Hoatson said.

Msgr. Reilly told the Register he had no comment when asked about the alleged homosexual subculture at the seminary, his past work with McCarrick and his thoughts on the independent review the school had conducted.

Based on his own experiences at Immaculate Conception, Father Ramsey expressed skepticism that there was a real desire to make substantive change in the area of governance.

"When I was there the seminary was treated as if it was a special place that was 'theoretically' under the jurisdiction of the university, and the seminary liked it that way," Father Ramsey said. "The less oversight the better."

Lauretta Brown writes from Washington, D.C. Senior editor Joan Frawley Desmond and news editor Tom McFeely contributed to this report.



# For 60 years, the University of Mary has been an innovator in adult education.

Since 1959, the University of Mary, inspired by our founders and sponsors, the Sisters of Annunciation Monastery, has faithfully served the Church through its mission to serve the needs of the people.

Today, it's never been more clear that the Sisters have been astoundingly visionary:

- Offering credit for work experience
- Creating flexible master's degree programs
- Delivering affordable online and evening classes so working adults can earn their degrees.

University of Mary—then and now.

Faithfully Christian.

Joyfully Catholic.

Gratefully Benedictine.

Discover truly affordable, quality adult education at the University of Mary.

online.umary.edu/Catholic



enroll@umary.edu • 800-288-6279 (MARY)

NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER | NEWS AND PERSPECTIVES FROM ROME

NOVEMBER 10 - 23, 2019

# Pentecostalism Grows in Amazonia

Will Amazon Synod's Measures Help the Church Meet the Evangelistic Challenge?

NEWS ANALYSIS

BY JOAN FRAWLEY DESMOND SENIOR EDITOR

During a press briefing at the Synod of Bishops on the Pan-Amazon Region, Bishop Carlo Verzeletti of Castanhal, Brazil, deplored the shortage of Catholic priests in the 1,000 villages he oversees near the mouth of the Amazon River.

Bishop Verzeletti spoke of "aging" priests, "running from one place to another," with little time to offer the "presence and proximity, the support and comfort," the faithful require.

This long-standing problem, he admitted, has put the local Church at a competitive disadvantage with Pentecostal Protestant sects that have rapidly established vibrant, tight-knit communities across South America.

"Popular piety cannot resist the impact," said the bishop, noting the presence of 750 Pentecostal churches in his city alone, compared with only 50 Catholic

This imbalance holds true in many towns and cities across the vast Amazon River Basin and helps explain the appeal of a key proposal floated at the synod: the ordination to the priesthood of viri probati (older married men "of proven virtue") who can celebrate the sacraments and sustain a compelling Catholic presence in areas that may not see a priest for months at a time.

Bishop Verzeletti's frank comments about the challenge posed by Pentecostal sects drew little attention from media outlets, which have focused on controversial matters at the synod that have more traction in Europe and the U.S.

But Church analysts and scholars who have studied this movement suggest that the rapid growth of Pentecostal communities, which study and proclaim the teachings of the Bible, conduct healing services and inculcate moral virtue, provides further context — and salutary lessons — for a Catholic Church "hemorrhaging" members across the continent.

"With the great exception of the evangelization efforts of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, the Catholic Church in South America lags far behind Pentecostals," said Andrew Chesnut, who holds the Bishop Walter F. Sullivan Chair in Catholic Studies at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of World Studies.



FAITH IN THE AMAZON. Pope Francis accepts a gift at the Mass for the closing of the Amazon Synod Oct. 27. Evangelization of indigenous peoples was part of the discussion at the recently ended synod. Daniel Ibáñez/CNA

Chesnut served as the lead academic consultant for a landmark 2014 Pew survey of the Latin American religious landscape. The study found that one in five Latin Americans across 18 countries and Puerto Rico are Protestants and most identify as Pentecostal.

Cradle Catholics said they had joined Pentecostal communities because they were seeking a more personal connection with God, a different style of worship and a church that offers practical help to its members.

The respondents noted that Pentecostals were more likely to share their faith than Catholics, and many said their new church offered clearer teachings on moral issues.

#### The Brazilian Context

Nowhere, said Chesnut, has this seismic shift "been more dramatic than in Brazil, home to the world's largest Catholic population, which is no longer a Catholic-majority nation, with just 50% identifying as Catholic, and the Brazilian Amazon region now more Protestant (46%) than Catholic (45%), according to the latest survey by Datafolha of Brazil."

"Pentecostals evangelize both at the grassroots via home visits and large-scale through televangelism and a very robust presence on social media," he told the Register.

Likewise, Pentecostals are "very quick to train pastors to work in their native languages, so in ... Amazonia there are far more indigenous Pentecostal pastors than Catholic

However, he emphasized that many Pentecostals who live in the region's cities are not indigenous.

Pentecostalism can incorporate a range of teachings and practices, with individual pastors adopting their own approach in an autonomous church, and lay men and women stepping into leadership roles as healers and counselors.

"Latin Americans relate to religion [in a way] that tends to be more experiential, pragmatic and centered on charismatic figures than doctrinal, theoretical and organizational," said Germán McKenzie, a Peruvian-Canadian sociologist who is an expert on religion in Peru at St. Mark's College in Vancouver, Canada.

Dale Coulter, associate professor of historical theology for the school of divinity at Regent University, echoed this point. He described Pentecostal services that feature spontaneous folk-style preaching, the laying on of hands and testimonies that celebrate deliverance from demonic power by God.

"Pentecostalism embraces a view of the world as charged with the spiritual," he said. "The demonic is real, which speaks to more indigenous religions."

#### **Strong Community Life**

Teachings and practices focused on spiritual empowerment make it possible for the poor to endure the suffering of daily life, Coulter said. But community life also helps members confront the unseen, but equally powerful, reality of spiritual warfare.

"Pentecostalism takes seriously the idea that there are demonic forces trying to destroy human persons in addition to the internal problem of sin," Coulter continued.

This teaching resonates with indigenous belief systems.

But Pentecostalism also challenges these beliefs by presenting God's divine power as the true source of deliverance from the devil and sin.

"The combination of folk spirituality with spiritual power allows indigenous peoples to adapt Pentecostalism to their own cultural context," Coulter said.

At a more practical level, religious teachings and counseling help members overcome the vices that have harmed their marriage or prevented them from holding a job, he said.

Women who join these churches are grateful for the palpable help they receive from a community that doesn't tolerate adultery, and often rise to leadership positions as healers, explained John Burdick, an anthropologist at Syracuse University who has studied Pentecostalism in Brazil, told the Register.

Burdick, the author of *The Color* of Sound: Race, Religion, and Music in Brazil, said that Pentecostals deeply value the changes their new faith facilitated in their personal life. They are primarily focused on

personal salvation and disinclined to embrace political movements advocating radical change.

Burdick added that the Pentecostal churches' vigilant response to the threat posed by demonic powers was another selling point, especially for indigenous converts who distrusted or feared some native traditions. So, if the Catholic Church sought to adopt elements of indigenous culture in a new Amazonia rite — a proposal floated at the synod — it must be careful not to introduce practices that could produce a backlash and may be perceived as incompatible with Church teaching.

U.S.-backed Pentecostal outreach in the region began to gain traction in the 1950s, with the Protestant missionaries displaying a flexible, entrepreneurial approach to recruitment and evangelization.

They preached on city streets and made home visits in rural neighborhoods. Active laymen, with only limited religious formation, were appointed pastors, though modern televangelists and preachers in megachurches generally complete formal Bible studies

Coulter told the Register that it was important to "differentiate between historic Pentecostal churches like the Christian Congregation and the Assemblies of God that were formed in the early 1900s and neo-Pentecostal churches like the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, which was formed in

The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, which owns the second-largest TV station in Brazil, "teaches a version of the prosperity gospel, which you would not find in the more historic (classical) Pentecostal churches," he said.

But even as the prosperity gospel has attracted scores of followers, more political elements of this movement have begun to address the problem of climate change and related economic and political issues addressed at the Amazon Brazil, in particular.

#### The Catholic Response

Meanwhile, Latin America's Catholic bishops have struggled to mount an effective response to the steady encroachment of Pentecostal sects.

"Catholic charismatics in Latin America are by far the most vital force for evangelization by the Church and have mostly followed the Pentecostal playbook in their efforts to reach out to lapsed Catholics," said Chesnut.

But the Catholic Church continues to face criticism for being slow to "grasp the nature of this phenomenon, which went beyond converting uneducated poor people" and focused on helping them make changes that boosted their standard of living, said McKenzie.

In the 1970s, the rise of liberation theology, which often employed Marxist categories of class conflict to advocate for social change and offered a sweeping indictment of economic injustice and social inequality in the region, was heralded as a promising departure from the Church's traditional posture, giving it added appeal, especially among the disenfranchised.

Liberation theology, rejected by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI for its "serious ideological deviations," prompted a shift in priorities for some Catholic dioceses and parishes that gave more weight to political engagement and downplayed popular devotions to the Virgin Mary and the saints. But many argued that this new approach politicized the faith, sending Catholics to Protestant churches, where the focus was on the Gospel and personal change.

This critique "has found confirmation in some studies, particularly in the case of Brazil," said McKenzie.

Citing the 2014 Pew study, he said it was telling that most Latin American respondents defined religiously based social-justice initiatives as the provision of practical help for congregants and the needy.

"This might mean that the religious question — getting in contact with the Transcendent — has a paramount importance in their lives, in a way that cannot be wholly translated in sociopolitical terms," he suggested. That said, he noted the strong link between religious belief and political change throughout the region — not only on the political left, but among more traditional evangelical Christians who now play a significant political role in

#### Lessons to Be Learned

Pentecostalism is the fastestgrowing Christian denomination in the world. And as the Pew study confirmed, its beliefs and practices address a common hunger for a deeper relationship with God, Christian fellowship and the power to change one's life for the

The movement has upended the Catholic Church's dominance **CONTINUES ON PAGE 8** 

# Pastoral Sense Absent From Amazonian Statue Controversy

COMMENTARY

The disputed Amazonian statue might be dismissed as a small distraction, but it is an important thing made more significant by a lack of elementary pastoral sense.

As Catholics ought to know better than anyone else — all the more so Vatican officials — symbols convey much more than words. That's why the liturgy is a ritual employing symbols rather than an essay employing syllogisms.



provides the proper lens through which to see what will become a lasting image of the

FATHER RAYMOND J. DE SOUZA

Amazon synod, the wooden statue of the naked pregnant Amazonian woman, first deployed in the curious tree-planting ceremony in the Vatican Gardens, later resident at the Church of Santa Maria in Traspontina and carried in procession during the Amazonian Via Crucis, and then once floating in the Tiber, where it was thrown by anonymous thieves who thought it had no place in a Catholic church, and subsequently recovered.

The theft and throwing of the image into the river was wrong. But I don't share the view of papal biographer Austen Ivereigh that it was akin to ISIS terrorists destroying statues of the Blessed Mother, precisely because, even at this late date, no one can say what exactly the statue is supposed to be or what religion, if any, it belongs to.

In light of the recent theft and aquatic disposal, Ivereigh has downgraded the "Marian theme" to a "mother-nature effigy."

The same "effigy" theme was picked up by the editorial director for all Vatican news, Andrea Tornielli, who spoke of it as an "effigy of motherhood and the sacredness of life" that is "a traditional symbol for the native people, which represents their tie to what St. Francis called 'mother earth."

Hence the confusion endures. St. Francis praised God "through our Sister Mother Earth." The tie was to God, not to the Earth. St. Francis himself would have insisted that an image used in prayer be a sacred one, the Blessed Mother, not mother-

hood in general nor Mother Earth. Sometimes — not always, but sometimes — a simple parish priest's experience might prove helpful at the Vatican. Parish priests are asked all the time - at weddings and funerals especially — to include some image, item or song dear to those attending. Even a young priest knows enough to ask, "What does this mean?" Depending on the answer, he knows to say that it might find a place elsewhere, but not in the church. The excluded item need not be offensive to Catholic teaching. Consider a national flag, customary to drape over a coffin for soldiers and veterans. It is an honorable thing, even a kind of sacred symbol, but it is not Catholic. And so it is supposed to be removed upon arrival at the church and replaced with the pall for the funeral, which represents baptism. The flag is put back as the coffin leaves the church.

A similar example: A few years back I was asked whether it might be permissible to include native Canadian drumming in a liturgical service. I grew up in Alberta and had seen that indigenous drumming a thousand times, on occasion finding it quite welcome.

It was not obviously contrary to the Catholic faith, but I did not know what it meant.

Was it a summoning of the people to a solemn occasion? Was it a hymn of thanksgiving to God? Was it intended to conjure the spirits of the dead? I didn't know what it meant, so I asked. Depending on the answer, I said, we might be able to include it, or it be might be inadmissible. In this particular case, the person asking did not know what it meant, so we proceeded no farther.

The problem with the Amazonian statue was that no one could or would — explain what it was. Ivereigh, offering some helpful spin doctoring, suggested that the Vatican should declare the two figures a depiction of the Visitation and be done with it.

That would have been fine, if it were true. It is quite possible to include bad or ambiguous art, if its meaning is clarified. Papal audiences in the Paul VI hall have taken place for decades in front of a massive, mystifying and, to me, quite horrible bronze installation. But everyone is informed that, no matter how off-putting it is, it is the Risen Christ. No controversy, and no one absconding with it in the early dawn to throw it in the river (though it would it take a crane and fleet of transport trucks).

So when people asked what the statue meant, an answer should have been ready. The indigenous people of the Amazon have seen Catholic images of the Blessed Virgin Mary for centuries, so it's possible that they expressed the same faith in their own artistic forms. Was it an image of "Our Lady of the Amazon" or some other Catholic image?

"There is nothing to know. It is an indigenous woman who represents life," said Father Giacomo Costa, part of the synod communications teams. "It is a feminine figure [which] is neither pagan nor sacred."

That was not helpful. If it's not sacred, why was it included in a prayer service to mark the feast of St. Francis of Assisi in the presence of the Holy Father? I might treasure a painting of my ancestors, but I wouldn't use it a paraliturgical rite.

Paolo Ruffini, the prefect of Vatican communications dicastery, said that he sees the figure as "representing life," which is basically saying that it is a fertility (life) symbol, in different words.

The Catholic press bent over backward to offer various accounts of something apparently so mysterious that it could not be straightforwardly explained by the people who thought it important enough to bring it across the oceans. The secular press was not so accommodating, and said flat out that it was an "indigenous fertility symbol," in the words of The Associated Press.

That being clarified, what was it doing in a side chapel of Santa Maria in Traspontina? Generally, that would not be allowed. Even photographs of the deceased during a funeral are not to be put in the sanctuary or before the altar. Certainly an indigenous fertility symbol — which, if "not pagan" at least hints in that direction, with perhaps touches of the superstitious — has no place in the side chapel of a

It is true that the Church of Santa Maria in Traspontina — on the days that I visited it during the synod — has been treated less like a church than a convention hall, with

various booths set up along the perimeter of the nave. It's not much of a defense to say that the church was being used in the manner of a social or environmental policy convention, but at least it is better than being used for purposes directly forbidden by the First Command-

The whole episode, from the beginning, has been deeply regrettable. Clarity would have avoided disturbing those who were legitimately disturbed and also indicated to what purposes the effigy could have been used.

Instead, a deliberate ambiguity was promoted by those who were responsible for the information, allowing the impression to fester that something akin to idol worship was going on in the heart of Rome.

I don't actually think that was the case. But it should not have been hard to say that clearly, directly and unambiguously.

The responsibility for the theft and disposal lies with those who recorded themselves in the act, but without the courage of showing their faces.

ing confusion about the effigy lies with those responsible for the official synod communications. The synod has not been served well.

The responsibility for the endur-

Father Raymond J. de Souza is the editor in chief of Convivium magazine.

#### VATICAN

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!





You can be a great blessing to them all & help them stay on track in this confusing world! Please tell your parish & fellow parishioners about EWTN's National Catholic Register.

And with our DISCOUNTED BULK SHIPMENT PROGRAM, you or your parish can get the Register – and the Truths of our Faith – into the hands of many more Catholics!

Call us today at (800) 781-0382 or email us at Register@kable.com



### **WOMEN MADE NEW**



In this must-see miniseries, host Crystalina Evert examines the fundamental Catholic values of being a wife and mother, answering the important questions Catholic women have about marriage. Airs November 18-22 at 5:30 PM ET.



LIVE TRUTH. LIVE CATHOLIC. ewtn.com 👽 😝 📵 🗓

TELEVISION • RADIO • NEWS • ONLINE • PUBLISHING

# Cardinal Defends Property Deal

CATHOLIC NEWS AGENCY

VATICAN CITY - Cardinal Angelo Becciu has denied any impropriety in a real estate investment made with Vatican funds and insisted that he only acted in the best interests of the Holy See.

In an interview with Italian media published Oct. 29, the former deputy at the Holy See's Secretariat of State rejected any wrongdoing in the authorization of a \$200-million property deal to develop a building in London.

Responding to what he called "slanderous charges" that he had "played with and tampered with the money of the poor" in the 2014 transaction, the cardinal defended the investment, saying it was "accepted

Speaking to ANSA, the cardinal said: "My conscience is clear, and I know I have always acted in the interest of the Holy See and never in my personal one. Those who know me well can attest to that."

Cardinal Becciu served as sostituto, or the second-ranking official at the Secretariat of State from 2011 to 2018, when Pope Francis named him a cardinal and moved him to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

The interview came in response to media coverage of an ongoing investigation by Vatican criminal and financial authorities into a 2014 \$200-million investment made through Athena Capital, a Luxembourg investment fund, which financed a stake in the development of a luxury apartment project in London. Details of the investment were first reported by the Financial Times earlier this month.

The money was taken from Swiss bank accounts under the control of the Secretariat of State and kept separately from other curial accounts held at the Vatican.

The London investment, along with a nearly \$50 million 2018 investment in the same property, has raised questions about the internal control of Vatican money held in international banks and investment vehicles, especially after repeated efforts to bring financial practices into line with international practices and standards.

On Oct. 29, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin said the investment was a one-off, and the fund in question appeared to be "well managed."

He said that he was addressing questions about the project.

opaque, and now we are trying to clear it up," Reuters quoted Cardinal Parolin as saying.

Cardinal Becciu told ANSA that there is a difference between Vatican funds intended for the benefit of the poor and the proceeds of the annual Peter's Pence collection taken up in every parish in the world and sent to Rome.

"It is accepted practice for the Holy See to invest in property; it has always done so: in Rome, in Paris, in Switzerland and also in London," Cardinal Becciu said, insisting that the deal was "regular and registered according to law."

"In the Secretariat of State we had a fund entitled 'money of the poor.' And it was destined for the poor. If, on the other hand, for money of the poor they want to refer to Peter's Pence, we have to clarify," Cardinal Becciu said.

"The Pence is not only for the Pope's almsgiving, but also the funding for his pastoral ministry," Cardinal Becciu said, suggesting that the secretariat's two investments in the luxury apartment development were an appropriate use of donated funds.

Cardinal Becciu did not address his reported involvement in other complicated Vatican transactions during the interview.

On Oct. 29, CNA reported that Cardinal Becciu was involved in a complicated series of events and financial transactions around the purchase of the Istituto Dermopatico dell'Immacolata (IDI), an Italian hospital that collapsed in 2013 under 800 million euros of debt through theft and fraud.

As sostituto, sources told CNA, Cardinal Becciu was the "driving force" behind requests for a \$25-million grant from the U.S. based Papal Foundation, ostensibly to supply short-term liquidity to the hospital, but actually intended to help remove a 50-million-euro bad loan from the books at the Vatican's central bank, APSA.

While the balance of the grant was canceled after pushback from Papal Foundation board members, \$13 million was initially sent to the Secretariat of State, though how the money was used has not been reported.

Cardinal Becciu told CNA that although he had been involved in the purchase of the IDI by a partnership created by the Secretariat of State, "Cardinal Parolin assumed the office of secretary of state [in 2013], and I no longer concerned myself with IDI."

"We are working to clear up wrote to the Papal Foundation saying investigation."

everything. This deal was rather the \$13 million would be reclassified as a loan, rather than a grant, and would be repaid.

Two sources within the Papal Foundation told CNA that the Vatican has proposed the loan be repaid through "discounts" applied each year to the list of grants requested of the Papal Foundation by Vatican offices and Catholic apostolates.

"The poor will end up paying the debt," a source close to the Papal Foundation told CNA.

Cardinal Becciu's role in authorizing the \$200-million investment and the potential focus on his time at the Secretariat of State by Vatican investigators have placed his tenure there under renewed scrutiny.

While there, he was responsible for the cancellation of an external audit of all Curial finances, intended to centralize information and details of Vatican assets and funds held away from the Vatican and unavailable for scrutiny.

On Oct. 1, Vatican prosecutors raided the Secretariat of State's offices. Documents and devices were

Although the Vatican did not indicate what exactly had prompted the investigation, subsequent reporting has indicated the London property investment and Cardinal Becciu were being looked into.

The next day, a confidential memo was leaked announcing the suspension of five Vatican employees, including two officials: Msgr. Mauro Carlino, who oversees documentation at the Secretariat of State, along with layman Tomasso Di Ruzza, director of the Vatican's Financial Intelligence Authority (AIF). Di Ruzza was subsequently cleared to return to work following an internal AIF investigation.

came two days after the same paper reported that Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte had been hired to consult on the deal in May 2018, just weeks before taking office. Conte has since distanced him-

Cardinal Becciu's interview

self from the Vatican-backed deal and ensuing investigation.

On Oct. 28, his office released a statement in response to the Financial Times' story.

The statement said that "it should be noted that Mr. Conte only gave a legal opinion and was not aware of, and was not required to know, the fact that some investors were connected to an investment fund supported by the Vati-In early 2019, Cardinal Parolin can and now at the center of an

### **Desmond**

**CONTINUING PAGE 7 STORY** 

in much of South America, And now, as the Pan-Amazon Synod draws to a close, little has been said publicly about what the rise of Pentecostalism can teach the Church in the 21st century.

But scholars like Chesnut warn that if the Church does not reckon with its failure to offer a compelling reason for staying Catholic, it is destined to repeat its mistakes.

Experts told the Register that the Church must revise its overly centralized model for evangelization and lay engagement and bring the Gospel to the people and

inspire the laity to work alongside pastors. Likewise, as the synod prompts the Church to more definitively embrace climatechange issues and join campaigns that defend the rights of the indigenous people in the Amazon Basin, the experience of the past half-century suggests bishops and pastors must be wary of displacing the Gospel and the sacraments with political projects.

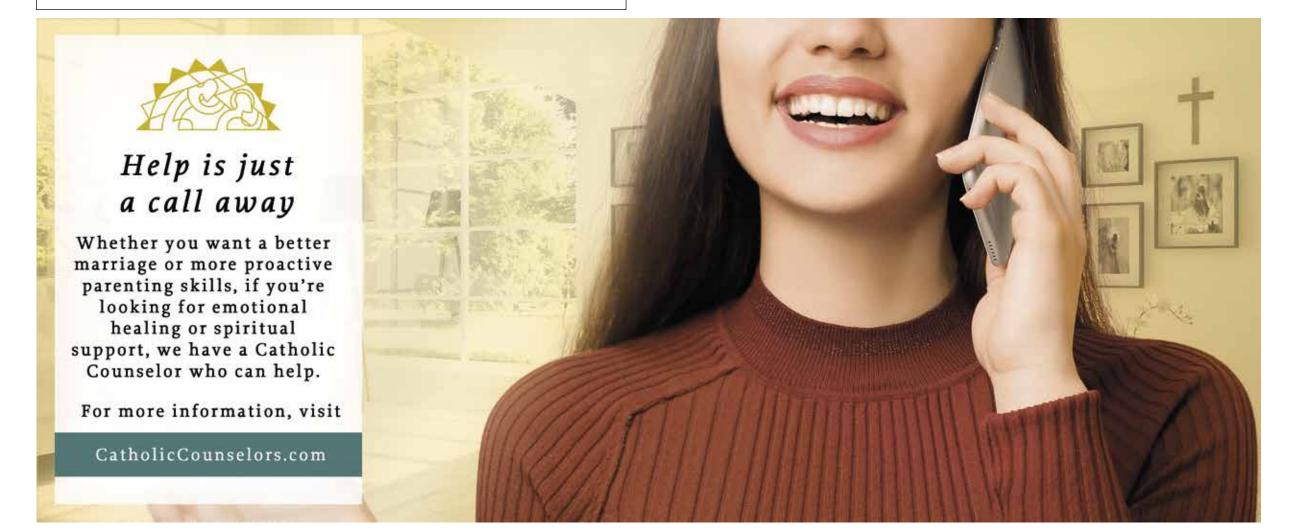
Indeed, even if Pope Francis approves the proposal to ordain married men to the priesthood, experts contacted by the Register made clear that the local Church has a great deal more work to do.

"The Church had no religious competition for over four centuries, so there was no need to implement effective evangelization strategies," Chesnut observed.

The "Pentecostal boom, in which droves of Catholics ... started leaving the Church for this charismatic branch of Protestantism," changed everything, he said.

"Ordination of permanent deacons could be part of a larger solution, but Pope Francis does not believe in aggressive Pentecostalstyle evangelization, which is why he hasn't paid much attention to the Catholic Charismatics as a dynamic force of evangelization."

"Without large-scale evangelization," he concluded, "the Church will continue to hemorrhage mem-



#### NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER | AT THE INTERSECTION OF FAITH AND CULTURE | NOVEMBER 10 - 23, 2019

# Join the Club!

Communion Of Saints Offers **Exclusive Benefits** And Inclusive Membership

n April 30, C.C. Sabathia of the New York Yankees became a member of the "3,000 Strikeout Club" when he struck out John Ryan Murphy of the Arizona Diamondbacks. This is a peculiar kind of club, insofar as its members never meet, never pay dues and have no social significance. The membership includes 17 pitchers, beginning with Walter Johnson, who achieved the illustrious 3,000 mark in 1923. If he was a member at this time, he was alone for nearly 51 years, until Bob Gibson turned the trick in 1974. Johnson passed away in 1946, though he is still a member.



Deep in the human psyche is a need for bringing people together in one kind of society

DONALD DEMARCO

or another. The "3,000 Strikeout Club" satisfies the notion of membership, but little else. The membership is eternal, but nothing more is required of its members than having fanned 3,000 batters over the course of their Major League careers. Their membership can never be revoked.

In Alex Haley's celebrated book Roots, Omoro, one of the principal characters in the story, is trying to explain life and death to young Kunta Kinte. He begins by saying that there are three groups of people who live in every village. He refers to those whom we see walking around, eating, sleeping and working. The second group consists of those who have passed away and whom another character in the book, Grandma Yaisa, has now joined. "And the third people who are they?" asked Kunta. The third group, Omoro tells him, "are those waiting to be born."

In this image, Halev is adding to mere membership the notion of respect. This respect is not based on achievement, but on being a living part of the human family.

There is respect for the people one encounters, as well as for those who are unseen: the deceased and

the unborn. The Sisters of Life, a religious order that Cardinal John O'Connor founded, help in the healing process of women who have undergone abortions. The sisters ask these women to write letters to the children they once carried in the womb, expressing their love and asking for forgiveness. In this way, both the reality of motherhood and the humanity of the unborn are affirmed. Adding to the notions of membership and respect is communication. Acknowledging the relationship between mother and child proves, in many cases, to be therapeutic. The mother-child bond is one that is rich in moral signifi-

cance and should not be belittled. According to Catholic doctrine, the Communion of Saints embraces membership, respect and communication. But it also includes "communion," and one on a very deep level, since it is communion in Christ through a common membership in the Mystical Body. It is, so to speak, the summit of clubs - and the greatest fulfillment of that deep desire in the human psyche for a perfect society.

Avowing belief in the Communion of Saints is part of the Apostles' Creed, which is recited at the beginning of every Rosary. It represents the solidarity that binds together in a spiritual way the faithful on earth, the souls in purgatory and the saints in heaven. In terminology that is used less often than it was in the past, the Communion of Saints includes the faithful on earth (the Church Militant), the souls in purgatory (the Church Suffering) and those in heaven (the Church Triumphant). The term "saints"

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 10** 

# Essentials for Our Journey's End

10 Things to Know About Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell

BY RICK BECKER

onverting to Catholicism was like being wooed. It was like a courtship, and I fell in love.

Among other delights during that courtship, I especially enjoyed learning about (and committing to memory) various Catholic lists, like the seven sacraments, the seven cardinal sins, the seven virtues — stuff like

Such lists are solid 4x4 catechetical posts that provide pivotal stability in a wobbly world. There are the Four Marks of the Church — one, holy, catholic, apostolic that establish where we've been in the past as God's family and where we are today. They identify the distinguishing features of the Church Militant (us!) to assist those who might be looking for her, but also to remind us who we are as we march along in faith.

But where are we going? That's where the other list of four comes in, the Four Last Things: death, judgment, heaven and hell.

Actually, that list should read heaven or hell, because you don't get to go to both. (More on that later.) And it's actually four-plus last things, as we'll see.

But let's not quibble about details. Regardless of how they're enumerated, the Last Things sketch out for us our journey's end. If the Four Marks represent the Church Militant in motion here on earth, then the Last Things bring us to our common destiny: the threshold of eternity and beyond - the Church suffering (Penitent), i.e., purgatory, for some of us and, eventually (God willing), the Church Triumphant (heaven) for all of us. The Last Things provide a framework in which we can understand our whole lives now and what we can look forward to later.

By "framework," I especially want to emphasize the "frame" part of that word. A frame represents the limits of a picture or painting. It's the outer confines of whatever it is we've chosen to highlight, the dividing line between the art we're gazing at and the wall on which it is hanging.

So it is with our lives. Our temporal, physical lives are framed by a beginning (birth) and an ending (death). Yet Christians have the hope of a continued life beyond physical life. like a frame beyond a frame. This latter metaframe provides context and meaning to the complex picture of our temporal stories within life span frames, and it's the Last Things that tie together all the strands of this multilavered framework. So let's take a look at them one by one — a bit out of the traditional order, but we'll get to them all.

#### **Death**

First things first: We're all going to die. We all know that, and we hear it confirmed on Ash Wednesday: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." We experience the death of relations and loved ones, and the more often we grieve such losses, the more real our own eventual death becomes. It's something inescapable, like taxes, as the saying goes, but with far more reaching consequences.



DISPUTATION OF THE SACRAMENT, A PAINTING BY RAPHAEL

To help us get at those consequences, let's consult a familiar hymn, All Creatures of Our God and King. It's a Mass standard, and you're probably already humming the tune in your head, maybe even voicing an Alleluia or two. The text, as you might know, is a paraphrase of a 13th-century prayer-poem by St. Francis of Assisi, The Canticle of the Sun. It's the one that refers to Brother Sun and Sister Moon, and the hymn version captures well the saint's exuberant joie de vivre.

What the hymn skips, however, is the poem's last canto, in which the saint applies that same exuberant joy to the end of life. What's more, it provides us with a superb minicatechesis on the topic.

Praised be my Lord for our sister, the bodily death, from the which no living man can flee. Here, Francis affirms what we've already stated — that everyone will die but he does so with flair and insight. To begin with, he praises God for physical death, which strikes us as odd, especially since, as St. Paul teaches, it constitutes the "wages of sin" (Romans 6:23). But, seriously, given the effects of entropy and old age, would we want to indefinitely put off our physical demise, even if fleeing it were really

While we are forbidden from doing anything to hasten our deaths, we do well to follow Francis' lead and consider death a beloved sister who helps us keep our focus. The inevitability of death "lends urgency to our lives," the Catechism teaches, and "helps us realize that we have only a limited time in which to bring our lives to fulfillment" (1007). That fulfillment has a positive connotation and a negative one, which follow.

2. Woe to them who die in mortal sin. Here's the negative side of anticipating death: the avoidance of sin, especially (and ironically) mortal or "deadly" sin; that is, any deliberate, conscientious choice to cut ourselves off from God and his grace. Since we cannot possibly know when we'll die, we must be vigilant at all times and in every season in resisting temptation. And when we do fall, then we are motivated to seek reconciliation with God and the Church through the sacrament of penance as soon as possible. "For those who die in Christ's grace [participate] in the death of the Lord, so that they can also share his Resurrection" (1006).

3. Blessed those who shall find themselves in Thy most holy will. Here's the positive dimension of preparing for death, and it's much more than just the flipside of avoiding sin. It's rather the mystical union with Christ that constitutes the essence of the faith: that we're to become Christ. "Sanctity does not consist merely in doing the will of God," writes Thomas Merton. "It consists in willing the will of God," which means striving daily for an ever greater identification with the Person of Jesus, both figuratively and literally. "By the sacraments of rebirth, Christians have become 'children of God,' 'partakers of the divine nature.' Coming to see in the faith their new dignity, Christians are called to lead henceforth a life 'worthy of the gospel of Christ" (1694).

4. For the second death shall do them no ill. By "second death," St. Francis alludes here to the Book of Revelation, where St. John describes the final destination of those who reject God as a "lake that burns with fire and brimstone" (21:8). If we avoid sin, stay close to the Church and the sacraments, and endeavor to live as Christ in the world, then our future physical death (no matter when it comes) and what comes next will not haunt

us. Our firm hope in God's mercy will mitigate our fear of hell, and we'll be able to say with St. Paul, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). What we hope to gain, of course, is heaven. But, before we get there, we'll have to be judged — the next in our line of Last Things.

#### **Judgment**

"Don't judge me." It's a crack my kids regularly make (to me, to each other) as shorthand for "give me a break" or "lighten up." Yet, like death, judgment is serious business and something we all will undergo: a divine reckoning of how well we navigated our earthy existence and made use of the time (and grace) God granted us on earth. And it will take place in two distinct stages with an earth-shattering, momentous event in

5. Particular Judgment. Our dying will coincide with a divine evaluation in which our very lives, our faith as well as our thoughts, words and actions (both of omission and commission), will be weighed as to our ultimate allegiance: either to Christ or against him. It's a judgment focused on us as individuals, and there'll be no delay with regards to its consequences: "either entrance into the blessedness of heaven ... or immediate and everlasting damnation" (Catechism 1022). It's a stark divide, to be sure, but we lean on the hope that Christ will someday tell us what he told the Good Thief on Calvary: "Today you will be with me in paradise."

6. Last Judgment. This will be a collective summing up at the end of time of humanitv's track record within the context of Providence: a revelatory weaving of everybody's **CONTINUES ON PAGE 10** 

# The First Thing You Should Know About the 4 Last Things

Then we read the epistles of St. Paul, there's a tremendous sense of urgency. Just look at St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians. The apostle writes (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5):

"Concerning times and seasons, brothers, you have no need for anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night. When people are saying, 'Peace and security,' then sudden disaster comes upon them, like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness, for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We are not of the night or of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober."

As we well know, the sense of the eschaton was greater in the early Church. What is the eschaton? It is the end time. Eschatology is the study of the reality of the Four Last Things: death, judgment, heaven and hell. Sadly, the Four Last Things are not preached about very often today; and, when they are, there seems to be some confusion concerning them. But the early follow-

ers of the Way, who daily were risking their lives because they believed in Christ, who were considered enemies of the state due to their faith, truly believed that, at any moment,



Jesus, King of Glory and Lord of the World. could descend, just as he had ascended, to

father John Cush

judge each man according to his deeds. When Jesus didn't come back after a year, after 10 years, or even after 50 years, perhaps the early Christians, facing death for their faith, began to lose heart. Perhaps some even fell away. Evidently, St. Paul felt that the best way to bolster the young Church was to exhort it to hold tight to hope in Christ's coming — hence, the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. Christians, over time, began to forget that, at any moment, the Bridegroom could come again, like a thief in the night, and they could be caught wallowing in the mire of their own fear. St. Paul wanted to remind them what a great reward lay in store for their perseverance amid persecution.

As history progresses, when the danger of being Christian seemingly fades, when Christianity cution oppresses Christians and becomes, in a sense, mainstream, as it did after the edicts of the Emperor Constantine throughout most of Western civilization, men and women can lose sight of the Last Things. We can put our focus on things of less importance. We might settle into daily routines, the concerns of daily life becoming more and more important. We may begin to focus on the little things of life, naturally enough, and begin to miss the big picture. We might miss the forest for the trees. Made for immortality, we may become

stuck in immorality. The same is true today. In the United States, Australia and parts of Europe, we have largely lost the eschatological edge that St. Paul wanted to instill in the Thessalonians. We are complacent instead of living in our awareness of Christ's return. I think that we need to reclaim the eschatological edge as soon as possible, if we are to regain the proper focus in the Christian life. In reality, where the cult of political correctness reigns, we may not be physically killed for our faith, but we are considered completely irrelevant and an enemy by a not-insignificant portion of society. This type of perse-

threatens our hope even today. Today, in parts of the Middle East, in parts of Africa and in other places, being Christian can (and still might) get you killed, as in the early Church.

We were blessed as a universal Church by the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church under Pope St. John Paul II. We need to look no further than to the Catechism to learn exactly what we as the People of God, the Church, need to know and believe concerning the Four Last Things. It can be found in Nos. 1020-1065 of the Catechism.

We should make no mistake: Heaven is real, hell is real, and purgatory is real. And in our lives on this earth, we should aim for heaven by living lives of virtue. If we only try for purgatory, and we miss, we end up in a place no one wants to be!

The systematic theologian Paul Tillich asked what our area of ultimate concern is. What did he mean? It's a theological term for something actually pretty simple. In our lives, we have plenty of real concerns: health, career and so many other aspects of the daily grind. But if we were asked, what is really our ultimate concern, and on

what really do we base our lives, what would we say? Tillich said that our religion has to be our ultimate concern. It will be the only thing that will survive when this material world passes away. According to this Protestant theologian, offering us Catholics some good advice, our faith, the daily living out of our religion, has to truly be the area of our ultimate concern. It has to be that which animates us, that which we think about when we consider our life's decisions.

Do we really believe that our actions and attitudes lead us toward the Lord or away from the Lord? Are we aiming for heaven or heading directly away?

Do we know that the Lord, who is Savior and Redeemer, who is the Lord of Mercy, but also the Lord of Righteousness and the Just Judge, is coming at a time when we do not

This should not frighten us but should make us realize that all this stuff — death, judgment, heaven, purgatory and hell — is very, very real. What is our ultimate concern? If it's not the salvation of our immortal soul, then we need to reevaluate our lives.

> Father John P. Cush is a priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

#### **OPINION**

# **Recovering Care for** All the Churches

**EDITORIAL** 

GUEST EDITORIAL

BY FATHER RAYMOND J. DE SOUZA

venerable phrase kept occurring to me during the last days of the Pan-Amazon synod: sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium. It means the "care for all the Churches" and refers to the governance of the entire Church universal. Had this necessary care for the welfare of the Church as a whole been sufficiently present, I wondered, throughout the synod's controversial deliberations?

The Amazon synod, which closed Oct. 27, highlighted the need for all bishops to recover a fuller sense of their sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium in the pastoral care of the entire flock of Christ. The governance of the Church universal is entrusted to the entire College of Bishops, which acts in two ways, according to Vatican II: through its head alone, the pope, and as a body united to its head, the pope.

Each individual bishop, therefore, has not only the care of the particular Church (diocese) entrusted to him, but participates in the sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium, in the care for all the local Churches united in the

It was, by the way, the title given to the papal bull of 1814, whereby Pope Pius VII re-established the Society of Jesus after it had been suppressed by Pope Clement XIV in 1773. The phrase was not in my mind due to the prominence of Jesuits in this current moment of the Church's life, beginning with the novelty of a Jesuit pope.

It came to mind because the Amazon synod manifested a certain lack, to my mind, of the sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium in three ways.

First, there is the pastoral problem of access to the sacraments in the remote areas of the Amazon. This is not a new problem in the history of the Church, and it even earned the attention of the Second Vatican Council, which sought to address the imbalance in the global distribution of priests by creating new structures for priests to serve in lands far away from their home dioceses. That's where the idea of "personal prelatures" came from, though none have been set up to address the distribution of priests around the world. The only personal prelature erected has been for Opus Dei, but for quite different canonical reasons.

AT THE HEART OF THE AMAZON SYNOD WAS THE QUESTION OF THE CHURCH AS A MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE. ALMOST ALL PARTS OF THE CHURCH OUTSIDE OF EUROPE HAVE TO ADDRESS WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE GOSPEL TO **ENCOUNTER INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, EITHER TODAY OR IN** THE PAST. INDEED, THE VERY MISSIONARY IDENTITY AND INTEGRITY OF THE CHURCH IS AT RISK. EVERY BISHOP MUST BE CONCERNED ABOUT THAT.

The sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium has, in practice, usually meant that bishops are willing to share their priests for ministries outside their dioceses — in the missions, in seminaries, in universities, in the military, in the Roman Curia and national bishops' conferences, in various associations of the faithful and for particular needs.

The Amazon synod did not emphasize an intensified sharing of priests, but, rather, new measures — married priests; studying a "diaconate" for women — that have not been previously employed elsewhere. The synod fathers were not seized with the conviction that their sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium meant providing themselves for the remote regions within their own countries.

Second, the synod participants did not appear to give much weight to the impact that their deliberations would have on other parts of the Church. Considering "new paths" for the Amazon without thinking them through as part of a universal Church is a failure of the sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium. A particular bishop, or group of bishops, cannot regard themselves as somehow apart from the Church universal, unconcerned with how their decisions will have a wider effect.

Strangely, though, there were some synod voices that did consider the wider impact, but not so much with concern for other local Churches, but, rather, with an agenda to impose.

Using the particular urgencies of the Amazonian situation as an entry point to changing universal disciplines is turning the sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium inside out and upside down. Instead of a local Church looking to serve the needs of the universal Church, there is instead a desire to exert pressure on the universal Church to change in order to accommodate the local

Third, the whole Church was watching the Pan-Amazon synod, and there was no shortage of bishops who were concerned by what they saw and heard. They remained, with few exceptions, silent.

Part of this was an ecclesial courtesy, allowing the synod the freedom to discuss and deliberate absent external pressure. But now that the synod is over and its final report published, the sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium invites bishops who were not part of the synod to offer their contributions.

For example, the Amazon is not the only remote place where access to the sacraments can be difficult. Decisions taken for the Amazon will then have wider implications. Bishops in other parts of the world ought to share their wisdom about that.

Theology is not a regional exercise; if there are theological concerns about Amazonian matters, they are theological concerns for the whole Church. A local bishop ought not to content himself with the idea that the Amazon is not his diocese and therefore is not his concern.

At the heart of the Amazon synod was the question of the Church as a missionary enterprise. Almost all parts of the Church outside of Europe have to address what it means for the Gospel to encounter indigenous peoples, either today or in the past. Indeed, the very missionary identity and integrity of the Church is at risk. Every bishop must be con-

Pope Francis suggested that perhaps the next synod in 2021 might be on "synodality" itself, examining how the Church ought to govern herself. Structures do change over time, but the charge to the apostles their care and governance of the entire Church — remains perpetually valid, a charge that includes the sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarium.

Father Raymond J. de Souza is the editor in chief of Convivium magazine.

#### s preparations for the holidays of Thanksgiving and ▲ Christmas begin to draw our attention, the Catholic Church in her wisdom offers a sharp focus

on preparing for something greater:



Today amid the scandal, false witness and rash judgment too often on display within the Church

MICHAEL WARSAW

and political life, and amid the general confusion in our world about

#### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

# **Eternal Motivation**

the Truth, the Church reminds us of the need to detach from this transitory life and remember the Four Last Things — death, judgment, heaven and hell. Now is the time to take account of how we live and to reconcile our hearts and minds to Christ in recognition of our mortality. It's also a time to account for those who are entrusted to our care - to pray for our loved ones who

are far from the Church and to pray for the souls of the faithful who have gone before us in death.

St. Cyprian of Carthage, a third-century Church Father, once called his flock to attention with these words, "Here, life is either lost or kept. Here, by the worship of God and by the fruit of faith, provision is made for eternal salvation. Let no one be kept

back either by his sins or by his years from coming to obtain salvation. To him who still remains in this world there is no repentance that is too late."

Till that last day, may all of us, through Mass, confession and prayer or in spiritual and corporal works of mercy, know that the clear promise of Christ and his Church shines through all of the distraction and confusion. Let's let this awareness of eternity motivate our present actions and thoughts and redirect them more and more to Christ.

God bless you!

#### **LETTERS**

#### **Priests and Prayer**

I read "Catholic Seminarians Go Deeper In Prayer" (Oct. 13 issue) with great interest. Why would seminarians have to go to a special summer school to learn the tools for maintaining a vibrant life of prayer in the midst of their busy schedule? Why isn't it taught in their seminary every day? What is more important in priests' lives than their having a personal relationship

with Jesus Christ, his Father and the Holy Spirit, which can come only through prayer?

A pastor, coming back from a retreat he had given to priests gathered from around the country, remarked, "Oh, they are so angry with me because I told them every priest should spend an hour before the Blessed Sacrament," and my jaw dropped. They don't? You have had several articles on the beauty of celibacy. But celibacy is not just about sexual relationships. A personal relationship with Jesus through prayer is connected to their vow of celibacy because celibacy frees

them from the cares and burdens of married couples so that they have the time to pray and develop this personal relationship with Jesus. In this way, they can become the good shepherds and leaders of the people burdened by family matters. A married man is devoted to his wife and his wife to him and both to their children. The priest, through the vow of celibacy, is free to devote himself to prayer and intimacy with the Lord. Perhaps this lack of prayer is the reason that so many priests betrayed their vocation.

Mary Best, Conneaut, Ohio

### **DeMarco**

**CONTINUING PAGE 9 COLUMN** 

does not refer to canonized saints, but in the sense that St. Paul had in mind when he began one of his letters with the salutation, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi" (Philippians 1:1).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines the "Communion of Saints" as consisting in "all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church. ... [I]n this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always [attentive] to our prayers" (962).

Members of the Communion of Saints are able to confer benefits on each other.

One way is through prayer. "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins" (2 Maccabees 12:45). "Do not weep," St. Dominic advised his loved ones, "for I shall be more useful to you after my death." Likewise, St. Thérèse of Lisieux expressed the intention "to spend my heaven in doing good on earth."

In his book The Mystical Body, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen states, "It is indeed one of the most consoling doctrines of the faith that we can still help our loved ones after death, if they stand in need of help, and by doing so perhaps make atonement for our ingratitude to them during life."

Death does not dissolve the relationship between the living and the dead because that relationship is not based on flesh and blood but on the Spirit of Christ. Love, which is the life of the soul, endures beyond death.

The Catholic novelist Flannery O'Connor is reputed to have been haunted by the grotesque.

To her credit, however, she was only too aware of human imperfections and the need for grace.

Although she regarded her subject in fiction as "the action of grace in a territory held largely by the devil," she was a firm believer in the

"This action by which charity grows invisibly among us, entwining the living and the dead," she wrote, in

one of her essays, "is called by the church the Communion of Saints. It is a communion created upon human imperfection, created from what we make of our grotesque state."

As members of the Communion of Saints, we pray with hope for those who have predeceased us and hope that the blessed in heaven will pray for us. We are not alone as long as we are part of the Mystical Body of

> Donald DeMarco is professor emeritus at St. Jerome's University and adjunct professor at Holy Apostles College & Seminary. He is a regular columnist for the St. Austin Review. His latest books are available at Amazon.com.

### Becker

**CONTINUING PAGE 9 COLUMN** individual stories into an intricate account of world history as superin-

tended by the Lord of history. All our best moments and worst moments, that is, will be on display for the cosmos to take in, and the meaning of it all will be made clear.

The Last Judgment will also include a ratification of our particular judgments, and it will be preceded by the resurrection of our bodies, which will share in our soul's experience of eternal reward, one way or another. Our bodily resurrection will have a cosmic parallel in the rebirth of all creation — a "new heavens" and a "new earth," in the words of St. Peter, the commencement of God's Kingdom in its completeness.

7. Resurrection of the Body. We recite this belief in the Nicene Creed every week — "I believe in the resurrection of the body" — but do we think about it? Anyone who's been around corpses and dead bodies can't help thinking that this is one bizarre tenet of faith. How's it supposed to work? It's one thing to affirm the resurrection of the Man-God, Jesus; quite another to think that'll happen to us.

Yet, it's in the creed, and so we know it's essential — as it always has been, despite opposition and ridicule from the beginning. Just as Christ rose from the dead — bodily, not just spiritually — we, too, will know resurrection, as will all the dead.

But this won't be some kind of zombie apocalypse, for our bodies, like Christ's, will undergo a transformation. Even for those long deceased, there will be some kind of real continuity between our temporal and resurrected bodies, similar to how there's continuity between sown seeds and the plants they grow into. And, although we have a pretty good idea how seeds grow into plants, the "how" of our own bodily transformations "exceeds our imagination and understanding [and] is accessible only to faith" (Catechism, 1000).

#### **Eternity**

Now we've finally arrived at the crossroads of forever, a cosmic drama that can't be geographically located despite what Dante described in The Divine Comedy. As already mentioned, our ultimate direction within this drama was already determined at the moment of our death and particular judgment, but now we'll explore a little of what those destinations are all about. As you remember from your English classes, Dante's Comedy had three acts — hell, purgatory and heaven — but, really, there's only two. And they're concurrent, with a slight intermission that heralds the one we're all shooting for.

8. Hell. But let's get the one we're hoping to avoid out of the way, and the first thing to make clear is that God doesn't send anyone there. Hell is a state of selfimposed exile from the beatific vision. It's something the damned choose by refusing to ultimately and decisively choose God, a decision manifest in obstinate clinging to mortal sin when we die.

What's it like? "The chief punishment of hell is eternal separation from God, in whom alone man can possess the life and happiness for which he was created and for which he longs" (Catechism, 1035). Our imaginations conjure up flames and devils and torment, in part because the Bible uses that imagery (as does Dante), but it's also because it's hard for us to imagine what eternal separation from God would be like - and, frankly, to ward us off from lives that would put us there. Burning is terrifying, but I like Dante's lowest level of hell in his *Inferno*. It's icy and cold: frozen, still and boring an eternal polar vortex with no cozy comforter and hot chocolate and DVDs to watch with the family.

But how can we believe in a God that allows hell, even if he doesn't send souls there? How can we love him? Strangely enough, the fact that hell exists is in fact a profound indication of God's love for us. Free will is impossible unless there is a hell, and, although God desires heaven for all his creatures, he won't save us against our final choice at the end of our lives. "He respects our decisions" (Catechism, 213).

9. Purgatory. Despite popular conceptions of purgatory as a "mini hell," it's rather a suburb of heaven. "Purgatory is the state of those who die in God's friendship, assured of their eternal salvation, but who still have need of purification to enter into the happiness of heaven" (Catechism, 210). There is definitely suffering in purgatory, but it's the suffering of those who know that they'll finally reach their heavenly destination — more like a pining for paradise than some kind of "helllight." Think of it as waiting in a celestial TSA line, but with the knowledge that your plane won't take off without you.

We have the opportunity actually, the solemn responsibility — to assist those in purgatory with our prayers (especially at Mass), good works and sacrifices; hence, the long-standing practice of "offering up" our incidental inconveniences, pains and irritations for the "suffering souls," a practice that should be habitual, for it's a spiritual work of mercy that will redound to our own sanctification.

10. Heaven. Finally, we've arrived at the transcendent human hope: the happy ending anticipated by Dante's Comedy, the last great adventure! And I do mean adventure, for heaven will not be a static state of being in which the bewinged blessed are just sitting around, strumming harps and looking serenely bored. Dismiss from your thoughts anything resembling the lilting Talking Heads song Heaven. It portrays eternal bliss as a bar where they "play my favorite song ... all night long," and where "there is a party; everyone is there; everyone will leave at exactly the same time."

Frankly, that describes the kind of hell that Dante stuck on his lowest level: boring and same and interminably dull.

Heaven is definitely not like that, but rather "fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness" (Catechism, 1024).

We'll get to see God face-to-face (1 Corinthians 13:12), and we'll join that vast crowd of saints - like a great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1) — who get to commune with the Blessed Trinity forever. Less like a dull party, it'll be like an eternal journey into the mystery of the Trinity, an infinite beatific vision, and there'll always be more to discover.

I can't think of a better image of heaven than the last paragraph of The Last Battle by C.S. Lewis. He tells of those who'd completed their adventures in Narnia as entering into something even grander. "Now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read." Lewis writes, "in which every chapter is better than the one before."

So that's what's on the agenda, what's "coming up" for all of us eventually.

It's November, a month dedicated to the holy souls in purgatory, so it's a great time to be thinking about all this and sharing it, especially with our kids. That goes especially for death, a subject that is still taboo for too many of us, despite our firm hope of a blessed afterlife. Allow your children to observe that you commandeer every day as if it were your last, not abandoning responsibilities and ordinary activities, but embracing them with intentionality and love.

Orient your every choice, word and action to heaven, and your particular judgment will be a mere formality. Pray regularly; get to know God; be honest with him; get used to him. He's your destination if you truly live the Christian life. Why not begin now?

Rick Becker writes from Indiana.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER

FOUNDED BY MSGR. MATTHEW J. SMITH NOVEMBER 8, 1927

National Catholic Register is published by EWTN NEWS, Inc., (a not-for-profit supporting organization of EWTN Global Catholic Network) with editorial and business offices at 5817 Old Leeds Road, Irondale, AL 35210. For subscriptions, call 1-800-421-3230, or visit us on the web at NCRegister.com



**Publisher** Michael Warsaw

**Operating Officer Editor in Chief** 

of EWTN News, Inc. **Emily Isaminge Administrative Assistant** 

**Managing Editor** 

Assistant to the President

**Managing Editor** of Digital Assets Alyssa Murphy **News Editor** 

Senior Editor

Joan Frawley Desmond

**Senior Editor** Matthew Bunson

**Blog/Social Media Editor** 

Staff Writers Peter Jesserer Smith Joseph Pronechen Lauretta Brown

**Graphic Designer** Film Critic

Rome Correspondent **Edward Pentin Europe Correspondent** 

**U.K.** Correspondent

Middle East Correspondent

Solène Tadié

Michele Chabir

K.V. Turley

Amy Hodges Marketing Directo Brian Horvath

> **Advertising Manage** Jim Cosgro

**Customer Service** 

Debbie Paxson Yalile Gonzalez-Deal Advertising Ad

Operations Specialist

**Advertising Sales** 

#### **USCCB**

**CONTINUING PAGE ONE STORY** 

Once a new USCCB president is elected, the assembled U.S. bishops then choose from among the remaining nine candidates for the position of vice president.

Veteran Church analyst George Weigel told the Register that it "seems virtually certain that Archbishop Gomez will be elected president." He didn't speculate on the vice president.

Shaw explained that when nominating their fellow bishops, the bishops were likely looking for "a personality that would suit the leadership position in the conference of bishops, as it operates largely on the basis of consensus. Someone who has a sense of consensus, if you put it that way, is able to build consensus among a group of people and respect the wishes and dealings of the membership."

Weigel said that "solidity of doctrine and serious pastoral ability" were likely factors that the bishops were taking into consideration in their nomination.

#### **Conspicuous Absences**

Regarding the list of those nominated for president and vice president, some have noted the absence of the names of three prelates who are perceived to be closely aligned with Pope Francis' vision for the Church: Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago, Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, and Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego.

"I can only say while they are certainly prominent in the American hierarchy, they still have yet to establish their particular presence within the conference of bishops," Shaw said. "It takes time; you don't get to be president or vice president of the bishops' conference quickly. The feeling, I'm quite sure, among the bishops is that they want a man who has been a member of the conference for some years and who has served on committees."

He added that he did not see the absence of their names as a "putdown or repudiation of Pope Francis. The American hierarchy is intensely loyal to the papacy, and always has been, so the bishops are not taking a sort of unspoken shot at the Pope or the Vatican or anything like that."

Weigel said that it seemed "fairly obvious that whatever support these men enjoy in Rome is not matched by the support they enjoy among their brother bishops, but that's nothing new."

#### 'Faithful Citizenship' Videos

Bishop Paprocki spoke with the Register about some of the other significant action items that the bishops will address at the assembly, including approval for the scripts of a video format for their "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" teaching document.

Bishop Paprocki explained that at the bishops' general meeting in June 2018, "The decision was made that rather than trying to do a revision of the document 'Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,' we wanted to focus more on doing a video or videos. The discussion then was that we spent a lot of time, it seemed, writing and revising documents that we wonder: How many people read them?"

"For example," he continued, "I've noticed when I travel, I rarely see people reading books anymore. They're all on their cellphones or tablets or they're watching videos and movies. We thought we would have a greater impact and reach more people if we would do videos."

"What we're looking at is not really so much the content or any change in the content," Bishop Paprocki emphasized. "It's more to try to make our message more accessible to a greater number of people."

The bishops will be considering for approval a short letter that would supplement "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" and the scripts for five videos taking themes from the document.

Bishop Paprocki said that the first video is "Catholics Participating in Public Life" and has the theme of the importance of participation in political life. The second video is on Catholics protecting human life and dignity, he said, noting that "that would refer to, of course, the unborn, abortion, women, migrants, the elderly, dis-



2006 BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES abled, persons in poverty," and "the spectrum of issues involving human life and dignity."

The third video is "Catholics Promoting the Common Good," Bishop Paprocki said, since "a major theme in Catholic social teaching is common good and the dignity of every human being." The fourth video will be about Catholics loving their neighbors and "solidarity and subsidiarity: how we organize society to work together and fight problems and to respond to people's needs." He said that the fifth video is "Faithful Citizens Work With Christ as He Builds His Kingdom" and is "about how we as Catholics then work in our society to try to build a better world."

Bishop Paprocki emphasized that these videos will be short — the shortest is roughly 90 seconds, and the longest is 5-6 minutes — so that Catholic viewers can see these issues discussed in a concise way. The bishops will be "looking at the text, just as in the past we would look at documents and revise documents."

"I really don't see anything that would be a matter of debate," Bishop Paprocki said regarding what he

anticipated from the discussion. "These are matters of Catholic principle of Catholic social teaching, so we tend to speak more in terms of the principles like the common good, the dignity of the human person, and then in terms of specific issues. These are things that would've been pretty much a mainstay of Catholic teaching. There's a teaching against abortion, promoting the rights of migrants, the poor. There are general categories like that, rather than getting into specific policies, and certainly not taking partisan sides in this."

Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco told the Register regarding the discussion of faithful citizenship that "while there has been movement in different directions on different issues over the past four years, the issues themselves remain pretty much the same."

"I anticipate that there will be no major rewriting of 'Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship," he said, "only some modifications. We will see, though, where the sense of the body of bishops takes us."

But Shaw said that given the upcoming U.S. presidential election, he couldn't be sure there wouldn't be a debate on the faithfulcitizenship material. "If even one bishop feels strongly about that, then there will be a debate," he said, while noting that the bishops have historically reached some consensus on these matters.

#### **Priestly Formation**

Another item the bishops will be considering is a vote to approve the sixth edition of the "Program of Priestly Formation." The Register asked Bishop Paprocki if this discussion might touch on the recent scandals in the U.S. Church, particularly involving now-laicized former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick's sexual misconduct with seminarians and allegations of a homosexual subculture in some seminaries (see story on page 2).

Bishop Paprocki, who was on the collaborative committee that worked on the changes, said that "seminary formation, in at least the last decade, if not longer, I think, has taken that into account."

"There are psychological evaluations that are required before a man is even accepted into the seminary, and then there is continued psychological work that is being done while they're in the seminary," he pointed out. "The 'Program of Priestly Formation,' sixth edition, is not saying that we need to radically change the seminaries because we have a current problem. I think what we're saying is the seminaries have done a very good job, at least in the last 20 years, of addressing the previous problems, and this is really just trying to strengthen it."

"It would be naïve to think that we've eliminated all the problems, but I think it's a question that perhaps we're more vigilant or even better at diagnosing the problems," he concluded on that matter. "In the past maybe the problems were present and they were allowed to continue or even fester, whereas, now, I think problems, if they are present, they are more quickly identified and then dealt with."

Weigel thought the issue "should be" discussed, although, in his opinion, "a lot of that problem has been resolved." He added that "the real formation issue now is less a question of 'culture' than of the availability of gay-dating apps."

Shaw said that a discussion of a homosexual subculture is "a rather remote possibility." However, he added that "this latest updating of the 'Program of Priestly Formation' could encourage some of the bishops to strongly suggest a close study of the issue. If they did advocate that, I would think it quite a reasonable thing to do. This is rather early in the game to make any broad, sweeping statements about the issue."

#### The Propaedeutic Stage

Bishop Paprocki anticipated, regarding the priestly-formation discussion, that debate will occur over the stages being added to the current program, which are "described in a document that came out from the Holy See called the *Ratio Fundamentalis*, the basic foundation for priestly formation for the universal Church." The four stages they talk about are "the pro-

paedeutic stage, the discipleship stage, the configuration stage and the vocational synthesis."

"The area where there will be the most debate is this propaedeutic stage," he predicted. "What that refers to is asking for a full year for a new seminarian to spend time really getting to know the Church better and Catholicism better before they enter major seminary."

"What we're finding is we're getting more candidates that are coming to the seminary right after college and in some cases are recent converts," Bishop Paprocki explained.

"So they've converted and then have felt the call to become a priest, but they are, in a sense, learning how to be Catholic; and so this propaedeutic stage is to give a little bit more foundation before they enter into their seminary studies."

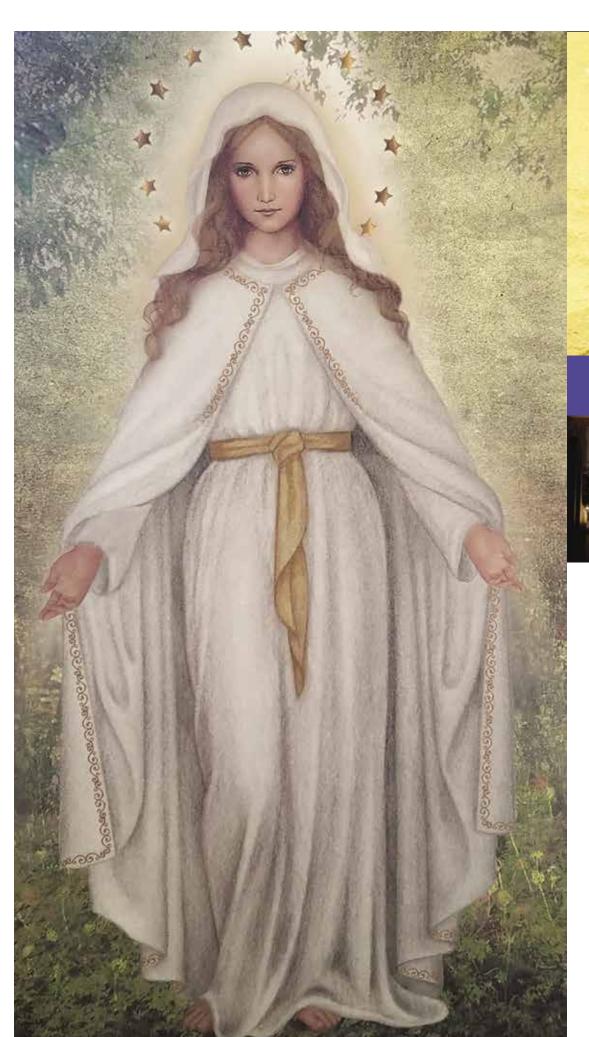
"If you don't go to a college seminary, it would be a year for the propaedeutic stage, two years for philosophy, and then four years for theology, so it could add a year to that program," he said. "That probably will get some discussion because there's a need there, but then it's also adding another year to the seminary formation."

Archbishop Cordileone was in agreement with Bishop Paprocki that the propaedeutic stage will be "a major area of focus."

"The propaedeutic stage can be fulfilled in different ways, and I think bishops will want to know how to make sure it is done well, without adding a burden of more time required of seminary formation beyond what it already is," he said.

Addressing the question of sexual misconduct and alleged homosexual subcultures in seminaries, Archbishop Cordileone said that "this early stage of formation places a heavy focus on human formation, which gets to the heart of the issues which you ask about. I think an effective program at the propaedeutic stage can get seminarians off to a good start in understanding and living affective maturity, provided that is continued throughout their seminary formation."

Lauretta Brown writes from Washington, D.C.



At Champion Shrine, our Blessed Mother will help you find peace, love and healing.

The only church-approved (Darian apparition site in the USA.





Between Lake Michigan and the Bay of Green Bay, lies Champion Shrine, where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared 160 years ago. Today, thousands of pilgrims make the journey to Champion every year to experience the Peace, Love and Healing graces of our Blessed Mother as she brings us closer to her Son, Jesus.

**G**o plan your pilgrimage to the place in America where the Queen of Heaven appeared on earth, visit our website today.



www.shrineofourladyofgoodhelp.com

### In Person

continuing page one interview of our society. The project is an initiative of the Benedict XVI Institute for Sacred Music and Divine Worship, which was established to provide practical resources for more beautiful and reverent liturgies and to energize

a Catholic culture of the arts.

If we consider what the Church is doing now to promote the good, the true and the beautiful, we see she is doing a great deal in the area of goodness, to serve the poor, and in the area of truth, to make catechetical resources available. But we need to do more in the area of beauty.

You frequently reference a comment by Pope Emeritus Benedict that affirms the transforming power of great art: "The only really effective apologia for Christianity comes down to two arguments, namely the saints the Church has produced and the art which has grown in her womb." What does the Pope mean?

He is saying these are the fruits of the Church, the fruits of holiness and beauty. As brilliant as he is, the pope emeritus realizes that to really reach people's hearts, arguments won't suffice, no matter how sound they are. To reach hearts, we need a special witness — holiness and beauty. Pope Francis just spoke to a group of children singing Gregorian chant, and he affirmed what they were doing. He said the music for the liturgy must be holy music. He said beauty is universal, something every-



**'HOLINESS AND BEAUTY.'** San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone presides at *The Mass of the Americas*, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe, at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco last December. Courtesy of the San Francisco Archdiocese

one can understand and celebrate.

You commissioned a Mass of the Americas, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe, that premiered at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco last December and will be performed in Washington, D.C. Nov. 16. What inspired you to take this on?

Every year in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, we have a big celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of both Mexico and all the Americas, on the Saturday before her feast day, with a procession and a Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral. Last year, I realized that the Saturday, Dec. 8, was also the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, patron saint of the United States. Our Lady is the mother of all God's children, and I thought that in the midst of so

much division and contention in our society, she can unite us. I asked Frank La Rocca [the Benedict XVI Institute's composer in residence] to compose music for a Mass for Our Lady that incorporated sacred music and the melodies of songs Mexican people sing to celebrate Our Lady, so they would connect with it.

I told him that my idea for this composition was inspired by the way the Franciscans had built their mission churches [in California]. They were traditional Catholic churches, but local materials were employed, like adobe. That artistic style reflects the creation of sacred art in the Catholic Tradition.

The Mass includes music in Latin, English and Spanish. There is a Hail Mary in Nahuatl, the same Aztec language that Our Lady used to speak to St. Juan Diego.

Since then, *The Mass of the Americas* has been performed for the closing Mass at a national congress on church music in Tijuana, Mexico, and I was the celebrant.

The Mass of the Americas celebrates the holiness of the Virgin Mary and her power as a unifier and evangelizer. Why has devotion to Mary inspired great art since the early Church?

Mary is a mother figure and the mother of God's Son. She is "the highest honor of our race," as the Book of Judith states. She is the perfection of the human person kept free of sin. That motherly love touches the heart of anyone who loves her Son. So many central mysteries of our faith and salvation came through her.

What are the plans for The Mass of the Americas in Washington, D.C.?

In November, when it is performed at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, it will be a solemn pontifical high Mass. Frank was able to adapt the music for the extraordinary form. After the Mass, we are having a conference, and Frank, the conductor Richard Sparks and I will talk about the making of The Mass of the Americas. Jacqueline Leary-Warsaw, dean of The Catholic University of America's Rome School of Music, Drama and Art, will moderate. [Leary-Warsaw is the wife of Michael Warsaw, the chairman of the board and CEO of EWTN, the

Register's parent company.]

There will also be master workshops on poetry, singing and painting.

The broader vision here is resurrecting what the Church has done historically to commission Masses for special occasions. I have already asked Frank to compose a requiem for the homeless, a memorial Mass for people who died homeless. He has studied homelessness and is getting to know people who are homeless. The music will reflect the reality of their life on the streets.

You live in 21st-century San Francisco, not 15th-century Rome. That means you need to think outside the box to be a patron of the arts and to engage the public, like a recent poetry reading you sponsored that took place on the 60th floor of the Salesforce Tower, the tallest building in San Francisco.

I try to find people who appreciate the power of beauty to overcome our divisions.

The poetry reading came about because Marc Benioff [the founder of Salesforce, a leading customerrelations software company] has been supportive of the archdiocese and our project to make beauty a force that unites us. He offered us space at the top of the Salesforce Tower for the poetry reading and discussion by Dominican Father Paul Murray, an award-winning poet and a professor at the Angelicum in Rome. It was a chance to discuss the importance of the arts, that we have a soul as well as a body, and that we need beauty to cultivate our souls. The event drew people interested in art and poetry, and not only church-going Catholics.

We will also launch a new book of poetry commemorating *The Mass of the Americas* by James Matthew Wilson, called *The River of the Immaculate Conception*.

What led you to launch the Benedict XVI Institute?

It started with the desire to provide parishes with resources for more reverent liturgies. God created us to worship him, and as Pope Francis has told young people, we should give God our best.

My vision is for the typical parish Mass to be so beautiful and moving that people can't wait to go back to church. The institute has held Gregorian chant camps around the archdiocese. So far, 10 to 15 parishes and schools have participated.

The first place we brought Gregorian chant was San Quentin prison, which has a dedicated Catholic chapel. We scheduled a concert, and 30 men signed up.

What are your long-term hopes for these new initiatives?

We hope to re-energize a Catholic culture of the arts that will have a ripple effect, encouraging a desire for beauty in worship, where it has been absent for a long time.

#### **MORE INFO**

Visit BenedictInstitute.org/ mass-of-the-americas/ to register for the conference and for more information about the Mass.

### Deacons

CONTINUING PAGE ONE STORY

standing of the diaconate, he pledged to "reconvene the [2016] commission" he had established to review the historic record on women deaconesses, perhaps "with new members" added to the commission.

While some media reports interpreted the Holy Father's willingness to allow further exploration of the subject of women deacons as a hint that they might be approved, past studies have not yielded evidence of ordained women deacons in the early Church. And canon lawyers and theologians contacted by the Register underscored this lack of historical evidence that the Church had ever ordained women deacons or deaconesses to the sacrament of holy orders.

#### Historical Role of Deaconess

"The Church's study of a female diaconate is nothing new and has been investigated since the 17th century," Bishop Thomas Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield, Illinois, a canon lawyer, told the Register, as he checked off formal studies of this issue over the past two decades.

"In 2002, the International Theological Commission, an advisory body to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued a document which gave a thorough historical context of the role of the deaconess in the ancient Church and overwhelmingly concluded that female deacons in the early

Church didn't have a liturgical or sacramental function."

"While male deacons were ordained to the sacramental ministry of the altar, the deaconess was entrusted with the ministry of charity among the women of the congregation as well as to female religious communities," he said. "It seems as if the female diaconate was distinct and of its own category, not considered part of the sacrament of holy orders."

Capuchin Father Thomas Weinandy, a member of the Vatican's International Theological Commission, echoed this assessment of the historical record. The new commission is "not going to be able to prove that deaconesses were ordained in the early Church. And if it is not possible to prove this, we have to stick with the long-standing tradition that women cannot be sacramentally ordained to the diaconate," Father Weinandy told the Register. "Only the apostles were ordained, and from that apostolic time to the present only men have been sacramentally ordained."

That teaching, he noted, was affirmed by Pope St. John Paul II in his 1994 apostolic letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, which stated that priestly ordination was "reserved for men alone."

"Pope John Paul declared that women cannot be ordained priests, and that would also mean that they cannot be ordained to the diaconate, because the sacrament of holy orders is of a threefold nature," said Father Weinandy, referring to the three degrees of the sacrament — bishop, priest and deacon.

Further, "if a Catholic bishop would attempt to ordain sacramentally a woman to the diaconate, it would not be a valid sacrament because the sacramental signs would not effect what they symbolize," he added. "The reason that the signs would not effect what they symbolize is that the proper sacramental matter would not be present, that is, a male."

#### Furthering Diaconate Debate

E. Christian Brugger, a professor of moral theology at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, Florida, agreed that the weight of Tradition and Church history argued against the introduction of women deacons.

"In the ordained priesthood, the configuring that takes place is particular to men — Christ's embodied maleness is relevant to who can and cannot receive priestly orders," said Brugger. Still, he expressed concern about Pope Francis' pledge to review the matter again.

"[C]ommending the ... issue for further study allows it to stay alive until a more opportune moment arises" Brugger suggested

arises," Brugger suggested.

Asked to comment on the significance of the Pope's decision, Phyllis Zagano, a member of Pontifical Commission for the Study of the Diaconate of Women, declined to be interviewed. Zagano is a supporter of the claim that the early Church did ordain women deacons.

"Many of the working groups of the Catholic Church's just-ended Synod for the Pan-Amazon in Rome requested the restoration of women to the ordained diaconate, a longabandoned tradition that could well address the Amazonian church's needs," read a statement from Zagano provided to the Register. "I look forward to continuing my work."

Meanwhile, the public endorsement of women deacons by Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego, one of three U.S. delegates to the Pan-Amazonian Synod, lent some credence to Brugger's sense of alarm. "The ... majority of bishops [at the Amazon synod] were in favor of admitting women to the permanent diaconate," Bishop McElroy told Catholic News Service. "My hope would be that that they find a way, a pathway, to make that a reality. And I think there is a good possibility that's the direction it's going to head into," he added, citing the Pope's comments immediately after the final vote as an indication that "there's a good chance some positive action" will take place.

Another high-profile synodal endorsement of ordained women deacons came from Bishop Evaristo Pascoal Spengler of Marajó, Brazil, who asserted at an Oct. 25 press conference that Pope Benedict's XVI's 2009 revisions of canon law had paved the way for this move.

Benedict's 2009 motu proprio, Omnium in Mentem, revised Canons 1008 and 1009 of the Code of Canon Law, updating Church norms to reflect the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the nature of the diaconate.

But the day after Bishop Spengler's comments, Archbishop Georg Gänswein, the prefect of the Pontifical Household and the pope emeritus' longtime personal secretary, dismissed the Brazilian bishop's claim as "totally absurd and wrong," in an interview with the Register.

Bishop Paprocki, who like Archbishop Gänswein is a canon lawyer, said he agreed with the archbishop's judgment. "Pope Benedict's revisions were done to help better understand the differences of ministry for deacons and priests," said Bishop Paprocki, "and nothing was said about women deacons."

#### Concern Over Potential Schism

Canonists contacted by the Register insisted that the question of ordaining women deacons "was not so much a matter of Church law as ecclesiology," rooted in the nature and structure of the Church. And, they said, on these ecclesiological grounds it appears clear that ordaining women deacons is precluded.

"My opinion is there is no wiggle room on this," Dominican Father Pius Pietrzyk, a professor of canon law at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, California, told the Register.

And what could happen if this practice is changed, nonetheless?

"It will create a schism, but I don't think it will be changed," he said. "If you look at the final document, it did not request a change. It just said the subject was raised in the conversations before the synod," he continued. "There is no recommendation for ordaining women to the diaconate."

Rather, the synod's final document requested the opportunity to share "experiences and reflections

with the [Study] Commission [on the Diaconate of Women] and await its results." That said, Dominican Father Joseph Fox, vicar for canonical services at the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, acknowledged that the decision to reconstitute the Vatican commission on women deacons had raised fears that a change could come. When this question has already been taken up repeatedly, said Father Fox, "there is a sense that we have not gotten the results we want, so we will study it again."

However, Bishop Shawn McKnight of Jefferson City, Missouri, who has studied the issue of permanent deacons, had a different take on the synod's proposal, suggesting it might be aiming instead toward a non-sacramental ministry for women in the Amazon basin.

The synod delegates were responding to the vital role played by "women serving in outlying communities," including their service as parish administrators, he said. "The Holy Father has also asked about the possibility of a non-sacramental role for the diaconate, and I wonder if that is what is being considered," said Bishop McKnight.

"There may be other new forms or offices open to women in the Church that do not necessarily entail the sacrament of holy orders.

"If that is in accord with the mind of Christ and the Holy Spirit, we are obliged to do it," he concluded — but only after "answers are given to doctrinal questions that have yet to be resolved."

CNA and Rome correspondent Edward Pentin contributed to this report.

# Synod

CONTINUING PAGE ONE STORY

and the creation of a rite of the Mass adapted to the culture of the Amazon, received the least votes. In fact, a rite dedicated to the Amazon was pushed by some synod fathers as a means to contain the ordination of married men to the region, but it was not clear how such a rite would work, given the region's wide variety of cultures and languages.

All three issues were the most-contested elements of the synodal recommendations, with the first two criticized by some synod fathers for monopolizing the discussions. Members of the Church in Germany, which funded much of the preparations for the synod, were seen as asserting the married priests and women deacons' agendas in particular.

"[Viri probati] was pushed strongly in the aula [synod hall]," Cardinal Peter Turkson, who attended the synod as prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, told the Register. "As you know, Brazil has a lot of German missionaries, and that's where I think this is coming from." But he played down the significance of the final document, saying

it simply provided the "ingredients" for the Pope's apostolic exhortation.

Referring to the Pope's 2015 environmental encyclical *Laudato Si* (Care for Our Common Home), which played a key role in this synod, Cardinal Turkson said: "I saw how they made transformations [in that encyclical], so I will wait for [the apostolic exhortation]." The Pope said at the conclusion of the synod he would ask Cardinal Turkson to create a new section on the Amazon within his dicastery.

Speaking to reporters after the publication of the final report Oct. 26, Cardinal Michael Czerny, one of the synod's two special secretaries, said concerns about a female diaconate, including that it is a breach of the Church's dogmatic teaching, would be taken up by the Vatican commission.

Referring to the "new paths" theme of the synod, he said change of hearts and behavior were vital. The Pope denounced in his closing Mass homily exploitation, a "predatory model of development" and an "alleged superiority" that can make one deaf to the "voices of the poor"

one deaf to the "voices of the poor."

But the three-week meeting was also riven throughout with controversy, beginning beforehand with its working document, which was heavily criticized as containing her-

esy and doctrinal errors.

Another concern was the choice of participants: As a special assembly, none were elected by bishops' conferences, and, instead, they were all deliberately chosen by the synod's organizers, leading critics to say the deck had been stacked to ensure a predetermined result.

Among the (nonvoting) participants were the economist and population-control advocate Jeffrey Sachs, two U.N. officials and former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Kimoon.

#### Vatican Garden Ritual

Further controversy ensued when indigenous groups, taking part in a prayer ceremony in the Vatican Gardens, prostrated themselves in front of a statuette of a pregnant female figure. The object would later reappear in several places, including St. Peter's Basilica, in front of the Pope in the synod hall and in a church near the Vatican, which was used as an exhibit space for indigenous groups.

The Vatican communications personnel seemed reluctant to clarify exactly what the object meant, beyond it being a symbol of fertility and life — something that failed to placate critics who saw it as a worshipped pagan idol and therefore a

breach of the First Commandment.

Tensions reached a crescendo when four of the statuettes were filmed being seized from the church near the Vatican and hurled into the Tiber. After Italian police recovered three of the objects, the Pope asked for "forgiveness from those offended" by the seizure.

Although Francis referred to them as *pachamama*, widely understood and venerated by indigenous in the Andes as a goddess of the earth or Earth Mother, he said the objects were displayed in the church "without idolatrous intentions." For some, the episode highlighted a false understanding of inculturation that prevailed at the synod, one that overvalued celebration of indigenous culture at the expense of a Christ-centered evangelization (*see related commentary on page 7*).

Further controversies also emerged, including the discovery that three indigenous lobby groups taking part in the synod, two of which were closely connected to the Brazilian bishops' conference, had received millions of dollars from the pro-abortion Ford Foundation

Neither the groups, which were part of the Pan Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) that had prepared and run the synod, nor the Vatican, nor the Ford Foundation clarified why the groups had received the funding, what the funds were spent on, or whether any of the funds went toward the synod.

#### Liberation Theology Links The disclosure underlined of

The disclosure underlined concerns that the synod had become politicized, particularly by leftist parties. Accusations of political interference increased when it was  $revealed\,that\,REPAM\,had\,invited\,six$ leftist Brazilian politicians, including one communist, to a "parallel" meeting of the synod to present a human-rights report. Concerns were also heightened when some synod fathers renewed the 1965 "Pact of the Catacombs," which is widely viewed as the birthplace of liberation theology, parts of which Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger rejected in 1984 as Marx-

ist, idealist and not based on reality.
For Julio Loredo of the Brazil-based Plinio Correa de Oliveira Institute, the synod marked "the rebirth of liberation theology of a Marxist and subversive character" through the guise of indigenous and

ecological theology.

Other critics said the synod was too uncritical of indigenous culture, particularly the continued practice of infanticide in some indigenous

cultures, which, were it not for media coverage, may never have been mentioned.

Writing in Asia News shortly before the synod's conclusion, Uruguayan Salesian Father Martin Lasarte, who was personally picked by the Pope to take part in the synod, said he would have liked to see more emphasis on evangelization in relation to increasing vocations, felt the Church was "in danger of becoming an NGO" by being "ruled by the pragmatic, secular," and lamented a "certain parliamentary sagacity but not a lot of synodal spirit for discernment."

But he also welcomed the meeting for giving "much visibility" to the region's problems, felt the "Christ-centric dimension in the Church and evangelization were emphasized," and "really liked" the Pope's "unplanned speeches" that included advocating "Yes" to inculturation, "No" to aboriginalism and "Yes" to a more pastoral priestly formation.

In his closing address, Pope Francis said the next synod could be on the theme of synodality (which has been understood during his pontificate to mean a more collegial, decentralized and "listening" Church).

"I have not yet decided," he said.
"I'm reflecting and thinking."

# Preparing for the Eternal

Hospice Offers Comfort, Care Bolstered by Prayer

BY PATTI ARMSTRONG

ccompanying someone to death through hospice happens in small steps," according to Debbie Hoermann of Toms River, New Jersey, who accompanied her 99-year-old aunt, Edith Hipp. "It is like a candle slowly burning out," she said of those final days. "You have the chance to say everything you could possibly say, and it makes death easier." Hoermann was very close to her aunt, as Hipp's three children live out of state.

Hoermann went through hospice with her mother, who died in 2010 at the age of 95. Her father died 11 years earlier, at age 89, just a week after he caught pneumonia. There was no hospice since they hoped he would get better. Hoermann said the lack of preparation for his death made it harder to accept.

Hipp stopped taking her heart and thyroid medications to let death unfold naturally. "The nurse told us she's in transition," Hoermann said as the time of death drew near. "Her skin is whitish, and her legs are swollen due to lack of circulation. She's unable to speak now and not conscious very often."

In one of their last conversations, Hoermann told her aunt, "You're beautiful." Hipp smiled, squeezed her hand and replied, "You're beautiful."

"She has been ready for a while," Hoermann told the Register shortly before her aunt's death. "She would often smile and point her finger up and say, 'I'm ready."

Hospice care is a sacred juncture from the ending of earthly life to the beginning of the eternal. It is a philosophy of care for patients when death is expected within six months. The goal is comfort - not treatment - during farewells and preparation to meet God. It is not a place, but rather an insurance benefit, where a nurse comes for two or three hours a day to monitor how the patient is doing as they and the family prepare for death.

Hospice is especially a time for spiritual accompaniment, according to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and a time for guarding moral principles for the treatment of the dying based on love, compassion and a respect for life. In their document "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services," the bishops stated that care should be "rooted in a commitment to promote and defend human dignity; this is the foundation of its concern to respect the sacredness of every human life from the moment of conception until death." Thus, euthanasia is never acceptable.

They noted that, whenever possible, dying patients themselves should be consulted, and loved ones should arrange for pastoral care, especially in administering last rites, which include viaticum (Communion for the dying), a commendation for the dying and prayers for the dead. Last rites may also often include the sacrament of extreme unction (the anointing of the sick).

Janice Willet, a pastoral care hospital chaplain in Howell, New Jersey, and a No. 1 best-selling author on Amazon, wrote Dying Without Crying to help patients and their loved ones experience the



#### **Ensuring Proper Care**

According to gerontologist Dr. Lisa Honkanen, it is morally imperative to remember that food and water, even when administered by medically assisted means, are considered ordinary care due to all patients.

Unless a patient is imminently dying (in which case food and water will not make a difference), nutrition and hydration should be provided except if there is a medical contraindication against it and providing such actions would pose a great burden to the patient (inability to absorb/assimilate it, causing pain, etc.). It is not wrong to request a feeding tube to assist with providing food and water even though most hospice providers will discourage that even when it is morally appropriate. Listen to your instincts, ask questions, and seek good advice. The National Catholic Bioethics Center is available to assist in these difficult situations, at NCBCenter.org or (215) 877-2660. Above all, pray, and trust in God!

— Patti Armstrong

end of life with joyful anticipation. "It's a privilege and an honor to be in someone's sacred space when they are dying," she explained.

She has been comfortable with dying since she was 18 and her 97-year-old grandmother had come to the end. Her grandmother sat straight up and said there were 12 people around her. "She had a beautiful look in her eyes, and her skin was glowing and translucent and beautiful," Willet recalled. "She let out a sigh and laid back and died."

Once, when a man was dying alone at the hospital, Willet sat at his bedside and held his hand. "You're okay," she told him. "There's love around you. You can go. The angels and saints are there." He then turned his hand the other way and gave Willet a handshake shortly before he passed away.

To make the best of the time in hospice, Willet advises people to respect the wishes of the dying. She said, "If they say, 'I only want visitors from 2-4,' respect that and don't take it personally. It's about helping them make the journey into God's arms as peaceful and loving as possible."

Most importantly, Willet said not to be afraid to talk with a patient about death. She acknowledged it can be hard, especially when it is a child,

but that the dying are often very candid about their experiences. Willet witnessed such candor firsthand with a 5-year-old daughter of a friend. "I find children are very accepting and so full of grace," she said. "Their lack of fear helps give courage to the rest of the family."

While hospice has many blessings, Dr. Lisa Honkanen, a geriatrician in East Northport, New York, with a medical practice dedicated to the homebound elderly, warns against ignoring easily correctable situations. "For instance," she said, "a urinary tract infection is often easily remedied with antibiotics, but untreated it can cause serious distress." Honkanen also cautions against overmedication. "Patients not in severe pain usually do not need controlled substances, which are often overprescribed and with too high of a dose," she explained. "Of course, you don't want to deprive a loved one of needed pain management, but sometimes the recommended regimen is too aggressive." As the disease advances, Honkanen said they may need higher doses, but in older, frailer patients, starting with small doses is important to avoid unnecessary sedation and side effects, including premature death. "If you are concerned about overdosing, usually sedation or excessive sleeping is the first obvious sign," she said. Unless there is a serious need to continue those doses, she said that a decrease is likely warranted.

Patients should not be deprived of consciousness out of convenience, she said. "This medical option should only be used in rare instances," Honkanen said. "In the case where it is morally appropriate and there are no other alternatives to relieve the patient's symptoms, make sure the patient has received the sacraments and spiritual 'loose ends' have been addressed."

Father Stefan Starzynski has been a full-time chaplain for more than four years at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Virginia, a 1,000-bed facility. For someone dying, he offers last rites and especially the anointing of the sick as part of these rites for the dying. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the anointing of the sick: "This last anointing fortifies the end of our earthly life like a solid rampart for the final struggles before enter-

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 14** 



PRAYERFUL GLOW. The faithful light many candles at the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Courtesy of the Marians of the Immaculate Con-

# Lights of Faith

Candles Keep Vigil, Become Votive Offerings

BY JOSEPH PRONECHEN

ot far from Puget Sound, at St. Mark Church in Shoreline, Washington, Mike Scarpelli regularly lights a five- or seven-day votive candle by the Sacred Heart statue and another votive candle before the statues of St. Joseph and the Blessed Mother on both sides of the sanctuary.

He remembers as a child watching his grandmother and mother "light votive candles and say prayers, always at the statue of Mary. I learned it was a special way to pray, in that case to Immaculate Mary, and also to ask for her intervention to God to hear and answer our prayers."

In Philadelphia, Vincentian Father Michael Carroll also uses candlelight to recall his loved ones in prayer. "Every time I go into a new church, I light a candle for my parents," he said. "It's my custom and a way of remembering them and acknowledging them."

The votive candle also recalls memorable pontifical moments of prayer, said Father Carroll, noting that Pope Emeritus Benedict, while visiting Ground Zero in New York City, prayed for the lost souls of the horrific Sept. 11 attack there and lit a large candle. Likewise, more recently, after the 9/11 memorial was completed, Pope Francis visited Ground Zero while a candle was lit at St. Patrick's Cathedral in memory of the 9/11 victims and their families.

Neither Scarpelli, Father Carroll nor the Holy Fathers are alone in their fondness for votive candles.

Father Carroll, current director of the Miraculous Medal Shrine in Philadelphia, said that from the 1940s to the 1960s, people lit approximately 2,500 candles every Monday during several Miraculous Medal novena services held throughout that day. After every service, the candles had to be moved to the downstairs Marian shrine chapel. Even with fewer novena services scheduled today, still approximately 400 candles are lit every Monday at the shrine.

Lighting votive candles and vigil lights is a strong tradition in the Church that began at least 1,800 years ago, when lights were burned in the catacombs at the tombs of martyrs as a sign of unity with them. The lights kept "vigil"; hence, they were named "vigil lights."

Father Carroll points out that candles have long been recognized with prayer. Whenever the faithful light a candle and say a prayer before or after lighting it, he said, they are "turning that lit candle into a continuation of our prayer ... as long as that candle is lit." It, too, keeps vigil.

"The word 'vigil' comes from the Latin vigilia and means 'to keep watch.' How? With light," explains Father Chris Alar of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. "The vigil candle we light for a period of time symbolizes how we as persons wish to remain present to the Lord in prayer even though we might leave the church and go to our own homes."

Scarpelli is comforted as he reflects on this. "The light staying there as the candle is burning will continue to maintain your prayer to

Because the lit candle maintains **CONTINUES ON PAGE 14** 

# Daniel Mitsui, Modern Artist With a Medieval Gothic Heart

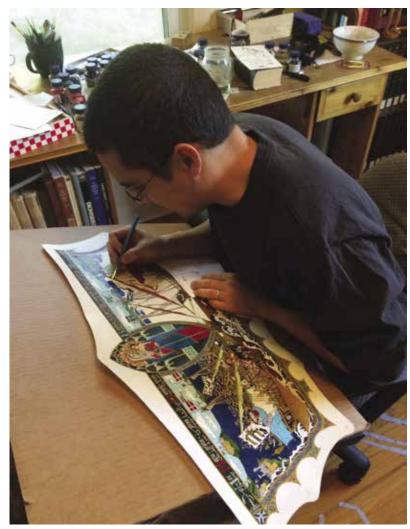
Pen-and-Ink **Drawings Depict** Jesus, Saints

BY JAY COPP

captivating new drawing of Our Lady of Seattle, created for St. Luke Church in Washington, is rich in details and symbols. To wit: On the border of the illustration, pairs of animals approach Noah's Ark. Chief Seattle, the local Native American leader who converted to Catholicism in 1848, took Noah as his baptismal name.

"It's a very creative piece," says Father Brad Hagelin, pastor of the Seattle-area church. "It's obvious that it comes from a place of devotion. This is the artist's calling. It was like commissioning an icon from a monk who has a great devotion."

The artist, **Daniel Mitsui**, who is married with four young children, is no monk, and he prefers not to talk at length about his Catholic faith because he does not want to leverage his devotion as a way to attract clients. But his idiosyncratic yet traditional Gothic art, inspired by illustrated manuscripts, panel paintings and tapestries from more than 800 years ago, has drawn a devoted following. Clients praise



DRAWN BY HAND. Indiana artist Daniel Mitsui carefully crafts each work of art, including Our Lady of Seattle, shown above right. Courtesy of Daniel Mitsui



his work as "richly layered and very complex" and "beautiful, reverent, thought-provoking and mystical."

Working from his studio at his home in Hobart, a small city in northwestern Indiana, Mitsui specializes in pen-and-ink drawings. His art is scooped up by churches, devout Catholics for their shrines at home, and seminarians announcing their ordinations. Recent clients include a Knight of Malta from England who commissioned a Lady of Victory drawing and the Cathedral-Basilica of the Assumption in Covington, Kentucky, which had Mitsui design the

intricate pattern for new carpets.

As a measure of his stature as an artist, the Vatican commissioned him to illustrate a new edition of the Roman Pontifical. In 2011, he completed his work for the liturgical book that contains the rites performed by bishops.

He is a serious artist with a touch of whimsy: He's authored a series of coloring books. Published by Ave Maria Press, the series includes books on the saints, the Rosary and labyrinths.

No matter the medium, Mitsui takes great pains to create art embedded in Church Tradition.

"Art without tradition is pretty, but without deeper meaning," he said in a lecture at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. "Tradition — art — has a content that comes down to us from the beginning of the Church. It doesn't belong to us. It's not about self-expression, but the history and tradition."

Mitsui, 37, is an unlikely torchbearer for traditional Catholic art. He was not baptized until he was a senior at Dartmouth College. His mother had been raised Catholic, and he went to Mass only on Easter and Christmas. His conversion was "not a dramatic moment. It came by the grace of God," he says.

Growing up in a Chicago sub-

urb, he admired the Gothic architecture at the University of Chicago. But his attachment to Gothic art was solidified by a fortuitous or providential — discovery.

Shortly after college, while working at a liturgical arts supplier, he picked up a book about medieval Gothic art by Émile Mâle, a French art historian. He was hooked. His growing faith fed his appetite for traditional Catholic art, and his immersion in Catholic art fortified his faith.

Mitsui jokingly calls himself a "spirit of Nicea II Catholic." His understanding of the role of religious art has its roots 1,200 years ago with that Church council, which reversed an earlier council's suppression of sacred images and restored the use of icons for devotion. Mitsui often quotes from the teachings of the Second Council of Nicea: "The tradition does not belong to the painter; the art alone is his. True arrangement and disposition belong to the Holy Fathers."

These ancient prescriptions regarding art are especially relevant today when art is trivialized, he says. Even sacred images find their way onto coffee mugs and T-shirts. People look at it but don't really see it. "Unlimited quantities of

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 14** 

# Artist

**CONTINUING PAGE 13 STORY** 

art can be reproduced. When you see it on Facebook, you hit the 'like' button," he says. "But you don't engage with it. The idea is that the image is disposable. There is such gluttony of images that the meaning of the art is an afterthought."

The religious artist needs to be knowledgeable and intentional. "Art should not just be familiar and comforting. It needs to be real and beautiful and interesting. It needs to engage people intellectually and spiritually," he says.

Like most of his work, intended not for churches but for private devotion, the Our Lady of Seattle drawing is quite small — 12 inches by 17 inches. But the level of detail of the drawing, done on deerskin parchment, is astonishing. Mary is dressed similar to a treasured statue of Our Lady of Seattle at St. James Cathedral in nearby Seattle. The "Undoer of Knots," the one we can turn to in times of need, carries the Christ Child in a sling. She stands astride a crescent moon, with 12 stars above her head. The shape of the piece suggests a copper shield, a reference to a Native American artifact.

Another enthused patron of Mitsui is Father James Smith of St. Francis de Sales Church in Mableton, Georgia. He treasures Mitsui's

depictions of the Stations of the Cross and the Mysteries of the Rosary. The art is part of the priest's devotional life. "Art is not just a pretty picture. It's very helpful to pray. It's helpful to knowing and loving God," says Father Smith of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. "He [Mitsui] imbues his work with so much research and knowledge. So much symbolism is incorporated into his art."

Over the next decade, Mitsui is working on incorporating all the major events of the Old and New Testaments into his work. Begun at Easter 2017 and slated to be finished by Easter 2031, he's drawing 250 biblical scenes. Like a medieval encyclopediast, he envisions his highly ambitious Summula Pictoria: A Little Summary of the Old and New Testament to include the foundational events, stories and beliefs rooted in the Bible.

"It will be the most important and profound events from the Book of Genesis to the death of the apostles," he says.

He's using metal-tipped dip pens and paintbrushes on calfskin vellum, and the prodigious output possibly could become a book. At least, functioning as a visual online catechism, the full-color art will be available for all to see and savor.

Besides 40 drawings of the life of Christ, the project also will include 124 smaller drawings related to the Old Testament, 56 illustrations depicting the lives of the Mary, John

the Baptist and the apostles, and 13 portraits of other holy people.

"It's a legacy I want to leave," Mitsui says. "I don't want to regret never having done them."

Like his other art, the Summula Pictoria will emanate from the past but strive for relevance for today's

"I don't want to make 13th-century art," he says. "It's not as if art from that time has an ending principle. I want to embrace the same ideas but make a new connection to them now."

> Jay Copp writes from La Grange Park, Illinois.

INFORMATION

DanielMitsui.com

# Light

**CONTINUING PAGE 13 STORY** 

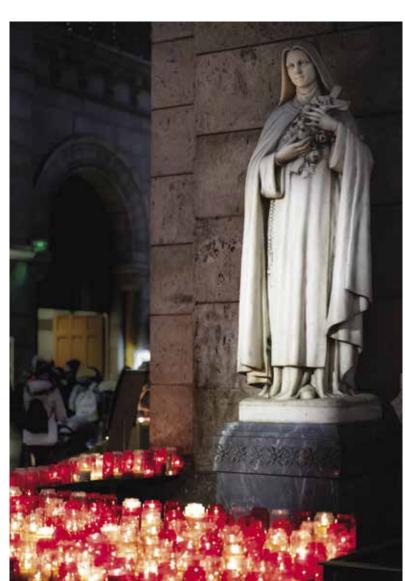
that prayer, it is also called a votive candle. The terms "vigil lights" and "votive candles or lights" are basically interchangeable. The word "votive" comes from the Latin votum meaning a "promise or a prayer," indicating that "a candle which we call a votive candle really represents our prayer before God," Father Alar said. "When we light a candle, we're basically giving a prayer intention. It's a physical sign of a spiritual prayer."

"My prayer is in my heart," he explained. "How do I show this internal prayer? The votive candle is the way we can express in a physical, tangible way our inward prayer. Our prayer is symbolized by the candle."

We don't light candles because God is going to be able to see and hear our prayer better, but because we need something visual to connect our body and our soul, he said.

By lighting the candle our prayer is physically represented, and we join our prayers to the light of Christ, explained Father Alar.

That's also why these candles are official sacramentals, which, like the sacraments, are an external sign of an internal grace and involve the body and the spirit; although, unlike the seven sacra-



LIGHT OF LIGHT. Lit candles radiate light before a statue of St. Thérèse at Sacre Coeur Basilica in Paris. Stephanie LeBlanc/Unsplash

ments, the Church's sacramentals, which also include holy water and sacred images such as the crucifix, do not directly confer grace upon the faithful but prepare them to receive the graces of the sacraments (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1669-71).

The faithful illuminate vigil lights and votive candles for any number of reasons. "Everyone has an intention when they light the candle," noted Father Carroll. They may tell a person, "I will light a candle for you. That's an expression of 'I will say a prayer for you."

Father Alar pointed out the common practice of lighting votive candles before a saint's statue to express devotion to that saint.

Yet most candles are placed before images of Jesus and Mary.

"When I light a candle before the Sacred Heart or in front of the Blessed Mother," Father Alar said, "it shows my devotion to them, asking for their help."

Along with showing devotion to Our Lord, the Blessed Mother and the saints, the faithful will also light a vigil candle asking for God or his saints' intercession or expressing thanksgiving for a favor granted.

St. Mark Church has "many places where people can take a quiet moment and can be in peace and prayer," said Veronica Olson, pastoral assistant for liturgy and

parish life. The faithful regularly light votive candles placed by every image and work of art in the church.

"Everyone obviously prays in thanksgiving," Olson explained. "We often see people kneeling and praying. We also see people having hardship and going through trials, some weeping, some for joy raising hands — any kind of emotion. They take special moments to be in the church, praying outside of normal Mass times."

Scarpelli connects lighting the candles also to different events in life, "like illness in family, or death, or happier occasions, and you want to emphasize your prayers to God more deeply."

As Father Carroll explained, "You're not in the church alone; you're there with the prayers of others. We know we are never alone in our prayer, and the candles around us remind us of it."

"The beauty of the votive candle is that the light signifies our prayer offered, united in faith going to the light of God," Father Alar concluded.

"With the light of faith, we basically ask Our Lord or a saint in prayer to help us. We ask the light be given to the Light, which is

> Joseph Pronechen is a Register staff writer. Read more at NCRegister.com.

# Hospice

**CONTINUING PAGE 13 STORY** 

ing the Father's house" (1523). He also offers the apostolic pardon, which is an indulgence offered to the dying for the remission of punishment due to sin. "Then I do the Litany of Saints and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy," Father Starzynski said.

Father Starzynski said that the prayers and sacraments bring peace and help people struggling with their faith at the end. He encourages loved ones to pray the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet with the patient.

He also provides some pastoral advice, warning loved ones against oversedating a patient and advising them to let the patient know that he or she is not a burden. "So often, they feel that they are," he said. Once a patient is prepared, Father Starzynski said that the family should let them go to God. "I see hospice as a human response to this: helping to prepare the patient and family for death," he said. "It is one of the most beautiful parts of this ministry, escorting a soul into heaven with prayer."

Deb (Liffrig) Kaul, a nurse for 15 years with Hospice of the Red River Valley in Fargo, North Dakota, said that it was a privilege to accompany the dying: "The superficial focus goes away then, and people care about what is most important: their spiritual walk, relationships and healing and forgiveness. It was gratifying to see those things happen."

In that way, she said that although a terminal diagnosis is often hard, she witnessed the opportunity it is for people to decide what they want to do with their remaining time on earth.

One memorable patient in his 70s looked forward to his death because, years earlier, he had a near-death experience where he saw his body below and was drawn to a beautiful light. "He was disappointed when he was pulled back," Kaul said.

"He told me, 'I can't wait to die. I got a taste of what it was like."

As Kaul added, "Not everyone feels ready to leave loved ones, but their time to say good-bye is sacred. I always felt like I was walking on hallowed ground."

Patti Armstrong writes from North Dakota.



# ARTS & Entertainment

It's not inconceivable, moreover,

that canonizing Faustina and advancing her vision could ulti-

mately be John Paul II's most endur-

ing contribution to the life of the

Divine Mercy image was first dis-

played in Vilnius, Lithuania, during

the Easter season in April 1934 to

the institution of the Sunday after

Easter as Divine Mercy Sunday at

Faustina's canonization by John

Paul II on that very day in April

2000, the explosive spread of the

Divine Mercy devotion has been

without precedent in Church his-

tory. A new documentary about

Faustina and the Divine Mercy

devotion, Love and Mercy: Faustina,

which debuted in American the-

aters in a Fathom Events screening

from the first film to explore the life

ish-language drama, Faustyna

(1995), also known as Faustina: The

Apostle of Divine Mercy (Ignatius

Press DVD title). Directed by Jerzy

Łukaszewicz and starring Dorota

Segda, the 75-minute film offers an

impressionistic portrait of Fausti-

na's life and spirituality told in

flashback through the eyes of an

elderly nun looking back on her

relationship with Faustina from her

tography floods the film with light

— golden-hour rays falling on faces;

sunbeams in the doors and win-

dows of the convent basement or in

sunshowers on the street — as if to

fill the world with the rays emanat-

film is the perplexity with which

Faustina's visions and ideas are

regarded by confessors and fellow

religious. With one notable excep-

tion, most aren't suspicious or

resentful of Faustina; they're simply

ordinary human beings who don't

Blessed Michael Sopocko (Maciej

Małysa), a priest and assistant pro-

fessor of theology who becomes her

spiritual director and, later, an

advocate for her vision. Although

initially no more comfortable with

her strange "confessions" than her

last confessor, Father Sopocko does

his best to support her, ultimately

connecting her with the artist Euge-

In Vilnius Faustina meets

know what to make of her.

Perhaps the best thing about the

ing from the Lord's heart.

Zdzislaw Najda's rich cinema-

younger days.

Among the best is a lovely Pol-

on Oct. 28, is returning

for an encore screening

on Dec. 2, at 7pm. Love

and Mercy: Faustina is far

of this saint and her vision.

From the time the original

Church.

### TV Picks

Nov. 10-23

All Times Eastern

By Daniel J. Engler

SUNDAY, Nov. 10, 4am

**Angels in the Outfield** 

**TURNER CLASSIC MOVIES** This 1951 dramedy features little orphan Bridget (Donna Corcoran), whose innocence and prayers help her pacify her beloved Pittsburgh Pirates' angry manager (Paul Douglas) — and enlist angels to help the team win games. Janet Leigh, Spring Byington and Ellen Corby also star.

#### MONDAY, Nov. 11, 4pm

#### **FRONTLINE FATHERS**

EWTN On Veterans Day, this documentary profiles two Catholic chaplains in the U.S. Army in South Korea as they minister to troops at and near the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) with communist North

**MONDAY-WEDNESDAY, Nov.** 

**USCCB Fall General Assembly** 

EWTN In this biennial meeting, our U.S. bishops will elect their new leaders and chart their agenda for the coming year.

#### WEDNESDAY, Nov. 13, 10pm

Mother Cabrini and the Heart of

**EWTN** This EWTN docudrama bios Italy-born St. Francis Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917), who founded the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1880. She and her sisters came to the United States in 1889 and over the years established 67 institutions to minister to immigrants and the poor. Pope Pius XII canonized her in 1946. Re-airs Thursday at 10am and Friday at 8pm.

#### SUNDAY, Nov. 17, 1:30pm

In Concert: The Great Organ of **Notre Dame Cathedral** 

EWTN Olivier Latry, a titular organist of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris and professor at the Paris Conservatory, played the Great Organ not long before the fire at the cathedral this past April 15. The organ, which has 8,000 pipes, dates to 1403 but has been extensively remodeled through the years and needs repairs after suffering smoke and water damage.

#### SUNDAY, Nov. 17, 8pm

America in Color: Coming to America

**SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL** This

season premiere employs colorized news footage and home movies to depict immigrants' arrivals and assimilation in the United States between 1900 and the 1960s.

#### MONDAY-FRIDAY, Nov. 18-22, 5:30pm

#### **Women Made New**

**EWTN** Author and speaker Crystalina Evert founded Women Made New Ministries and co-founded Chastity Project. In this miniseries she proclaims Catholic teaching about love, family and the vocation of marriage.

#### WEDNESDAY, Nov. 20, 8pm

#### **Nature: Bears**

**PBS** This new documentary surveys the many types of bears around the world and discusses their lives, habitats, survival adaptations and prospects.

#### THURSDAY-TUESDAY, Nov. 21-26

**Apostolic Journey to Thailand** and Japan

**EWTN** Follow coverage of Pope Francis' apostolic journey to Thailand and Japan via EWTN. Check times at EWTN.com

> Dan Engler writes from Santa Barbara, California.

# 'Apostle of Divine Mercy' in Film

New Documentary Adds to List of St. Faustina-Themed Movies

BY STEVEN D. GREYDANUS t. Faustina Kowalska, the first saint canonized in the new millennium, is far from the best-known or most venerated saint of the 20th century — but the impact of her calling is out of all proportion to her popular celebrity. Indeed, perhaps only her fellow Pole St. John Paul II has had a more decisive influence on the shape of Catholic theology and spirituality.

> niusz Kazimirowski (Janusz Chabior), who paints the original Divine Mercy image.

For viewers interested in learning more about the image itself, The Original Image of Divine Mercy (2016), a two-hour documentary, is available on DVD and streaming via Vimeo. First-time filmmaker Daniel DiSilva crafts a generally engaging blend of first-person voice-over narration and occasional onscreen interaction, location shooting and interviews with subject-matter experts and other talking heads ranging from the likes of Bishop Robert Barron and George Weigel to comedian Jim Gaffigan and musician Harry Connick Jr. There are also, of course, lots and lots of close-

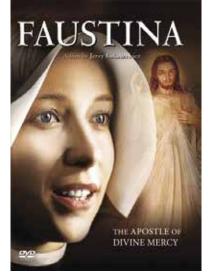
ups of the original Divine Mercy image — and of many other versions of

the image — with commentary on the meaning of various features of the image (the dark background, the positioning of the hands and the feet, and so forth).

There's also a critique of sorts of popular versions of the image based on the work of the Polish artist Adolf Hyła, who is responsible for the Divine Mercy variant I find least appealing, with the Lord making eye contact with the viewer and tilting his head to one side.

Then, of course, there are insights into the original image's sometimes surprising history. I had heard of the two women who recovered the image from a Soviet guard at the government-shuttered Church of St. Michael in Vilnius, where Father Sopocko was rector. But the "kidnapping" operation to rescue it from another shut-down church in Belarus - which involved swapping it with a replica — was news to me. Among minor missteps are an overreliance on Christian pop songs, suggesting a lack of trust in the audience. For the most part, though, The Original Image of Divine Mercy is highly watchable and worthwhile.

Billed as a docudrama, Love and Mercy: Faustina might be better described as a documentary with dramatized recreations as well as talking-head commentary, location shooting and archival images. If that still doesn't quite capture it, that's because the production is formally too slapdash and inconsistent, alas, for a clearer characterization. Although the docudrama sequences feature Polish actors



who played the roles speaking Polish, each scene was shot twice in Polish and English, so the English version of the film features actors speaking English with Polish accents. This was once a more common technique, but in a historical recreation today, it feels cheesy and inauthentic. Likewise, when interview subjects speak Polish, their voices fade and a translator speaks for them, like in radio interviews.



MOVIES ABOUT MERCY. Clockwise from top left: Love and Mercy, The Original Image of Divine Mercy and Faustyna. Kondrat-Media, Knights of Columbus, Springtime

Passion of the Christ audience to be willing to read subtitles?

As the film progresses the editing becomes less jarring, and the film becomes fitfully watchable. The dramatized bits are competent at best and most of the talking-head sequences are dully composed, so by default the best sequences are those that use voice-over with location shooting or other images. Much of the content, of course, will be familiar to devotees, although there were some surprises for me.

For example, the artist Kazimirowski, who happened to live in the same building with Father Sopocko and thus became the painter of the original Divine Mercy image, was a Freemason, in an awkward detail left out of most treatments. Nor had I heard that his later paintings included images of himself as Judas — nor that, like Judas, he committed suicide by hanging.

Do the filmmakers not trust The (At least, according to Matthew; Luke describes Judas' death differently. Curiously, Kazimirowski's death seems likewise ambiguous: The Original Image of Divine Mercy suggests that he died of pneumonia!)

> I can't recommend Love and Mercy: Faustina, except to pious viewers for whom the sacred subject matter alone is enough of a selling point. (It did win an audience award at a Polish film festival in Wrocław, so it's not without appeal to some viewers.)

Fortunately, there are other options that do better justice to the story of this extraordinary visionary and the powerful devotion that continues to spread around the globe. (For a longer version of this article, including coverage of additional films, visit DecentFilms. com/faustina.)

> Deacon Steven D. Greydanus is the Register's film critic.



Have you retired or changed jobs recently? If so, you may want to consider rolling over your retirement account assets, such as those in a 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b) into an Ave Maria Mutual Fund IRA. Here are some reasons to consider:

- Tax-free transaction when moving from one qualified account to another
- Continued tax deferral benefit
- Consolidation of assets
- Diversification through one of our five unique funds
- Morally responsible mutual funds to match your Pro-Life, Pro-Family beliefs

#### **CONTACT US TODAY**

**1-866-AVE-MARIA** (1-866-283-6274) avemariafunds.com/EWTN

Request a prospectus, which includes investment objectives, risks, fees, expenses and other information that you should read and consider carefully before investing. The prospectus can be obtained by calling 1-866-283-6274 or it can be viewed at www.avemariafunds.com. Distributed by Ultimus Fund Distributors, LLC.

### Home Video Picks & Passes

By Steven D. Greydanus

It's a Wonderful Life (1946) The Wizard of Oz (1939)

wo classic Vatican film-list honorees from Paramount both universal pop-culture touchstones and straight-up masterpieces — have pristine new 4K Ultra-HD + Blu-ray + Digital releases.

Both Frank Capra and Jimmy Stewart picked It's a Wonderful Life as their favorite of all their films. Variously celebrated or castigated both for its sentimentality and for its darkness, it's a wiser film than many fans and detractors allow.

It's a celebration of a heroic life that is far from typical, the absence of which leaves a hole more awful than most of us would leave. Yet George's life isn't simply useful to others; it is also rich and full.

The Wizard of Oz ranks among our earliest and most defining experiences of wonder and of fear, of



fairy-tale joys and terrors, of the lure of the exotic and the comfort of home.

Like all fairy tales, this one has suffered countless attempts to interpret it, from every conceivable angle. Yet L. Frank Baum, in his introduction to the book, said it "was written solely to pleasure children of today." Read more about both at DecentFilms.com.

CAVEAT SPECTATOR: It's a

Wonderful Life: Some tense family scenes; contemplation of suicide; brief inebriation. The Wizard of Oz: Some scary and menacing scenes. Both fine family viewing.

# TRAVEL History&Saints

# Heaven, Happiness And Holiness

Are You Prepared To Be Glad in Paradise?

#### The 4 Last Things

BY STEPHANIE MANN

arrie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds died within one day of each other in December 2016. Todd Fisher, Carrie's brother and Debbie's son, later made some comments on ABC's 20/20 about his sister and mother dying and being together again after death. Knowing nothing of his religious upbringing or background, his comments gave me pause and made me wonder: What do we, as Catholics — what do I, as a Catholic — really think heaven is?

Fisher referred to God calling Debbie Reynolds to heaven to help the angels handle her daughter Carrie, who might have been creating some problems. He described how close the mother and daughter were and how much Debbie wanted to help Carrie all the time. He pictured heaven as them being together, continuing the relationship they had on earth. He clearly believed in a life after death. His view of heaven seemed like a continuation of this life — just without all the problems of addiction, failed relationships, thwarted projects, bad days and other human troubles.

#### Life Everlasting

Reading the Catechism of the Catholic Church on heaven reveals great mysteries of happiness and holiness. In the Creed we say that "I believe in life everlasting," and as the Catechism explains, that life after death will either be spent in heaven or in hell, after each one of us has been judged on the basis of our "works and faith" (1021). Our particular judgment results either in immediate entrance into heaven

heaven — or "immediate and everlasting damnation" (1022).

Those who go to heaven become like God! They see him as he is, "face-to-face." With the angels and saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary, they achieve the highest, most perfect happiness. Paragraph 1024 states: "Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness."

#### What Is Happiness?

The Catechism (1027) acknowledges that this is the great mystery of heaven and one that we can't completely understand:

"This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description. Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise: 'no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him' (1 Corinthians 2:9)." We get glimpses of happiness throughout our lives, but do we really know what happiness is? Am I prepared to be happy in heaven?

Deal Hudson wrote a book in the 1990s, Happiness and the Limits of Satisfaction, in which he described a more classical view of happiness that might prepare us better for the mysterious happiness of heaven. Hudson noted that our conventional idea of happiness is that we feel good; we are satisfied by what we do or what we have. Our happiness depends on things and how we feel about them. That sort of happiness prepares us for a heaven in our own image.

#### 'A Church Is Like Heaven'

The classical and medieval view of happiness meant that a person must be good to be happy; should be living her life according to moral standards — should be holy.

That happiness as holiness pre-- or a period of purification before pares us for the heaven the Catechism describes. St. John Henry Newman describes this standard of holiness in his Parochial and Plain Sermon, "Holiness Necessary for Future Blessedness":

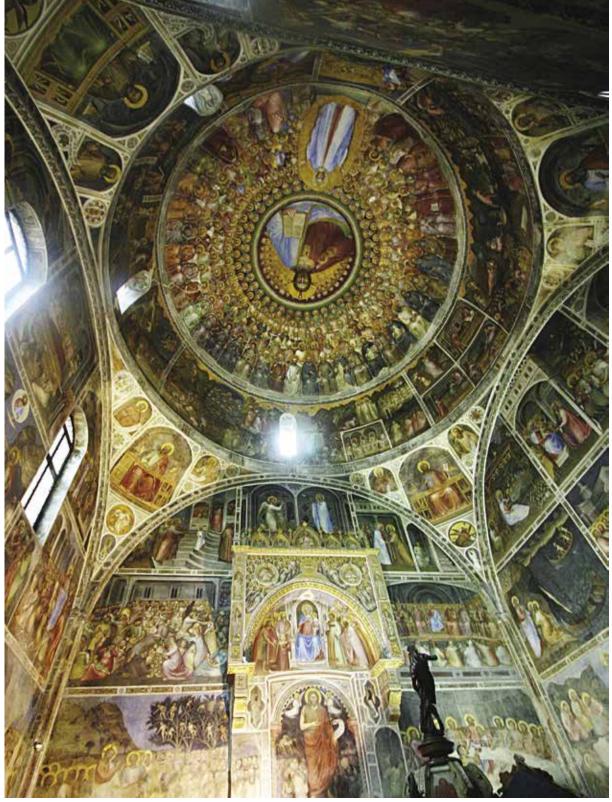
"To be holy is, in our Church's words, to have 'the true circumcision of the Spirit'; that is, to be separate from sin, to hate the works of the world, the flesh and the devil; to take pleasure in keeping God's commandments; to do things as He would have us do them; to live habitually as in the sight of the world to come, as if we had broken the ties of this life, and were dead already. Why cannot we be saved without possessing such a frame and temper of mind?"

And then he makes the startling statement that "even supposing a man of unholy life were suffered to enter heaven, he would not be happy there; so that it would be no mercy to permit him to enter." Newman comments that we can have the wrong idea about heaven — that it will be a place of pleasure and satisfaction — and then proposes a better way to think of heaven:

"Heaven, then, is not like this world; I will say what it is much more like — a church. For in a place of public worship ... we hear solely and entirely of God. We praise Him, worship Him, sing to Him, thank Him, confess to Him, give ourselves up to Him, and ask His blessing. And therefore, a church is like heaven; viz. [namely] because both in the one and the other, there is one single sovereign subject - religion - brought

So someone who has no thought of God, what Newman calls an "irreligious man," would be miserable in heaven: The face of God and the worship of God "would be no object of joy to him." On the other hand, if you are happy in church, at Mass, in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, etc., you will be happy in heaven, as heaven truly is. Stephanie Mann writes from

Wichita, Kansas.



Giusto de' Menabuoi, ceiling of the Padua Cathedral Baptistery, c. 1377

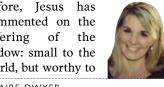
# Being Holy in the Present Moment

# User's Guide To Sunday

unday, Nov. 17, is the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C. Mass readings: Malachi 3:19-20A; Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9; 2 Thessalonians 3: 7-12; Luke 21:5-19.

In setting the scene for today's Gospel, Jesus and his disciples are in Jerusalem for the final Passover — his passion and death. They are in the Temple, and a few verses

before, Jesus has commented on the offering of the widow: small to the world, but worthy to



CLAIRE DWYER

God. Her poverty is in stark contrast to the splendor of the Temple, which people are remarking on as the reading begins.

Jesus overhears their admiration and says something striking and unsettling: "All that you see here the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down."

What did one see when one saw the Temple? The historian Josephus writes that the outside of the Temple "was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. But the Temple appeared to strangers, when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow, for, as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceeding white."

This dazzling building, destined to be destroyed, was only a symbol an important and sacred symbol -



but ultimately only a placeholder for the Living Temple, the Body of Christ.

"When will this happen?" His followers ask, and then things go from bad to worse. Jesus not only foretells of wars, earthquakes, famines and plagues, but of the suffering, persecution and martyrdom of these same friends because of his name.

But they won't be alone. "Remember," Jesus says, "you are not to prepare your defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you wisdom in speaking that all of your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refuse." In other words, "do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day" (Matthew 6:34).

It would have been natural for the disciples to be paralyzed by fear over the days ahead. But God himself would give them the grace exactly when they would have need of it: right in the moment, not a minute before. And in the meantime, life would go on, salvation would play itself out in eternity and in their own lives, and they were to

live each moment in trust and faith as it revealed itself in its slow unfolding. Mary did so; so can we.

St. Paul speaks to this in the second reading when he corrects those Christians who are not busy because they think Christ will be coming soon and are living with a why-bother attitude.

Because it is the present moment we are to concern ourselves with, in its duties and obligations. However small they seem in the light of eternity, they have enormous weight when united to Christ — they are the stones on which we build our inner temples, the sacred minutes we chisel with each small, and maybe unseen, surrender to "working quietly" and waiting for that longed-for day from the first reading when will arise the "sun of justice with its healing rays."

> Claire Dwyer is editor of SpiritualDirection.com and coordinates adult faith formation at her parish in Phoenix, where she lives with her husband and their six children.





Give something special this Christmas. A subscription to EWTN's National Catholic Register. It's the awardwinning newspaper filled with in-depth news reporting and faithfully Catholic analysis, catechetical resources, and features highlighting Catholic culture and more!

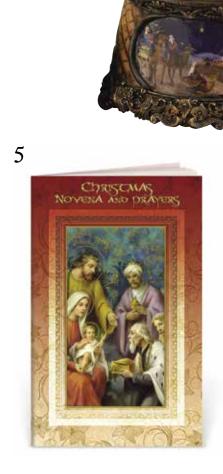
Order a subscription for a friend, or one for yourself, and get 26 issues of the Register for less than \$2.00 per issue. And, for a limited time, we'll send you a thank you gift - the EWTN original movie, Mother

Cabrini, absolutely free! Give more and save more. Get \$10.00 off every additional gift subscription you order. This Christmas, give the National Catholic Register as a gift, or simply treat yourself.

GO TO: NCREGISTER.COM/DVD OR CALL: (800) 421-3230 MENTION CODE 919DVD







8











#### 1. NATIVITY MUSICAL GLITTER DOME WITH THREE KINGS

This musical glitter dome features the Holy Family and the Three Wise Men in the glass globe that swirls with glitter when tipped upside down and plays the *Little Drummer Boy* music when wound. The globe is 4 inches in diameter, and the decorative base is made of resin. Measures 6 inches high. Item: 33028, \$38.

#### 2. HOLY FAMILY IN CHERRY FRAME

This beautiful print of the Holy Family is displayed under glass in a natural tiger cherry finish frame with carved gold edges. It has a hook for hanging and a black velvet easel back for tabletop display. Measures 12 inches x 10 inches. Item: 22362, \$20.

#### **3. WINTER WHISPER HOLY FAMILY ORNAMENT**A small Holy Family ornament with delicate filigree paper cutout

details of the city of Bethlehem is made of resin and measures 5 1/3 inches high. Item: 32994, \$6.

#### 4. HOLY FAMILY STAINED-GLASS ORNAMENT

This beautiful miniature stained-glass window Christmas ornament features the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and the newborn Baby Jesus surrounded by a cerulean blue sky with the bright star of Bethlehem above them. Oval ornament measures 4 1/2 inches high x 3 3/8 inches wide and comes with a silver chain for hanging. Item: 56387, \$10.

#### 5. CHRISTMAS NOVENA AND PRAYERS

This novena is translated from the Italian prayers of St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori and was first published in 1758. Although this novena is intended primarily as a preparation for the feast of Our Lord's Nativity, it can be used with spiritual profit at any time of the year as a devotion in honor of the Infant Jesus. Also included along with the novena is the "St. Andrew Christmas Novena Prayer to Obtain Favors"; an account of the birth of Christ; a "Litany for the Christmas Season"; and other prayers. Paperback. 25 pages. Item: 43280, \$2.50.

#### 6. NATIVITY GICLÉE ADVENT CANDLE HOLDER

Designed to look like an old-world stone sculpture with tiled artwork, this rustic piece features a beautiful giclée print of the Holy Family, the Magi and an angel on the front. It will hold four taper candles as either an Advent display when using one rose and three violet candles or as a decorative Christmas piece with candles of your choice. Made of a resin-stone mix, it measures 9 inches long x 3 inches high x  $1\,3/4$  inches deep. The candle wells measure 7/8 inch in diameter. (Candles not included.) Item: 33264, \$29.50.

#### 7. BEST-LOVED CHRISTMAS CAROLS BOXED SET

In a richly illustrated book of timeless art from world-class museums, Ronald Clancy offers historical perspective on the development of carols since the 13th century, with fascinating facts about each carol. This boxed set includes a CD with 25 carols performed by world-renowned choirs and orchestras. Also includes a bonus songbook. Item: 4601, \$30.

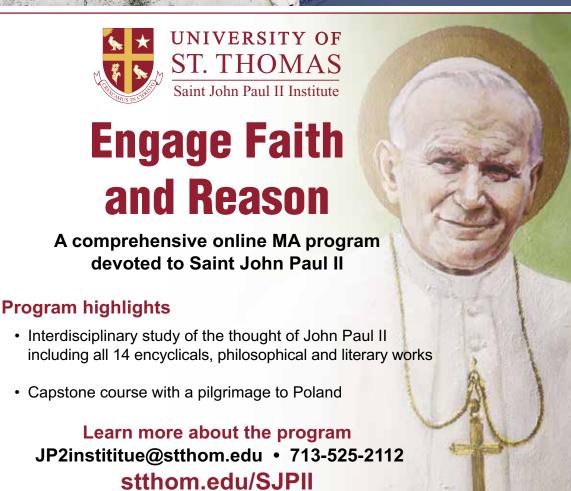
#### 8. PEACEFUL NATIVITY ADVENT CALENDAR

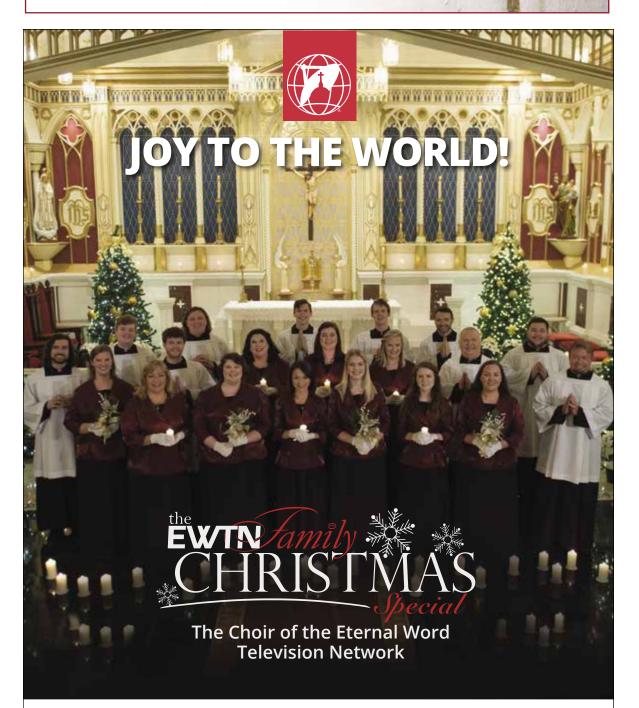
This devotional Advent calendar measures 8 1/4 inches x 12 inches and features a colorful Nativity scene with glitter accents. There are 24 numbered windows with Bible text on the back of the flaps. Count down the 24 days until Christmas with this fun family tradition: Beginning Dec. 1, open window No. 1 and then another each day to reveal a special picture and also read the Bible text that tells a part of the Nativity story. Item: BB811, \$4.

#### 9. CHILDREN'S FELT NATIVITY SET

Young children will delight in the anticipation of Christmas as they re-enact the story of Jesus' birth with this six-piece plush Nativity set. What a wonderful way to keep the focus of festivities on the real reason for Christmas joy. Set includes St. Joseph, Mary, Baby Jesus, lamb, ox and zippered carrying case. Item: 20967, \$24.







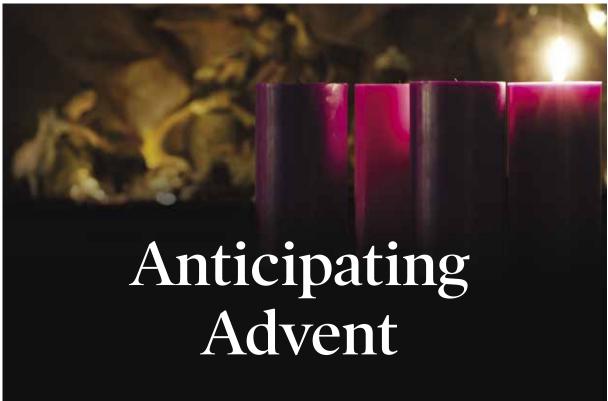
This Christmas, share the joy of our Savior's birth with twelve timeless hymns Catholics have enjoyed for centuries. Experience an extraordinary concert performed by The Choir of the Eternal Word Television Network with a special introduction by Father Joseph Mary Wolfe, M.F.V.A. Recorded on location at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 5:00pm; Thursday, Dec. 19 at 10:30pm Sunday, Dec. 22 at 12:00am; Tuesday, Dec. 24 at 6:00pm Thursday, Dec. 26 at 1:00pm ET

LIVE TRUTH. LIVE CATHOLIC. ewtn.com 🔾 🖨 🕲 🗓

TELEVISION · RADIO · NEWS · ONLINE · PUBLISHING





SHUTTERSTOCK

#### 9 Ways to Live The Season Well

BY CLAIRE DWYER

y the time we've put away the pumpkins, Christmas decorations and gift buying are in full swing. Storefronts blaze with advertisements, television specials and commercials light up our living rooms with holiday themes, and the radio has us singing about snowmen and reindeer before we've finished our Thanksgiving turkey.

It can be difficult, especially with children, to keep Advent as a sacred time of preparation rather than a long, run-on feast. By the time we actually arrive at the liturgical celebration of Christmas, we may already feel overstuffed and exhausted from the noise, lights and materialism of our modern culture.

How can we still our hearts and focus on the real meaning of the season with our families — without begrudging the joy of authentic anticipation? This is a time of expectation that should feel sacred but celebratory. Is that possible?

Many Catholic parents have found a healthy balance. Here are some simple ideas to live Advent well.

1. Try to have gift shopping done by the start of Advent, and cull the house of catalogues and references to toys, wish lists and shopping, in order to focus on spiritual prep-

2. Fill your home and cars with sacred seasonal music — there is music specific to Advent that can balance the holiday tunes filling stores and airwaves. The Advent at Ephesus CD from the Benedictine Sisters of Mary, Queen of Apostles, is ethereal and will fill your soul and quiet your heart: https://music.benedictinesofmary.org/content/advent-ephesus. This could be a perfect gift for a Catholic teacher, too.

3. Set out an empty manger along with a container filled with pieces of straw or yellow yarn. Each time a child does a charitable deed or makes a sacrifice, have them place a piece in the manger. By the time Christmas comes, Jesus will have a soft bed made out of the straw or yarn that each rep-



resent loving actions. On Christmas morning, the first gift to be opened can be the statue of the infant Jesus, and the youngest child can place Jesus in the place the family has prepared. This hand-painted Baby Jesus in the crib is exquisite, from EWTNRC.com, Item:

4. Begin your observance of Advent by blessing your Advent wreath with this traditional prayer, which the entire family can participate in (source: EWTN. com/catholicism/library/blessings-for-advent-4209; from Shorter Book of Blessings, USCCB Publishing). This short one is perfect for little ones:

All make the Sign of Cross as the minister says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All reply: Who made heaven and earth.

One of those present or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example:

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah: 9:1-2, 5-6:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom, a light has shone.

You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing,

As they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as men make merry when dividing spoils.

For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests.

They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.

His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, From David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he

confirms and sustains. By judgment and justice, both now and forever.

A minister who is a priest or deacon says the prayer of blessing with hands outstretched; a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin.

Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath;

may their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is

Lord, forever and ever.

R. Amen.

Or: Lord our God,

we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,

he is the Savior of every nation. Lord God.

let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath.

May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.

May he come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

5. Read the daily Mass readings or the Gospel at dinner. Demonstrate how the readings are leading us up to the birth of Christ with themes of conversion, watchfulness and preparation, and point out how the third week, beginning with Gaudete Sunday, reminds us to rejoice as we light the rose-colored candle.

6. Sing a verse of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel each evening while lighting the Advent candle during beforemeal prayers. Nervous about mixing little people and flames? You can use bat-

tery-light options: LED Advent Tea Lights, Item: 37954, \$7.50.

7. Use a religious Advent calendar. At EWTN Religious Catalogue, there are several beautiful, affordable options, including Item: BB886, \$4, and Item: BB881, \$4.



A fabric option is ideal for little fingers, Item: VC200, \$45. A calendar that allows children to add a sticker to the manger scene each day is also a good choice, Item: BB204, \$6, And a back-lit Nativity scene/Advent calendar can become a treasured heirloom (shown on next page). It has 24 drawers that can be custom-filled with a prayer, holy card, charitable deed or even a small anticipatory treat: Item: 32371, \$65.









8. Already have your tree up? What about pink and purple decorations for Advent?

Some families wait until Gaudete Sunday or even later to put up the Christmas decorations.

In the meantime, a Jesse Tree tradition is fun for kids and teaches them about the stories of the Old Testament that lead up to the birth of Christ.

The Jesse Tree Book and Ornaments Set is a good choice, from EWTN Religious Catalogue. Item: JTSET, \$49.95 (shown on next page).

9. Seasoned parents would advise not to take on too

**CONTINUES ON PAGE 19** 

# Valuing Vocations as a Family

BY CLARE WALKER

he primary task of Catholic parents is to raise their children to become true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ and to discern his will for their lives. Yet it is naïve to ignore the current state of the modern world: Every sphere of life - politics, education, entertainment, the media — is hostile to Christian values.

But we also know that with God all things are possible. Authors John and Clare Grabowski are living proof. They raised five kids who, by the grace of God, are still faithful, practicing Catholics. They outline their family's faith journey in Raising Catholic Kids for Their Vocations.

First of all, the Grabowskis take pains to dispel the myth that the word "vocation" refers only to priesthood, religious life or marriage. "Every Christian, joined to Christ in baptism, is called by God to a life of holiness," they write. "This is the basic and indelible vocation of every believer."

This distinction is crucial for Catholic parents to understand. Our primary goal is not to steer our children into a particular state in life priesthood, religious life or marriage. Our goal is to help our children embrace the universal call to holiness. If our children grow up seeking Jesus and pursuing closeness with him, the particular state in life to which God calls them is likely to become clear.

One of the best chapters of this

Eric & Suzan Sammons

**RAISING CATHOLIC KIDS FOR** THEIR VOCATIONS

By John and Clare Grabowski TAN Books, 2019 Item: 13761 184 pages, \$24.95 To order: ewtnrc.com or (800)

854-6316

book includes testimonies from each of the Grabowskis' adult children.

All the children praised their parents' deliberate integration of the Catholic faith into every day and into every moment. "Our mother was striking in this," writes one of the children. "She would pray for everything — little things, like asking St. Anthony to intercede for us when we lost something, and big things, like God's blessing in selling our house. Her posture was never one of independence and self-sufficiency but rather of an implicit recognition of utter dependence upon God in the everyday circumstances of life. By not relegating faith to Sunday alone, but by demonstrating it daily, our parents helped to make faith central in our

lives." The children also appreciated their parents' openness to questions and discussion about the faith:

"Our parents helped the faith take root within us by intertwining faith with reason - by allowing and encouraging us to try to understand what we believed. ... The key was that, in presenting a tenet of the faith, our parents would try to explain how it made sense, encourage us to think it through, and ask questions. We were never taught to just blindly believe."

This book is a good balance of theory and practical, actionable ideas, including what they call "post-Cana" formation for married couples.

The Christian family is supposed to be a "school of love" in which children learn by doing and by observing. But if the headmaster and headmistress of that school — Mom and Dad have a shaky foundation due to inadequate preparation for marriage, some kind of "remedial" formation would no doubt be helpful. Sadly, an in-depth treatment of this idea was beyond the scope of this book.

In the end, though, even successful Catholic parents like the Grabowskis must give all the glory to God, for they know that only his grace enables Christians to navigate the minefield of the modern world, with its many dangers to faith, holiness of life and moral uprightness. Let all Christian parents commend themselves and their children to this grace!

Clare Walker writes from Westmont, Illinois.



#### Virgin, Mother, Queen

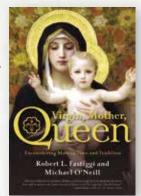
**Encountering Mary in Time and Tradition** ROBERT L. FASTIGGI AND MICHAEL O'NEILL

In Virgin, Mother, Queen, popular radio and television host Michael O'Neill gathers fascinating details from Mary's mystical appearances around the world. Robert Fastiggi, professor of systemic theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, answers questions about the historical and theological development of Marian teachings throughout Church history.

192 pages, \$17.95

#### "A beautiful book."

—Carrie Gress Author of The Marian Option



# Exalted

How the Power of the Magnificat Can Transform Us

Combining her own story with an invitation to engage the scriptures through personal study and "God prompts," Sonja Corbitt will help readers unlock the treasures contained within Mary's song to her cousin Elizabeth, revealing a song that speaks to each of us in a unique way, calling us to delight in the power of God to transform us and make us into everything he created us to be so we can revel in the fullness and joy of life in Christ.

192 pages, \$16.95

#### "You will LOVE this book!"

-Rev. Larry Richards Founder of The Reason for Our Hope Foundation

#### **Catholic Hipster: The Next Level How Some Awesomely Obscure Stuff Helps Us** Live Our Faith with Passion

**TOMMY TIGHE** 

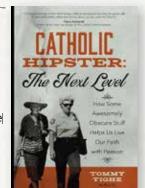
Building on the overwhelming popularity of The Catholic Hipster Handbook, Tommy Tighe is back with a new cast of fellow hipsters—including Haley Stewart, Samantha Povlock, Matthew Sewell, Fr. Damian Ferrence, and Patrick Neve—to share overlooked saints, forgotten prayers, and profound practices that define the countercultural Catholic lifestyle, inspiring you to live your faith in radical ways.

224 pages, \$15.95



-Claire Swinarski

Author of Girl, Arise! Creator of The Catholic Feminist podcast



#### Abide in the Heart of Christ

A 10-Day Personal Retreat with St. Ignatius Loyola

grow your relationship with him, and shape your heart.

In Abide in the Heart of Christ, Rev. Joe Laramie, S.J., offers accessible wisdom from the foundations of Jesuit spirituality—St. Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises—in a ten-day personal retreat that will help you encounter Christ,

160 pages, \$14.95

#### "A journey with Christ."

-Rev. Mark Thibodeaux, S.J.

**CONTINUING PAGE 18 STORY** 

many traditions. Choose a few that work well for your family, and be faithful to those.

The key is consistency and simplicity and not feeling like you've failed if you don't "do it all."

Remember: Children will cherish time together above all else and will continue traditions into adulthood that meant the most to your family. Jesus is our joy.

He is coming, and that is celebration enough!

Claire Dwyer is editor of SpiritualDirection.com and coordinates adult faith formation at her parish in Phoenix, where she lives with her husband and their six children.

### The Reclaiming CATHOLIC HISTORY SERIES The Reclaiming Catholic History Series **EDITED BY MIKE AQUILINA**

Books in the Reclaiming Catholic History series, edited by Mike Aquilina and written by leading authors and historians debunk myths and misinformation one era at a time.

The Early Church (33–313) St. Peter, the Apostles, and Martyrs JAMES L. PAPANDREA

The Church and the Roman Empire (301-490) Constantine, Councils, and the Fall of Rome

MIKE AQUILINA 192 pages, \$17.95

160 pages, \$16.95



#### Live Big, Love Bigger Getting Real with BBQ, Sweet Tea, and a Whole Lotta Jesus

The stressful premature birth of her fifth child threw her orderly world into chaos and ultimately led her to rethink her priorities. In Live Big, Love Bigger, Kathryn Whitaker shares her journey and challenges readers to understand that they, too, can live a life of authenticity with joy-filled purpose, love, and faith.

"I highly encourage you to read this book."

—Jenna Guizar Founder of Blessed is She

#### **Everyday Witness**

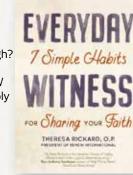
7 Simple Habits for Sharing Your Faith

THERESA RICKARD, O.P. Do you want to share your faith with others but think you might not know enough? Are you worried that conflicts will arise as you openly talk about and share the love of Christ? In Everyday Witness, Sr. Theresa Rickard, O.P., president of RENEW International, offers seven simple habits to help fellow Catholics more comfortably talk about and model Christian faith in our everyday lives.

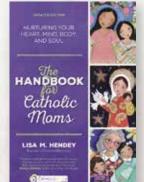
128 pages, \$12.95

#### "Captivating stories."

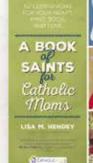
-Rev. Anthony Randazzo Pastor of The Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity Westfield, New Jersey

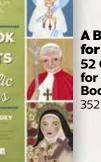


### REVISED EDITIONS from Lisa M. Hendey



The Handbook for Catholic Moms **Nurturing Your Heart,** Mind, Body, and Soul 256 pages, \$17.95





A Book of Saints for Catholic Moms **52 Companions** for Your Heart, Mind, **Body, and Soul** 352 pages, \$18.95

Look for these titles wherever books and eBooks are sold. For more information, visit avemariapress.com



# Advertising in the Register Generates

**UPCOMING ISSUES | Dec. 8 - Last-Minute Gift Guide** Reserve space by Nov. 15

Dec. 22 - Christmas

Reserve space by Nov. 29

Jan. 1 - Vocations

Reserve space by Dec. 13

Contact us at advertising@ewtn.com or call 800.356.9916

# Welcoming the Light of the World

#### Good Reads for Christmastime

CHILDREN'S BOOK PICKS

BY KERRY CRAWFORD AND PATRICIA A. CRAWFORD

**Guess Who's in the Manger? A Christmas Story** Written by Vicki Howie Illustrated by Julia Seal Pauline, 2019

28 pages, \$14.95

A barn owl gives a bird's-eye view of life in a bleak and dismal place: "That stable was dark,/ It was bare; it was poor!/ No wonder few visitors stepped through the door ..." But, soon, some very special guests do indeed come, and suddenly the barn becomes a very different place. The Holy Family arrives announcing, "We've traveled so far, any shelter will do,/ We're Joseph and Mary — our baby is due!" The once gloomy barn becomes bright and radiant when the Light of the World comes to dwell within it. Words and pictures are just right for young children and remind readers that Jesus is at the very center of the Christmas story. Ages 3-8.

**The First Christmas Night** Written by **Laura Godwin** Illustrated by William Low Feiwel and Friends, 2016 32 pages, \$16.99

What was it like on that first Christmas night? This beautiful picture book invites readers to imagine being there, to think what it must

OCTOBER 14TH - 24TH, 2020

have been like to see, hear, feel and smell all that surrounded the birth of Baby Jesus. While the quiet, poetic text is prayerful ("Welcome this tiny baby boy./ Feel this hush./ This peace on Earth./ This first Christmas night"), the deep, jewel-toned oversized illustrations add an elegant tone. A great Nativity story for bedtime and beyond. Ages 3-8.

#### **Silent Night**

Illustrated by **Lara Hawthorne** Lincoln Children's Books, 2018 32 pages, \$15.99

"Silent night, holy night;/ All is calm, all is bright." The words of the beloved, well-known carol spring to life in this eye-catching book. The song's traditional lyrics are paired with illustrations that seem to pop off the page with a bold, primitive style. Sensitively rendered images depict the Holy Family loving and gently caring for the "[h]oly infant, tender and mild," while luminescent stars twinkle against an inky black night sky. The depictions and tone reflect life in the Middle East. An afterword includes historical notes about the carol. A perfect choice for reading aloud — and singing along, too! Ages 3-8.

#### The Christmas Fox Written and illustrated by **Anik McGrory**

Knopf, 2016 32 Pages, \$16.99

POLAND PILGRIMAGE TOUR

10 Day, 9 Night

PILGRIMAGE

ALL INCLUSIVE

SAINT JOHN PAULII • MAY 7TH - 16TH, 2020

International

For more information contact Erika Piotrowski

(231) 720.8378 -or- erikap.euro@hotmail.com

This gentle tale repositions the Nativity story into a snowy, winter wonderland. One by one, a host of forest animals urge a little fox to prepare for a most important event: "A baby is coming. There's work to be done."

VISITING:

Wadowice

Ludźmierz

Zalipie

Czestochowa

Kraków • Wieliczka

· Auschwitz · Zakopane

Everyone has a special role to play: The woodpecker spreads the good news, the lamb prepares soft, cozy wool, and the bluebird is ready to sing the baby to sleep. But the little fox just plays in the snow and ignores the call to action. What could he possibly do for the special baby? Finally, the donkey urges the little fox to simply be present, "Just come. It is enough." When the little fox comes to the stable, he brings the perfect gift. He brings joy that makes the baby smile. The warm illustrations will nudge readers to think of ways to welcome the baby in the manger. Ages 3-8.

#### **God's Wildest Wonderment of All** Written by Paul Thigpen illustrated by John Foley TAN, 2019

32 pages, \$16.95 A little boy goes to the zoo and is amazed at all of the incredible animals he encounters. Why would God paint parrots various colors of green or give wings to ostriches who don't fly? The rhyming couplets of this story capture the natural curiosity of children ("What's this? Who taught the seals to bark?/ Did dogs give lessons on the Ark?"). After pondering the wonders of creation, the little boy decides that human beings have been fashioned in the most wonderful manner of all and that all creatures have the potential to bring God glory in their own ways. With roots in Psalm 139 ("I am wonderfully made"), this

book uses engaging images and fun word play to convey the important message that God has lovingly created each of us with a unique and important purpose. Ages 3-8. A Little Camel for Baby Jesus

Written and illustrated by

Maria Gianola Pauline, 2019

32 pages, \$9.95

The star has appeared! Sevenyear-old Joel, the son of a stableman, accompanies his dad and the King's caravan. Following the light, they search for the newborn King of Kings. Joel whittles a small camel for the infant, but freely gives it to a needy baby he meets on the way. Arriving empty-handed at the stable, Joel is surprised to learn just how special his gift was. Inspired by Matthew 25:40 ("Whatsoever you did for one of these least brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me."), it's ideal for Christmas and Epiphany. Ages 3-8.

Mozart: Gift of God Written and illustrated by **Demi** Magnificat, 2019 48 pages, \$15.99

For the musicians in your circle, this text-rich picture book of young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart will inspire and amaze. Composing music by the age of 5, Mozart and his sister Nannerl would soon dazzle audiences, including kings and queens throughout Europe. Raised in a Roman Catholic family, Mozart composed his first major piece of sacred music, the Te Deum, when he was only 13. A year later he met the pope in Rome — and he would become a favorite musician of a 21st-century pope, Benedict XVI. Ages 7 and older.

#### **Saintly Rhymes for Modern Times** Written and illustrated by

**Meghan Bausch** Our Sunday Visitor, 2018

40 pages, \$16.95 "Jesus came to Saint Faustina,/ asking her to share/ the message of his mercy/ with people everywhere ..." is just a sampling of the 16 delightful rhymes telling the stories of 19 holy men, women and children. As you turn each page, find beloved friends (such as St. Mother Teresa, Pope St. John Paul II, St. Padre Pio) and friends with whom

to become better acquainted (e.g., Blessed Chiara "Luce" Badano, St. Josephine Bakhita, St. Gianna Beretta Molla and more). Full-page illustrations featuring the saint, "Blessed" or "Venerable" against a background that is particularly his or her own (think snowy mountains for Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati!) make the book all the more engaging. Ages 4-10.

> The Crawford sisters write from Pittsburgh. All books are available at Amazon.com.



#### NATIONAL SHRINE OF **Vibrant MAXIMILIAN KOLBE Center for** Catholic A Ministry of the Conventual Franciscan Friars Renewal in **RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER** the Midwest **Eucharistic Adoration Centered around Our Lady** of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, Marytown is recognized as one of the most beautiful pilgrimage sites in the nation. 1600 W. Park Avenue Libertyville, IL 60048 KolbeShrine.org 847-367-7800 Gift Shop MarytownGiftShop.com



June 12-20, 2020: Fatima and Lourdes with Oberammergau option, with Fr. Peter Asantebwana

Oberammergau option, with Fr. Pete Gideon

Contact Katy Wyatt at 614.501.6714 or 888.373.8687 Or email kwyatt@jerusalemtours.com for more information.



# The Buy Small, Buy Catholic Gift Guide

30-Plus Ideas for Men, Women, Children, Families and Teachers

BY KATIE WARNER

n this list below, I've rounded up some of my many favorite items for men, women, children, families and teachers — mostly from Catholic small businesses, entrepreneurs and artists. Not only do I think these selections - many of which I already own and love and others I have on my own shopping list make fabulous gifts, but I also love that I can give something heartfelt to friends and family, while supporting creative Catholic families and companies in the process.

Hope this gift guide matches you with some gems.

For Men

1. Wood Pardon Crucifix or other handcrafted items from The Catholic Woodworker. Gorgeous, high-quality rosaries and other prayer aids.

Catholic Wood Worker.com

2. Monk Manual. "A system for being + doing" (basically the coolest type of planner you can imagine). MonkManual.com

3. Guadalupe Roastery. Good coffee from a company with a great mission and policies.

Guada lupe Roastery. com

4. Rugged Rosaries. Paracord rosaries with tons of styles. I think my husband owns at least three of



them. CordBands.com

5. SignumX T-shirt. Signum X (meaning the Sign of the Cross) apparel was started by a Catholic dad who wanted "So-Cal" style shirts with rich meaning.

TheSignoftheCross.com

"A solid and practical guide to virtuous manhood." Author Sam Guz-

man is a truly genuine soul and wise guide. EWTNRC.com or (800) 854-6316; Item: 40684.

For Women

7. Brick House in the City shirts. 6. The Catholic Gentleman book. I love the designs, the gal behind the business, and the fact that they have a new line for kids now, too.

BrickHouseintheCity.com

8. Jewelry from Telos Art and Design. Custom faith-centered pieces with modern design. While you're browsing the gorgeous necklaces, check out the super cool rosary window clings for the kids. TelosArtShop.com

9. Marian pillow cover from **CONTINUES ON PAGE 21** 

### Warner

CONTINUING PAGE 20 STORY

Rooted Designs. If you're looking for something a little more holidaythemed, I also love the Advent wreath coloring pillow.

TheRootedMom.com

10. Sacrifice beads from Happy Nest Home Goods. And if you want to grab sets for the little kids, here are some chewable-friendly ones from Little Praying Hands. *Etsy.com* 

11. Saint notecards from Saint Script: on my wish list. Love these beautiful, artistic cards for anytime. SaintScriptShop.com

12. Catholic Mother's Planner: It has all of the bells and whistles of a regular planner, plus inspirational quotes, spiritual challenges, feast days and more. Blessed Is She also has a lovely planner for Catholic women. AscensionPress.com; BlessedIsShe.net

For Home and Family

13. Theology of Home. More than a lovely addition to your coffee table, this book will capture you with its beautiful photography while nourishing your soul with its wisdom for cultivating authentic faith at home. EWTNRC.com or (800) 854-6316; Item: 3655.

14. Wall Rosary. So many different colors and designs, and a wonderful way to give the holy rosary a special place of honor in the home. *Etsy.com* 

15. Corda Candles. The scents are amazing and the religious theming is so cool. I have the Compline (reminiscent of the Liturgy of the Hours) and Shower of Roses (in honor of St. Therese) candles, and I plan to get more. CordaCandles.com

16. Botanical Rosary art. From Rose Harrington, these gorgeous floral mysteries of the Rosary watercolor paintings add so much spiritual depth and color to any room.

RoseHarrington.com

17. \*A Spouse Who Prays. This little guide to praying for your spouse and marriage has 52 intentions, one for each week of the year, that will take you through praying for an increase in the theological virtues, the cardinal virtues, the fruits and gifts of the Spirit, as well as other virtues and intentions especially important in marital life. Amazon.com

18. Rosary wall hanger. From Rough2Rustic, these hangers sell out quickly, but they are lovely, useful and perfect for a living or prayer room wall. I also love the natural-wood Nativity garland, which you can paint, color or stain and jazz up any fireplace mantel. *Rough2Rustic.com* 

For Kids

19. \*First Faith Treasury books. My absolute favorite board and picture books for little ones and some of the most used and loved books in our home. Check out Father Ben Gets Ready for Mass, which is both fun and interactive while also being catechetical, and Kiddie Cat: A Child's First Catechism Lesson as a great way to introduce little ones to the story of their Catholic faith.

FirstFaithTreasury.com

20. Saint dolls. These handmade Marzipantz shop dolls are my absolute favorites, but can be hard to get your hands on. Your little ones will also love these saint pillow dolls from Blessed Friends Forever or the wide variety of little saint dolls from Shining Light Dolls. *Marzipantz.com*;

Etsy.com; ShiningLightDolls.com
21. Catholic baby swaddles. The
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sacred
Heart, and Saint Francis blankets
from Be a Heart Design are all
adorable and perfect for boys or
girls. BeaHeart.com

22. Catholic Family Crate. Monthly packages help you build Catholic culture at home and live liturgically. I love the activities, mementos prayers and music

mementos, prayers and music. *CatholicFamilyCrate.com* 

23. Saint paper puppets. From Studio Senn, these come in soldier saints and princess saints; perfect shoe stuffers (for St. Nicholas' Day) or stocking stuffers. While you're at her shop, grab a Litany of Humility static cling for your bathroom mirror. (I have one and love it.) StudioSenn.com

24. Lego Catechism of the Seven Sacraments from Holy Heroes. This book is so cool. Your kids will love it, and you'll learn a lot from it, too! *EWTNRC.com or (800) 854-6316*; *Item: 8701.* 

25. Soft saint bracelets from Chews Life. Cute and perfect for little wrists. Also check out their Divine Mercy teether, chewable rosaries, and now their beautiful rosary bracelets for older kids and adults. *ChewsLife.com* 

uits. CnewsLije.com 26. My Catholic Keepsake. A



unique and modern Catholic baby (through high school) memory book to record both faith and developmental milestones. Such a neat way to record your child's sacraments for him/her. *ThyOliveTree.com* 

27. Brother Francis DVDs. These episodes have solid teaching and are incredibly appealing to the little crowd. I love the *Days of Advent* reflections for little ones, as well as all of the various topics on saints, prayer and sacraments. Also check out the newest series, *Totally Toddlers*. *BrotherFrancis.com* 

For Teachers and Catechists

28. Coffee cozy. These adorable

coffee cozies from The Cozy Wife come in tons of different colors with lots of great saint quotes, Marian titles and customizable options. Consider designing your own with your favorite Bible verse. *Etsy.com* 

29. \*A Teacher Who Prays: A Journal to Guide You in Praying for Your Students. Beautiful little companion for teachers to help them pray intentionally, specifically and uniquely for their students each week. Amazon.com

30. Religious tea towel. In addition to the stylish tea towels from Live Today Well, I also love their tote bags and mugs as great teacher gifts. LiveTodayWellCo.com

Shopping tip: I try to wrap my

gifts before the First Sunday of Advent. This frees up December for making Advent a time of preparation for the birth of Jesus, rather than a month full of stress and shopping. If you haven't tried early holiday shopping before, try it this year. I think you'll be hooked.

think you'll be hooked.

Follow Katie Warner online for more Catholic resources for the holidays and year-round @katiewarnercatholic on Instagram, Katie Warner, author & children's book writer on Facebook, and at KatieWarner.com.

\*Denotes books written by the author of this guide.



SHUTTERSTOCK

#### **Appreciating Advent**

The word Advent is from the Latin *adventus* for "coming" and is associated with the four weeks of preparation for Christmas. Advent always contains four Sundays, beginning on the Sunday nearest the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, Nov. 30, and continuing until Dec. 24.

\*\*Source: EWTN\*\*









#### **GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE INSURANCE**

Learn how you can help protect and insure your family's financial future through the purchase of a very competitive FCSLA life insurance policy.

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association of the United States of America • a Fraternal Benefit Society domiciled in Beachwood, OH

of the United States of America • a Fraternal Benefit Society domiciled in Beachwood, OH

FRATERNAL LIFE INSURANCE AND ANNUITIES

24950 Chagrin Boulevard, Beachwood, Ohio 44122 • 800-464-4642 • www.fcsla.org



# Priests, to Save the Church, Answer the Call to Save Souls And Seek the Lord Above All

**BOOK PICK** 

BY JANET SMITH

The Priests We Need to Save the Church by Kevin Wells could, in fact, be the book needed to save the faith of many laity and the priesthood of many priests.

It is an understatement to say that our Church is in a dismal state and that those of us who love her more than our own lives are nonetheless tempted to despair: "Can I really remain in a Church so full of corruption of various kinds and where leaders of the Church seem to be jettisoning dogmas and doctrines we have made many sacrifices to live and defend?"

Our love for the sacraments and our conviction that the Catholic Church is the one founded by our beloved Savior keeps us in the Church despite our shattered trust in our leaders.

Some of us have a hard time conceiving what could possibly be the solution to the crises vitiating the Church today: doctrinal confusion, seemingly rampant sexual misconduct, financial corruption, and the infiltration of alien ideologies. We have lost faith in the bishops as a whole and perhaps especially in the leadership in Rome to be agents of reform; with great reluctance we have come to see they are more of the problem than the solution.

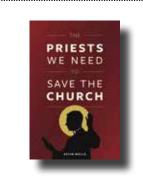
Wells does not dwell on the horrors in the Church, nor does he downplay or ignore them. He does not purport to offer the cure to the life-threatening sepsis in the Church, but he does offer a vision of the priesthood that could strengthen priests and laity and enable us to survive the undoubtedly severe and unsettling purgation that is sure to come, although no one knows the time or hour or what shape it will take. Wells tells that he was urged to write the book by Msgr. John Esseff, once a co-worker of St. Teresa of Calcutta, a renowned exorcist, now 92 years old and still giving retreats and spiritual direction to priests and laity at a ferocious rate.

Decades ago, St. Teresa strongly urged Msgr. Esseff to stop working with the poor and turn his attention to the formation of seminarians. Msgr. Esseff reports that when he began the work, he found seminaries riddled with homosexuality. Wells also records the testimony of priests who have found the priesthood likewise scourged. This problem in the presbyterate is not one that occupies Wells in the book, but it is a part of the background and part of the urgency for finding a way to "save" the Church.

Msgr. Esseff's words seem to permeate Wells' work: "We don't have a priest shortage right now, nor do we have a shortage of vocations. What we have is a shortage of priests who pray. We have a severe crisis in our priesthood because priests are not praying. They are not fathers. If we are to do anything well as priests, it must come from prayer, but we've stopped praying. Consequently, most of our priests seem to be bachelors today."

While this book was written within a year of the revelations concerning the predatory erstwhile cardinal Theodore McCarrick, it is clearly not a rushed project. Wells did his homework: He read the lives of saintly priests and spoke with saintly living priests to clarify what makes for holy priests.

Wells had the great blessing of



THE PRIESTS WE NEED TO SAVE THE CHURCH By Kevin Wells Sophia Institute Press, 2019 240 pages, \$17.95

(800) 888-9344

To order: sophiainstitute.com or

being the nephew of Father Thomas Wells, whom he clearly loved and whose life manifested the characteristics Wells found mark a holy priesthood. The key characteristics are prayerfulness, asceticism, and being willing to be radically available to others and to sacrifice for them. Father Wells was known for walking his neighborhood to chat with people, a chat which regularly included an exhortation to take up one's cross in life, softened by his loving and joyful demeanor.

This book is extremely readable. While it might seem implausible to some that a sports writer would be an excellent prose stylist and full of spiritual wisdom, Wells is. I haven't read a great deal of sports journalism in my lifetime but have read enough to know that there are firstrate writers among sports writers: They have the skill of capturing the lure of challenges, the life-enhancing power of struggles, and especially the joy of victory.

While Wells emphasizes the self-sacrificing dimensions of the priesthood and castigates "bachelor priests," he depicts the self-sacrificing life as one full of surprises, adventures and the inestimable reward of saving souls. Wells possess admirable pedagogical skills; he introduces his subject brilliantly and paces his narrative in such a way that the reader eventually comes to realize that the sacrifices required of a priest are pretty much required of anyone who would be a true follower of Christ.

The book opens with the poignant story of the struggle that Kevin and his wife, Krista, were having with infertility. Krista was so determined to have a baby she was willing to undergo IVF. Kevin arranged a meeting with his uncle,

who cut to the chase and explained why a Christian could not engage in a procedure that was not in accord with God's will for sexuality and procreation.

The priest did not recite comforting platitudes that all would be well and was fully aware of the suffering involved; he simply reminded the Wellses that following our Savior means there will be crosses. Later that night, a drug-crazed man broke into Father Wells' rectory and brutally murdered him.

Wells at one point in his life asked God for a severe suffering to advance his spiritual growth. God's answer was an untreatable brain hemorrhage from which Wells nearly died. When he called upon "Uncle Tommy" for help, his hospital room was filled with light, and Wells was apparently miraculously healed. He attributes his cure to the priest who tended to him on his deathbed and, of course, to his beloved uncle.

Good priests today are hurting — and hurting badly. They are hurting because their flock distrusts them and they distrust their bishops. They are at a loss of how to fortify the faith of their flock when their own faith is under siege.

The laity really do love and appreciate our priests; we should all give this book to priests and seminarians we love — and to the laity we know who wonder what they can do to reform our Church.

Laity should read this book since we too should respond generously to the call that Wells makes to priests: the call to put the salvation of souls above every other good in our lives, to seek intimacy with the Lord through prayer and sacrifice, and to allow that intimacy to guide our every decision.

This book reinforces the message of another book I recently reviewed, Father Carter Griffin's Why Priestly Celibacy: Reclaiming the Fatherhood of the Priesthood (Item: 3313, \$24.95, from EWTN Religious Catalogue). Both link celibacy with the demands of being a father and provide a vision of the priesthood totally incompatible with a life of comfort and timidity. Priests who embrace the need for prayer and sacrifice inherent in both priesthood and fatherhood will indeed be the priests we need to save the Church.

Janet E. Smith, Ph.D., is a moral theologian, recently retired from Sacred

#### A Prayer for Priests

By St. Thérèse of Lisieux

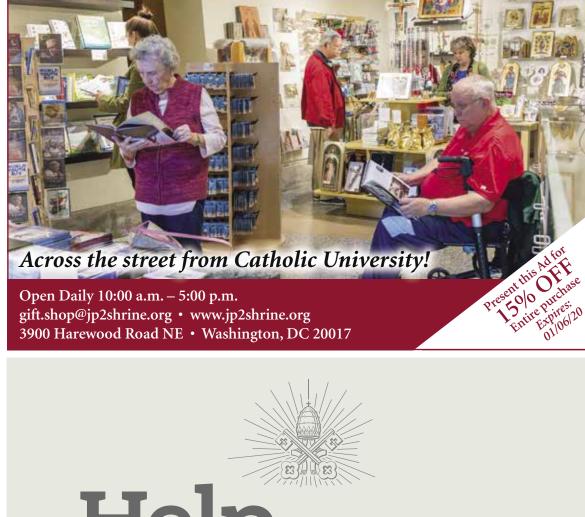
O Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep your priests within the shelter of your Sacred Heart, where none may touch them. Keep unstained their anointed hands, which daily touch your sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips, daily purpled with your Precious Blood. Keep pure and unearthly their hearts, sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood. Let your holy love surround them and shield them from the world's contagion. Bless their labors with abundant fruit, and may the souls to whom they minister be their joy and consolation here and in heaven their beautiful and everlasting crown.



Source: CNA











**Donate Securely Online** at NCRegister.com/donate For additional information or giving options please contact Mission Advancement at 205.795.5777 or

missionadvancement@ewtn.com

NATIONAL CATHOLIC **READ FAITHFULLY** 



