

The CATHOLIC TIMES

THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS' INFORMATION SOURCE
NOVEMBER 16, 2025 | THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME | VOLUME 74:23

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Sacred Heart Congress

The annual Sacred Heart Congress featured Mass, Adoration, confessions and speakers on Saturday, Nov. 8 at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church, Page 3

Father Francis M. Stanton passes away at age 90

Funeral Mass for Father Francis M. Stanton, 90, who died Wednesday, Oct. 29, was celebrated Wednesday, Nov. 5 at Columbus Immaculate Conception Church. Burial was at Resurrection Cemetery, Lewis Center.

He was born in Columbus on Jan. 7, 1935 to Thomas and Loretta (Butts) Stanton.

He was a 1951 graduate of Columbus St. Charles High School and earned degrees from the former Columbus St. Charles Borromeo Seminary and Mount St. Mary's of the West Seminary in Cincinnati. He also studied at the U.S. Naval Chaplains School in Newport, Rhode Island.

He was ordained to the priesthood on May 30, 1959 at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral by Bishop Clarence Issenmann and, with Msgr. John Dreese, was the senior priest of the Diocese of Columbus in terms of years of service.

He was an associate pastor at Columbus St. Agatha, Dennison Immaculate Concep-

tion, New Lexington St. Rose of Lima, Columbus St. Stephen the Martyr, New Philadelphia Sacred Heart, Columbus St. Peter and Columbus Our Lady of Peace churches, administrator at Wheelersburg St. Peter in Chains Church and pastor of the Crooksville Church of the Atonement. He also was a member of the diocesan vocations committee and an emergency relief chaplain.

He was commissioned in the chaplain corps of the U.S. Navy in 1967 and served in that position for 22 years at sites around the world.

While serving at Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines, he ministered on 31 ships off the coast of Vietnam. His other posts included the Naval Air Station, Whiting Field, Milton, Florida; the Naval Station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; the Naval Regional Medical Center, San Diego; the Naval Regional Medical Center, Great Lakes, Illinois; the Naval Air Station, Cubi Point, the Philippines; the Marine Corps Air Station,

Cherry Point, North Carolina; the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, Norfolk, Virginia; the Naval Station at Guam; the Naval Air Station, El Centro, California; and the Naval Construction Battalion Center (Seabees), Port Hueneme, California.

He retired from active duty on May 1, 1989, with the rank of commander. During his service, he received many medals from the U.S. Navy and one from the Republic of Vietnam.

He retired from active ministry on Dec. 31, 2004. He moved into the Villas at St. Therese in Columbus in 2008 and later resided at Mother Angeline McCrory Manor in Columbus.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Father Joseph Stanton and John Stanton; and a sister, Mary VonVille. Survivors include a brother, Roland; a sister, Marcella Boylan; and many nieces and nephews.



Father Francis M. Stanton File photo

Father Michael Nimocks' funeral homily for Father Frank Stanton

"I did not know Father Frank until I moved into the Villas at St. Therese Independent Living because of my late vocation to the priesthood.

"I would see him sitting in the common area on the first floor waiting as he was washing his clothes in the laundry room or walking outside or helping celebrate Mass at the Villas. He became a good friend.

"I met a resident in the hallway at the Villas after his death and they said he was a kind and gentle priest. What a way to be remembered! I hope that after I am gone, the people I have ministered remember me that way.

"I want to thank the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm and the staff at the Villas and the (Mother Angeline McCrory) Manor for their care of Father Frank over the years.

"Thank you for your presence here this morning and for your prayers to commend to the Lord our brother and friend Father Francis 'Frank' Stanton.

"I want to extend to the Stanton family our prayers for the loss of their brother and uncle, and thank you for sharing Father Joe (Stanton, Father Frank's deceased brother) and Father Frank with the Diocese of Columbus in spreading the Good News of the Gospel.

"We heard in our first reading from the Book of Wisdom, 'The souls of the just are in the hand of God.'

"How much of our lives is spent with our hands in the hands of loved ones? Parents hold the hands of their children as they cross busy streets and stroll along peaceful paths. Children hold the hands of their brothers and sisters. In Frank's case,

it was Father Joe, John, Mary, Marcella and Roland.

"Lovers hold hands in a gesture of tender affection. Congregations and couples sometimes hold hands during the Lord's Prayer at the Eucharist, thereby highlighting their unity as children of the one Father in heaven.

"Frank placed his hands in the hands of Bishop Issenmann on May 30, 1959 as they were anointed with sacred chrism. Frank lovingly held the hands of the sick and dying as he administered the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum.

"Frank also lovingly placed the consecrated host in the hands of the faithful during Mass, and Frank raised his hands to impart God's blessing at the end of Mass.

"We cannot forget that in the 22 years that Frank served the U.S. Navy, he was in the hands of the sailors he ministered to.

"An example is the time he was stationed at Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines ministering on 31 different naval ships off the coast of Vietnam. Another time, he was transferred from one ship to another ship by a bosun's chair. That takes a lot of faith!

"Jesus knew the power of this human gesture that links two people in a bond of deep trust and love. He knew that the Father had grasped Him by the hand at His baptism in the Jordan River and had grasped Him by the hand as He faced the tempter in the desert.

"He knew that God had grasped Him by the hand throughout His ministry of teaching and healing, throughout that life of service to God the Father and others that brought Him death on a cross. But

above all, Jesus rejoiced to know that God had grasped Him by the hand as He lay in the tomb and raised Him from the dead.

"The risen Lord Jesus spiritually grasps our hands throughout our lives. He grasped Frank by the hand on the day of his baptism and brought him into the family of God.

"On that day of dying to sin and rising to new life with Christ, Frank began a lifelong journey hand-in-hand with the Lord. Jesus was close to Frank throughout his life, grasping him by the hand, giving consolation and strength, guidance and encouragement.

"Frank experienced the strengthening hand of the Lord Jesus so often throughout life, in his joys and sorrows, successes and failures, just as we have. Then on October 29th, the Lord grasped Frank by the hand even more firmly, so that he might pass over from death to life.

"Such was the power by which Jesus raised up the only son of the widow of Naim; such is the power by which the risen Lord raises Frank and all believers to everlasting life.

"According to the Gospel of John, heaven is the Father's house, where Christ himself has prepared a dwelling place for all of us.

"In a life lived so much for others, in working daily to meet the needs of others, in going out of the way to serve others, Frank was imitating Jesus. Heaven is the Father's house where Jesus prepares each person's place.

"Heaven is where we encounter God – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – in the divine fullness. Jesus Himself is the way to the Father, the way to heaven. It is

through Christ that we get to heaven.

"Christ has taught us to pray the Lord's Prayer, and all our prayer is made through Christ our Lord. Christ invites us to pray in order that we may encounter God through our words and our silence, through our reading and our meditation.

"Christ has given us a foretaste of heaven here on earth through the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, His body and blood. It is in the Eucharist where we join into communion with Christ in His self-sacrifice for all of us.

"It is around this altar that we join with all the saints still living and the saints who have gone before us. Christ invites us to His banquet in order that we encounter Him through eating His body and drinking His blood, and experience heaven here on earth.

"Through Frank's 66 years of ordained ministry, he has helped us experience this through making the sacraments available to us, and we thank him for his 22 years outside our diocese ministering to our sailors and Marines as a Naval chaplain.

"Father Frank, I know you would appreciate this prayer from Cardinal Newman: 'May he support you all the day long, till the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed and the fever of life is over and your work is done. Then in his mercy, may he give you a safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at the last.'

"Eternal rest grant unto Father Frank, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen."

"May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."

The
**CATHOLIC
TIMES**

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Catholic Times (USPS 967-000) (ISSN 745-6050) is the official newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Ohio. It is published every other week throughout the year.
Subscription rate: \$26 per year, or call and make arrangements with your parish.
Periodical Postage Paid at Columbus OH 43218.

Postmaster: Send address changes to
Catholic Times 197 E. Gay St., Columbus OH 43215.
Please allow two to four weeks for change of address.

Mailing Address: 197 E. Gay St., Columbus OH 43215

Editorial/Advertising: (614) 224-5195

Subscriptions: (614) 224-6530

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Diocese of Columbus



Alicia and Mike Hernon deliver one of the featured addresses at the Sacred Heart Congress on Saturday, Nov. 8 at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church. *Photos courtesy Andy Long*



Father James Kubicki, SJ, a Jesuit priest from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, shares his experiences with the Sacred Heart devotion.



Sacred Heart Congress attendees listen attentively to one of the speakers during the 14th annual event on Saturday, Nov. 8 at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Sacred Heart Congress encourages devotion to Christ, family

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

The 14th annual Sacred Heart Congress held Saturday, Nov. 8 centered on life-giving attributes of Christ's heart and practical ways to implement devotion.

The congress was held at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church and hosted by Welcome His Heart, the locally-based Sacred Heart Enthronement Network.

The day began with a rosary at 7:30 a.m. led by the Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus, who serve at St. Paul, followed by Mass celebrated by Bishop Earl Fernandes.

This year's featured speakers included Mike and Alicia Hernon of the Messy Family Project ministry and podcast, and Father James Kubicki, S.J. (Society of Jesus).

A children's program was offered during the congress by the Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus with assistance from the Little Servant Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, who minister at St. John Paul II Early Childhood Education Center in Columbus.

"Our hope and our prayer is that we continue to live and share and spread the kingdom of love – the kingdom of love through devotion to the Heart of Jesus," said Emily Jaminet, national executive director of the Sacred Heart Enthronement Network.

For 14 years in the Columbus diocese, the

Sacred Heart Congress has sought to do just that: lead souls in devotion to Christ's Most Sacred Heart, first revealed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in Paray-le-Monial, France, in 1673.

"One of the things that's important to understand is this amazing restoration that comes when we acknowledge that we need Jesus," Jaminet said.

Sacred Heart Enthronement dates back to 1907. Father Mateo Crawley-Boevey, a Peruvian priest, was inspired to consecrate homes to the Sacred Heart of Jesus while praying in the Chapel of Apparitions at Paray-le-Monial. Enthronements began taking place in homes across the world.

The Sacred Heart Enthronement Network in Columbus was contacted by the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, of which Father Crawley-Boevey belonged. Jaminet shared a letter noting that the congregation was joining the Sacred Heart Congress spiritually from Rome.

The Sacred Heart Enthronement Network partners with dioceses, religious orders, local apostolates and individuals wanting to promote and live out devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the home, parish or school.

"This is not just for families – this is for all Catholics," Jaminet emphasized. "I cannot tell you the testimonies that come from those who are single parents, those who are widows who experience tremendous grace."

"We recently received a message from a

woman who had done the enthronement and said everything changed. She said, as a single mom, 'everything changed when the Heart of Jesus was welcomed into my life.'"

Father Jonathan Wilson, pastor at St. Paul, shared a history of diocesan consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In December 1873, the first bishop of Columbus, Sylvester Rosecrans, consecrated the diocese, which was then composed of present-day Columbus and Steubenville dioceses.

Bishop Emeritus Frederick Campbell reconsecrated the Columbus diocese to the Sacred Heart in 2015.

The Hernons, who founded the Messy Family Project to help individuals embrace the sacred calling of Catholic marriage and family life, gave the first keynote. The couple resides in Steubenville and has been married since 1994.

They are parents to 10 children and several grandchildren. They offered four "habits" for families to set the world on fire: be a spiritual leader in the home, make marriage the foundation of the family, take responsibility for their children's formation and intentionally grow the family culture.

"I want every family to not doubt – never believe the lie – that what you are doing is unimportant. That is from the Evil One," Alicia said. "The reality is that you are doing the most important work in the Church today, and young families especially."

Growing a family culture is important, the Hernons explained, because it confers identity, belonging and mission to its members. Children learn what is true, good

and beautiful, such as by witnessing their parents' love one another.

"When they go out into the world and someone in high school or in college says to them, 'If you loved me, you would –,' fill in the blank with something awful, your kids will look and say, 'That's not real love,'" Mike said.

He added the importance of presence. Parents, he explained, make the intangible – sacred and divine – tangible for their children. Children need to be seen and loved with their parents present.

Mike recalled struggling with work that entailed long hours and much travel. Even at home, he noted, he felt as though he were constantly on call.

"I had to put this stupid thing away," he said, holding up his cellphone. "I had to put it in my bedroom when I came home so that I could actually be present because, more than anything else, our kids are dying for our presence."

The Hernons encouraged couples to remember their wedding vows. Thinking back to their wedding day, Alicia recalled standing at the altar, looking at the person across from her, not knowing what would happen in life.

It is an act of faith, she noted, to make a life-long commitment, uncertain of what is to come. Brides and grooms can only be certain of being with each other in life,

See SACRED HEART, Page 4



Altar servers lead the procession out of Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church after Mass ahead of the Sacred Heart Congress. *Photos courtesy Andy Long*



The Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus help lead a children's program at the Sacred Heart Congress that included Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Bishop shares diocesan update with men's luncheon club

By Doug Bean
Catholic Times Editor

Bishop Earl Fernandes provided an update on the state of the diocese while addressing the Catholic Men's Luncheon Club on Friday, Nov. 7 at Columbus St. Patrick Church.

In a talk and follow-up question-and-answer session that lasted nearly an hour, the bishop shared positive news about the growth of the diocese in what he has identified as its four priorities: vocations, evangelization, Catholic education and social outreach.

He began by expressing thanks that The Appeal, the diocese's major source for funding its programs, is continuing at a record pace and noting that he's appreciative the diocese was able to reduce the number of parish closings over the past three years from the 32 recommended through the Real Presence Real Future initiative to 16 due to the availability of missionary priests to serve in ministry here.

The shortage of priests must be addressed through attracting young men to the priesthood, and Bishop Fernandes said a push to increase vocations has resulted in 43 seminarians this year, up from 17 just three years ago, and that expects as many as 50 to be in formation next year.

The bishop attributed the growth in vocations to various programs the diocese has put in place. Among them are Andrew Dinners held throughout the year in various parts of the diocese where the bishop joins young men with interest in the priesthood for a meal and fellowship; live-in weekends at the Pontifical College Josephinum; Melchizedek Project meetings that include talks about vocations; and outreach at the St. Thomas More Newman Center that serves the Ohio State University campus.

More seminarians have presented the diocese with a good problem to have: the need for additional monetary support for vocations. The cost per year to the diocese to educate young men studying for the priesthood has more than doubled from \$935,000 three years ago to \$2.4 million this year, the bishop revealed.

Additionally, the diocese has ramped up efforts to encourage young women to consider religious life. A Marian Evening was held earlier this month at the Newman Center, where more than 30 sisters interacted with young women discerning a consecrated vocation.

"More and more women are considering consecrated life because we have religious again in our schools and in our parishes," the bishop said.

Bishop Fernandes emphasized that evangelization and catechesis initiatives have been revamped to incorporate religious education for parents as well as their children. The bishop noted that a prime opportunity for young people and families to immerse themselves in the faith will be at their doorstep on Jan. 1-5 when the annual SEEK Conference sponsored by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) takes place at the Columbus Convention Center.

At the Newman Center in Columbus, evangelization efforts have led to growth in the number of students at Ohio State receiving instruction to enter the Church, attending Mass and participating in Bible studies. This year, there are potentially up to 70 young men and women who will be receiving the sacraments, the bishop said.

Another opportunity to evangelize has emerged with the influx of newcomers in all parts of the diocese, many of whom come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and speak different languages.

The bishop said that with diversity on the rise and the number of Catholics in

central Ohio doubling over the past few years to more than 500,000, the diocese needs to provide support and resources to new communities.

In recent years, the number of Masses for ethnic communities in their native languages has grown dramatically, with many of those in Spanish around the diocese. There are now 17 sites in the diocese with multiple Sunday Masses in Spanish, some of those at churches previously targeted for closing.

"This is the face of the Church in the Diocese of Columbus," the bishop said.

The bishop highlighted the growth of Catholic education, telling the men at the luncheon that the diocese's 11 high schools and 39 elementary schools are at 90 percent capacity. Schools on the west side of Columbus, he pointed out, have large numbers of Latino students. In addition, new schools are in the works, including one at Columbus St. Peter Powell St. Joan of Arc Parish.

Each high school in the diocese now has a priest in service to the students and staff, and religious sisters also are working in education at several schools.

"We've revised the religious course of study and we've incorporated Theology of the Body so that our Catholic schools are authentically Catholic," said Bishop Fernandes, who recently returned from Rome after leading a group of administrators on a pilgrimage for the Jubilee for Education.

"I'm not interested in funding Catholic schools as private schools with religion," he continued. "Catholic schools are an extension of the diocese, an extension of the Church's ministry, an extension of the life of the parish, and they exist for the same reason that the Church exists – to evangelize."

The Church's social outreach has expanded through Catholic Social Services (CSS) under the direction of CEO

and president Kelley Henderson with the creation of new programs and the growth of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Center on Columbus' west side to more than triple its former size.

CSS provides assistance for the elderly, children and mothers as well as material resources and job training programs. The bishop disclosed that Newark St. Francis de Sales Church and CSS are working together to repurpose the former Heath St. Leonard Church as an outreach center.

Meanwhile, the diocese continues to work in partnership with the Joint Organization for Inner-city Needs (JOIN), Bishop Griffin Resource Center, St. Stephen Community House and St. Vincent Family Center in Columbus and the St. Francis Evangelization Center in McArthur.

"There's a lot of evangelical work going on through Catholic Social Services," the bishop said.

Speaking directly to the men at the luncheon, Bishop Fernandes emphasized the need for strong fathers to lead their families in faith. High divorce rates and lack of catechesis over the past 50 years have resulted in the breakdown of families, he said, causing many young people to abandon the faith.

Bishop Fernandes stressed the need for lifelong Catholic education, the importance of prayer and interior life, developing a personal relationship with Jesus and striving for holiness. Studies indicate that in families where the father attends Mass the children in the home are more likely to continue to practice the faith.

"Men have to nurture their faith and sanctify their wives as well as allow themselves to be sanctified by their spouses," the bishop said. "They need to set the tone for the family and practice the faith so that the faith can be translated through the family."

SACRED HEART: Congress encourages devotion to Christ, family, *Continued from Page 3*

whether they be rich or poor, in sickness or health, is unknown.

"God also covenanted Himself to us in our marriage," Mike added. "It is not your love that sustains your marriage, but rather, it is your marriage – the sacrament – that sustains your love."

The Hernons encouraged couples be spiritual leaders at home, remembering that their call is sacred.

They reminded attendees that, for a calling to be sacred, they don't have to constantly be on their knees in prayer, such as some consecrated religious. Holiness is

in the service of home life, too.

Father Kubicki followed as the second keynote speaker. He is the author of "A Heart on Fire" and a conference and parish mission speaker, retreat director and seminary spiritual director in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

He entered the Society of Jesus, commonly known as the Jesuits, religious order in 1971 and was ordained in 1983.

"A Sacred Heart devotion is not one optional devotion. It is not one optional devotion among others," he emphasized. "It's at the heart, if you will, of our faith."

Father Kubicki shared stories of the importance of the devotion and its effect on people.

One such affected individual, Father Pedro Arrupe, a Spanish Jesuit priest, was a missionary to Japan from the 1930s to mid-1960s, during the time of World War II. He was elected general superior of the Society of Jesus.

"Two months before his stroke (and death) in 1981," Father Kubicki recalled, "he said the following, 'There is a tremendous power latent in this devotion to the heart of Christ. Each of us should discover it for himself.'"

"There is here an extraordinary grace that God offers us, power that's greater than the atomic bomb because ... nuclear weapons only kill. They cannot give life."

For 17 years, Father Kubicki served as director of the Apostleship of Prayer (now the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network). He

encouraged young Jesuits to be involved in Jesus' mission by promoting the Sacred Heart devotion, including Father Joe Laramie, S.J., who now serves as a spiritual director for Welcome His Heart Sacred Heart Enthronement Network.

Father Kubicki explained that the Sacred Heart is "not really our devotion" but "God's devotion to us – God's devoted love to us." He told attendees that the devotion is simply a response to His.

It is returning love for love, Father Kubicki added, making sacrifices individually and as a family. Every time an individual receives Jesus in Holy Communion, he noted, Christ unites His Heart with theirs.

Living out the Sacred Heart devotion, however, is more than uttering a few prayers or attending Mass on First Fridays as part of the devotion each month.

"It's even more than an enthronement because the enthronement has to be lived. Just as marriage is more than the ceremony, more than the wedding, so consecration ... is a whole way of life," he said.

"It means that our hearts and minds are transformed to be more like the Heart of Jesus. Consecration ... means living in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that our hearts may be as one with His Heart, and this is a lifetime process one day at a time."

The Sacred Heart Congress concluded with Exposition, Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.



Mass with Healing

Tuesday
November 18

PLACE:
ST MARY MAGDALENE

Rosary 5:30 pm
Worship 6:00 pm
Mass 6:30 pm

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Young women hear about religious life at Marian Evening

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

More than 30 consecrated religious sisters and 30 young women gathered at the Columbus St. Thomas More Newman Center, adjacent to Ohio State University, on Wednesday, Nov. 5 for a snack and chat.

The Marian Evening was organized by Sister Antionette Cedrone, a Salesian sister serving in the diocese as the bishop's delegate for religious.

Young women ages 18-35 were invited to spend the evening with consecrated sisters from across the diocese. Religious orders displayed various booths in the Newman Center's gathering space and shared their mission while chatting with attendees over iced tea, crackers and cheese.

A total of 224 consecrated sisters among 20 communities reside in the diocese.

Fourteen orders were present for the evening, including the Apostolic Sisters of St. John, the Order of the Most Holy Savior of St. Bridget (Bridgettine Sisters), Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, the Children of Mary, the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro, the Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters).

Also attending were the Dominican Sisters, Immaculate Conception Province; Dominican Sisters of Peace; the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist; the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity; the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (FIH); the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (FIHM); and the Little Servant Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

In a break from tradition, the Marian Evening was held at the Newman Center rather than a parish church.

Sister Janna San Juan, a Salesian sister and the diocesan campus ministry coordinator, noted that the change in location made the event more accessible to college students and young people.

"A lot of them are in that phase of life where they're deciding what to do," she said. "I think vocation in general is a question that a lot of them have on their minds, and so, I think it was just a good opportunity to bring it to them."

Sister Janna encouraged young women not to be afraid in getting to know religious sisters and consider God's call for their life. She suggested observing how communities pray, interact with each other and serve.

"I think this is a beautiful opportunity for our students and young women in the

area to get to know all of the sisters because some of them haven't met them," she added.

The Marian Evening took place during National Vocation Awareness Week, which was held from Nov. 2 to 8.

The diocese hosts Andrew Dinners about three or four times per year for young men to discern the priesthood. Bishop Earl Fernandes said young women need to see religious sisters.

"It's one thing to see them from a distance; it's another thing to talk to them, to spend time with them, to have a meal with them and to hear the stories of their own calls," the bishop explained.

"It's very beautiful, many of their conversion stories, but also how they feel so loved by Christ the Bridegroom. I think our young women need to hear this and to understand that this is a particular vocation, a special gift to the Church."

Sister Ave Maria, who entered the Dominican Sister of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist in 1999, shared a reflection with religious sisters and young women. The Michigan native and Franciscan University of Steubenville graduate teaches second grade at Worthington St. Michael the Archangel School.

She reflected on the story of the Anointing at Bethany (Matthew 26: 6-13). The passage, included in all four gospels, recounts a woman coming to Jesus with a jar of costly oil and anointing His Head.

Sister Ave Maria, who formerly worked as a nurse at the University of Michigan Medical Center, reflected on the Biblical woman pouring herself out for Christ. More broadly, her act represents giving oneself to God completely through consecrated life.

"We break the jar, so to speak, and pour out everything to Him through the three vows that we make," she explained, alluding to vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in religious life.

Consecration imitates Christ's total gift of love and self-emptying on the cross, and in the Eucharist, offering His Body.

"He's inviting you into that kenosis (self-emptying) ... that He's already done, and isn't that the definition of love?" Sister Ave Maria asked.

"Love is to will the good of another and to pour out yourself for the good of another. He's inviting us into that pouring out."

A total gift of self, she noted, is a sign of the end times.

"Religious, in a very profound way, are signs of heaven, so when you see a religious



Sister Antionette Cedrone, FMA, the bishop's delegate for religious in the diocese, speaks to the young women assembled at Buckeye Catholic for the Marian Evening on Wednesday, Nov. 5.

Photos courtesy Sarah Lightle



Sister Ave Maria, OP shares observations on religious life during the Marian Evening for young women in the diocese on Wednesday, Nov. 5 at the St. Thomas More Newman Center in Columbus that serves Buckeye Catholic.



Sister Loretta Dedomenicis, a student life assistant at Buckeye Catholic, takes time to be with students during the Marian Evening at the Newman Center, which serves Ohio State University.



Sister Antionette Cedrone, FMA, the bishop's delegate for religious in the diocese, speaks to the young women assembled at Buckeye Catholic for the Marian Evening on Wednesday, Nov. 5.

Photo courtesy Sarah Lightle

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Navy chaplain from diocese has seen combat around the world



Father Daniel Swartz leads the invocation prayer at the U.S. Navy's 250th birthday celebration with the Secretary of War, Chief of Naval Operations, President of the United States and the First Lady in attendance.
Photo courtesy Father Daniel Swartz via screenshot



Father Daniel Swartz, a priest from the Diocese of Columbus serving as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy, celebrates Mass at a cathedral in Oslo, Norway.

By Tim Puet

For The Catholic Times

Since the early 1900s, the U.S. Navy has used the slogan "Join the Navy and See the World" to entice potential recruits.

Father (and naval Lt. Cmdr.) Daniel Swartz of Columbus St. Agatha Church can attest to the accuracy of that statement. Father Swartz, ordained as a priest of the Diocese of Columbus in 2016, is a member of the military Corps of Chaplains and since 2019 has served as a Navy chaplain in Afghanistan, Guam and most recently aboard the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman.

That ship returned to its home port of Norfolk, Virginia in early June after being deployed since September 2024 as part of the Navy's Fifth and Sixth fleets. During four months of that period, the Truman was engaged in combat with the Houthis in Yemen to protect their attacks from closing down civilian shipping in the Red Sea.

"This was the most combat an aircraft carrier has seen since World War II, so things were pretty busy, to say the least," Father Swartz wrote in an email message to *The Catholic Times*.

"We launched defensive missions against the Houthis while they shot cruise missiles, ballistic missiles and attack drones against our fleet and aircraft."

After returning to Norfolk in August, it conducted what the Navy describes as an "ammunition offload" in which it transferred 1,307 tons of conventional munitions to the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush and the cargo ship USNS Robert E. Peary. It is now undergoing maintenance and awaiting its next deployment, which has not been disclosed. It has been part of 10 deployments since being commissioned in 1998.

This wasn't the first time Father Swartz has been in combat. He was a Marine Corps chaplain (the Marines are part of the Department of the Navy) in August 2021 when Afghanistan fell to the Taliban. As the last priest to leave that nation, he witnessed the chaos of the evacuation of American troops there.

His next assignment was to the naval station in Guam, which was significantly damaged by a typhoon in May 2023. His time on the Truman, besides the four months of combat, also included stops in Norway, France and Greece and a crossing of the Arctic Circle.

Being in the United States for an extended period will allow Father Swartz more time to come home to Columbus than has been available to him since being with the Navy.

"I am excited that this is the first time in quite a while that I will be able to celebrate Christmas and Thanksgiving with my family in the same year. Usually, it is one or the other, or even sometimes neither of them," he said.

"I write extensively and send letters to a wide correspondence; there is not always the luxury of connectivity or phone signal. I am hoping to get back to Columbus in November and also for the upcoming SEEK conference in January."

Father Swartz is grateful to have a relatively quiet period in which to wind down after the stress he has been through.

"Each deployment and duty station is unique in its needs and how a priest can be impactful," he said. "Right now, I am focusing on achieving a bit of stability now that this most recent deployment has concluded by visiting family and the Diocese of Columbus, renewing my praying and regaining a better physical lifestyle. Deployments are difficult and can throw off everything from prayer to nutrition, despite being diligent."

"One new development is that I was



Father Daniel Swartz writes a letter while flying between two U.S. Navy ships.

Photos courtesy Father Daniel Swartz



Father Daniel Swartz (right) is in flight with another U.S. Navy sailor on a helicopter.

recently selected to be promoted to lieutenant commander, which was a surprise as I was not even considered to be 'in zone' for consideration. This has highlighted the need of not just having priests in the military, but priests also positioned within the military to advise and help shape the cultural and ethical development of the armed forces."

Statistics provided by the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA show that there are 337 Catholic chaplains serving 220 U.S. military installations in 29 nations, with one priest for every 1,800 service members. There are 1.8 million Catholics in the military, representing 25 percent of all those in the services, but only 6 percent of military chaplains are Catholic.

An aircraft carrier the size of the Truman has a crew of about 5,500 sailors, depending on the situation. Father Swartz said that during its recently concluded deployment, "Catholics were the largest congregation aboard the carrier and Sunday Mass would have around 100 individuals, give or take. Each Sunday was a different sampling of people due to availability because the aircraft carrier never sleeps. Something is always occurring."

"For example, if the pilots were out flying, then they obviously could not make the Sunday Masses but would show up for daily Mass Monday or whenever they returned. An alarm went off during the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and all I could do was yell 'Whatever this is, as soon as it's over, we will continue Mass' and sure enough, an hour later we resumed Mass. You have to be as flexible as you can and roll with the punches."

"There were five chaplains aboard the same aircraft carrier I was on and every smaller ship (in his fleet) had one chaplain. I was not just the only Catholic priest on

See CHAPLAIN, Page 23

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Thanksgiving dinner will promote respect for environment

By Tim Puet

For The Catholic Times

In the spirit of respect for each other and for the planet fostered by the late Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home," this year's annual Thanksgiving dinner at Columbus St. Aloysius Church will be an environmentally friendly event.

"Warren Wright of the St. Vincent de Paul Society approached me after last year's dinner about switching from plastic plates and utensils to having the same items made from more environmentally sustainable materials," dinner chairman Sandy Bonneville said.

"So, at this year's dinner, all those items will be biodegradable. Warren will bring in a receptacle to collect them and then place them in a pile to be turned into compost."

The dinner will be from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 27 at the parish, 2165 W. Broad St. Bonneville said it has taken place for more than 50 years and thinks it's her 29th year as its coordinator.

"That's just a guess," she said. "It's been running for so long I'm not sure anyone knows when it started. I've been involved with it most of that time. I began helping the late Steve Joyce, who started it, just got more into it as he got older and eventually began running it."

Each year, more than 1,000 dinners are served either at the parish hall or through takeout or delivery to homes and to people living on the streets and in homeless camps in the Hilltop and Franklinton areas of Columbus' west side, where the church is located. The Columbus Folk Music Society has been part of the event for the past decade and again will provide entertainment.

Many turkeys for the dinner will be provided by the Fry Out Cancer organization, which since its founding in 2014 has donated more than \$260,000 from turkey sales to the James Cancer Research Hospital and Solove Research Institute at Ohio State University and to Nationwide Children's Hospital. A \$500 donation this year from the Knights of Columbus of Grove City Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church was one of several donations that also help cover expenses.

Among volunteers serving at the dinner will be the five Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro who live in the former St. Aloysius rectory.

The Martha Circle, a women's group affiliated with The Catholic Foundation, will bring pies. Coats and blankets from drives collected respectively by Columbus St. Mary Magdalene and Hilliard St. Brendan the Navigator churches will be available and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians will have warm socks for anyone who asks.

Fry Out Cancer, led by Matt Freedman of New Albany and Dr. Sameek Roychowdhury of the James, became involved with the dinner through Bonneville's son, Dr. Russell Bonneville Jr., a cancer researcher at OSU who now is at the University of Michigan as a fellow in hematology and oncology. He will be in Columbus for a period before and after dinner, at which he has helped since childhood. His father, Sandy's husband Russell Bonneville Sr., played a key role until his death in 2017.

Bonneville said local chef Tim Miller and his family also have been important to the event's continued success. "For about the past six years I couldn't have done it without them," she said.

"When I started volunteering, we may have served 100 meals. Now it's up to 1,000 and the need continues to grow," said



Sisters from the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro hand out clothing during the annual Thanksgiving Day dinner last year at Columbus St. Aloysius Church. CT file photo by Ken Snow

Bonneville, who also is active in the Taking It to the Streets ministry of St. Aloysius and St. Mary Magdalene churches, which distributes more than 100 meals a week to those without homes in Franklinton and the Hilltop.

"So many people come year after year to the dinner that it's become a neighborhood in itself, like a big family with mostly members who are poor," she said. "I think of it as a quilt of poverty with each patch representing a different situation, each stitch a different need, with the dinner one of the things that knits the neighborhood together."

"You'd think that with a hall filled with people, it would be pretty noisy, yet when they come here, it's like they were in church, the atmosphere is so reverent. Maybe the presence of the sisters, the recognition by people that God's work is being done here and the mutual respect being shown to everyone has something to do with it."

Another long-running Thanksgiving dinner in the diocese is that of Circleville St. Joseph Church, 134 W. Mound St., which is providing Thanksgiving dinners for home delivery or takeout this year for the 41st year.

Parish secretary Crista Kramer said more than 400 dinners of turkey, ham, green beans, stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberries and milk usually are distributed each year. Help comes from about a dozen kitchen volunteers and many delivery volunteers, with money coming from the parish general fund and individual donors.

Pickaway County residents who call the church at (740) 477-2549 by Friday, Nov. 21 will have dinner delivered to their homes between 11 a.m. and noon on Thanksgiving Day. Dinners also will be delivered at the same times on Christmas Day, Thursday, Dec. 25. The registration deadline is Monday, Dec. 22.

The Community Kitchen at the St. John Center, 640 S. Ohio Ave., will serve dinner in its dining room on Thanksgiving Day from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., said kitchen director M.J. McCluskey.

Columbus St. Dominic Church, 453 N. 20th St., will have a holiday lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 19 in its hall and will distribute Thanksgiving food boxes beginning at 1 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24 to anyone requesting them, said building manager Sheila White. The turkeys are donated by St. Dominic parishioners and members of the New Albany Church of the Resurrection and Westerville St. Paul the Apostle Church.

The 28th annual "Bring a Turkey to Church" weekend will take place at St. Paul Church, 313 N. State St., after all Masses on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 22 and 23. Large containers of Thanksgiving-related food and cash donations for the Community

Kitchen also will be donated that weekend. In recent years, enough turkeys have been collected to allow the kitchen to distribute the excess to other agencies serving needy families.

The Church of the Resurrection, 6300 E. Dublin-Granville Road, is collecting frozen turkeys and donations for other items for the 18th year for Columbus St. Dominic and St. James the Less churches. Jude Luffler, a Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School student who is coordinator for the collection, said a large truck to receive the items will be parked outside the parish ministry center on the Saturdays and Sundays of Nov. 15 and 16 and Nov. 22 and 23. The goal is to collect more than 500 turkeys.

The Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs (JOIN), a diocesan agency at 578 E. Main St., Columbus, that serves the city and Franklin County, will receive boxes of food for distribution on the three weekdays before Thanksgiving from the Byron Saunders Foundation, a central Ohio organization that provides holiday meals annually to families in need, said JOIN director Lisa Keita.

The St. Francis Evangelization Center, 404 W. South St., McArthur, doesn't have room to host a Thanksgiving dinner but gives about 500 Vinton County families a chance to have a family dinner at home through its annual Turkey Toss program. Eligible families come to the center and receive \$50 food vouchers for use at Campbell's Market in McArthur, the county's only full-service grocery, said center director Ashley Riegel. Turkeys also are distributed to about 60 families who live in remote areas of the county.

The St. Vincent de Paul pantry at Logan St. John Church, 351 N. Market St., will distribute baskets with holiday dinner items on Sunday, Nov. 23 from noon to 1 p.m. to families who have registered for a basket.

Sunbury St. John Neumann Church, 9633 E. State Route 37, is part of a Christmas box drive sponsored by Big Walnut Friends Who Share, an outreach of churches in the Sunbury and Galena areas. The parish is collecting canned carrots, preferably in large (40- and 60-ounce) sizes and canned frosting for a Christmas meal, with other churches collecting other items. Anyone attending the church's 9 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Mass is asked to bring canned or boxed foods for Friends Who Share.

West Jefferson Sts. Simon and Jude Church, 9350 High Free Pike, is collecting containers of instant mashed potatoes, gravy and stuffing, as well as monetary donations for meat, for the community's Good Samaritan Food Pantry. The parish Knights of Columbus council is collecting winter coats, gloves and hats for the Bishop

Griffin Resource Center on Columbus' east side through Sunday, Dec. 7.

The pantry at Columbus St. James the Less Church, 1652 Oakland Park Ave., will distribute nearly 400 two-box food baskets for Thanksgiving, said Jeff Zehala of the parish St. Vincent de Paul Society. One box will contain turkey, produce, bread and eggs, with perishable items in the other. The items are donated by Resurrection and St. Paul churches and several other parishes and by Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School students.

Zoar Holy Trinity Church, 1835 Dover-Zoar Road N.E., in cooperation with the Tuscarawas Valley Ministerial Association, will distribute dinners on Nov. 23 to homes, workplaces, domestic violence shelters, firehouses and hospices. The dinners will be prepared at the church and include turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, dressing, cranberry salad and pie.

New Lexington St. Rose Church, 309 N. Main St., is sponsoring its annual Turkey Trot 5-kilometer run or walk at 9 a.m. Thanksgiving Day in the parking lot of its former school at 119 W. Water St. Registration is \$25 on the day of the race. The parish also is collecting food items on Nov. 23 for distribution the following day. The St. Vincent de Paul Society is providing turkeys with parishioners asked to donate the rest.

Both Zanesville parishes — St. Thomas Aquinas at 955 E. Main St. and St. Nicholas at 144 N. 5th St. — will be collecting nonperishable food items at weekend Masses on Nov. 22 and 23 and at the St. Thomas parish office from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the three days before Thanksgiving.

The St. Vincent Family Center of Columbus is collecting donations to support Thanksgiving meals

for approximately 100 families and clients in its care, said development coordinator Carson Firestone. It also is running its annual Adopt A Family program, in which families or individuals receive information on a needy family, shop for items on the family's wish list, wrap and label the gifts and deliver them to the center on a specified time and date. Gift packages will be assembled on Thursday and Friday, Dec. 4 and 5 and distributed on Thursday and Friday, Dec. 11 and 12.

To apply as a gift giver, go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AdoptAFamily2025>. Monetary gifts may be made at any time online at www.svfs.ohio.org/donate or sent to St. Vincent Family Services, 1490 E. Main St., Columbus, Ohio 43205. For more information, contact Firestone at cfirestone@svfc.org.

The Scioto Catholic Community will serve dinner from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day at the Holy Redeemer Activity Center, 1325 Gallia St., Portsmouth. Carryouts will be available for those unable to attend.

The Lancaster Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, 132 S. High St., will collect nonperishable food and toilet items at its 9 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Mass to benefit the parish food pantry.

Columbus Christ the King Church, 2777 E. Livingston Ave., is conducting a novena to Christ the King through Saturday, Nov. 22. Its annual parish awards will be presented the following day at its 10 a.m. English and 12:30 p.m. Spanish Masses and will be followed at 1:30 by a celebration of the Feast of Christ the King at All Saints Academy on the parish campus. Thanksgiving Day Masses will be at 8:30 a.m. at both Christ the King and its sister parish, St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 2692 E. 5th Ave. Both will be in English and Spanish.

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St. Timothy students experience Latino culture on Day of the Dead

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

The Columbus diocese's Hispanic population continues to rise, including among Catholic school students.

In June, Bishop Earl Fernandes noted that the diocese's Latino population increased by 20 percent in a year while speaking at Catholic Social Services' newly opened Our Lady of Guadalupe Center in Columbus.

Latino culture has made its way through diocesan schools and parishes, including at Columbus St. Timothy School, about a 10- to 15-minute drive north of downtown. Students celebrated Día de Los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, a popular Latino custom, on Monday, Nov. 3.

"Our school has become far more diverse. We have a large amount of Hispanic culture as well," principal George Mosholder said. "We want students to learn and embrace it."

While St. Timothy is not a predominately Hispanic parish or area, he estimated that approximately 12 percent of the school's students are Latino. That number is far different than it was a decade ago.

"It absolutely has increased," Mosholder said of the school's diverse population, "and within the last, I would say, 10 years, it's increased immensely."

Not Latino by origin, Tara Krohe – who serves as co-president of the Home and School Association – and her husband choose to send their two sons to St. Timothy.

The Krohe family resides in Columbus' Clintonville neighborhood but drives the extra miles to attend the parish and school. The decision was for its culture.

"After leaving Chicago, my husband and I chose ... St. Timothy as our new home community for its vibrant cultural and socioeconomic diversity," Tara said. "It was important to us that our kids grow up understanding and appreciating that people come from many different backgrounds."

To educate students on Latino culture, which includes several of their peers, St. Timothy invited Mexican dancers and a local Mexican author to school to celebrate Día de Los Muertos.

The student body gathered in the school gym for a Mexican folk dance performance by Sol y Luna. Six performers shared traditional folkloric dances from Mexico with students.

Sol y Luna has been present in Columbus for about three years.

St. Timothy set up an ofrenda, or altar, by the school's main entrance. Fifth grade students celebrated with Mexican sweet treats.

Middle school students made paper flowers and papel picado (perforated paper). The colorful tissue with intricate cut patterns is used to decorate altars.

Día de Los Muertos is traditionally celebrated on Nov. 2, listed on the Church calendar as the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, or All Souls' Day. Latino customs include visiting cemeteries and having picnics by loved ones' graves.

Celebrants honor and pray for deceased family and friends by setting up an ofrenda in the home. Altars



St. Timothy School set up an ofrenda, or altar, by the school's main entrance for the Day of the Dead commemoration.



An ofrenda, or altar to honor the dead, is displayed in St. Timothy School's fifth grade classroom.

include photos of the dead, candy skulls, candles and gifts of food and flowers.

"We do this every year for our loved ones," said Chyenne Lopez-Shane, who has three children enrolled at St. Timothy and a son who recently graduated.

"I just love getting our whole community involved. We've had people outside of our school bring in photos," she said of the ofrenda at St. Timothy School. "The parish has brought in photos – just seeing it be for the entire school and not one teacher celebrating it."

"That's something that everybody should experience," Kathleen Ries said of Día de Los Muertos, "remembering those who've gone before us and keeping their memories alive."

Ries oversees St. Timothy's Home and School Association enrichment program. She has three children attending the school: two sons in fourth and sixth grades and a daughter in second.

Local author and native of Chihuahua, Mexico – a Mexican state bordering New Mexico and Texas – Silvia Rodríguez also visited St. Timothy to speak to students about Día de Los Muertos.

Rodríguez attends Columbus St. Mary Church in the German Village neighborhood and has written several bilingual children's books.

Rodríguez and her husband, Goose, emigrated to the United States in 1999 and relocated to Columbus in 2012.

The Mexican natives brought their pet parrot, Taco, to St. Timothy for the



Sol y Luna dancers display their traditional costumes in the St. Timothy School gym while accompanied by Kathleen Ries (left), overseer of St. Timothy's Home and School Enrichment program; Chyenne Lopez-Shane (second from left), a volunteer who helped with the Día de Los Muertos event; and Silvia Rodríguez (right), an author who spoke with the students about the commemoration of the dead on Nov. 3.

Photos courtesy Sarah Lightle



Fifth grade students enjoy the traditional bread made for Día de Los Muertos.



Sol y Luna has shared traditional Mexican dances with students in Columbus for the past three years.

presentation.

"I wanted to (catch) the kids' attention," Rodríguez explained. "Sometimes it's pretty hard to (get) their attention, and since we are talking about the Day of the Dead, these birds last forever – 60, 70 years."

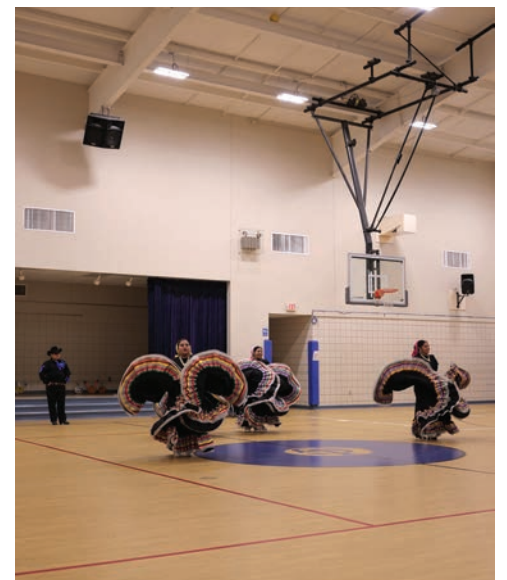
Students, "probably, they already went through the sadness of losing their pets," she added.

Rodríguez is the author of children's books including "Taco: The African Grey Parrot" and "Mandino: Celebrating the Day of the Dead," an interactive story geared toward readers ages 6 to 12.

"Death is part of our lives," she told students. "Even though we are sad



Silvia Rodríguez, with husband Goose and their adopted parrot Taco, shares her experience observing the Día de Los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, with St. Timothy School students in the gym. She's the author of several children's books, including "Mandino: Celebrating the Day of the Dead," an interactive story geared to readers ages 6 to 12.



A Mexican folk dance is performed by members of Sol y Luna in the St. Timothy School gymnasium on Nov. 3.

when we have to say goodbye to a pet or someone that we love, it's life. One day, we're going to go through this, and it's normal."

Rodríguez shared her experience of Día de Los Muertos with St. Timothy students.

The Mexican tradition, she emphasized, is not a day of sadness but a celebration. It is intended to remember loved ones who have achieved eternal life.



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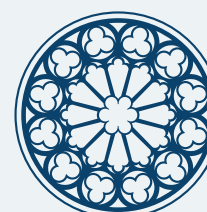
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ODU observes Black Catholic History Month with lecture, Gospel Mass

By Emily Strand

For The Catholic Times

In 1990, the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus chose November to observe as Black Catholic History Month. This designation marks November as a time to honor the cultural heritage and contributions of Black Catholics to the Church and society. It is a time to celebrate the “gift of Blackness” to the Church, as Pope Paul VI put it when he visited Kampala, Uganda in 1969. The choice of November for this observance coincides with feasts of special significance to Black Catholics, such as All Saints, All Souls and the feast day of St. Martin de Porres.

Ohio Dominican University (ODU) began its observance of Black Catholic History Month in earnest in 2024 with our first annual Black Catholic History Month lecture, given by Dr. Cecilia Moore, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton and renowned scholar of U.S. Catholic history. Dr. Moore shared with the ODU community the history and significance of a statue that adorns its own campus: “Come Unto Me,” a striking image of Christ cast in 1945 by Black Catholic artist Richmond Barthé. Dr. Moore’s lecture gave ODU a deeper appreciation of the campus’ own connections to the movement in the mid-20th century that sought to celebrate and promote the richness of Black culture and aesthetics in the sacred spaces of our Catholic tradition. In Barthé, she introduced us to one of many hidden but compelling figures in American Catholic history. As a result of Dr. Moore’s lecture, the statue was moved by the Dominican Sisters of Peace from its former location, which had become somewhat overgrown by surrounding trees, to a prominent location in front of their Motherhouse.

This year’s lecture was given at Ohio Dominican on Nov. 5 by Dr. Joseph Flipper, Mary Ann Spearin Chair of Theology at the University of Dayton. Dr. Flipper shared research conducted for a forthcoming book on the Black Catholic movement in a presentation entitled “Vatican II, the Black Catholic Movement, and the Struggle for the African American Ordinariate.” Dr. Flipper reviewed some of the key teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965), underscoring its desire for a flourishing local Church with its own indigenous clergy and sense of self-determination. He then linked these teachings not too far away places we might call “mission territory” but to the struggle of African American Catholics here in the United States.

Whereas Dr. Moore in 2024 focused on aesthetic contributions to the Black Catholic Movement, Dr. Flipper taught us about the intentional efforts of Black



Dr. Joseph Flipper, a theology professor at the University of Dayton, shares information from his research on the Black Catholic movement in America. Photo courtesy Emily Strand

Catholics, beginning in the 1960s, to develop and direct their own educational, catechetical and ecclesial structures within the Church. Why was this needed? In the 19th and 20th centuries, there were more than 500 missions and churches exclusively serving Black Catholics in the U.S., but these were mostly directed by White missionary order priests and religious, as well as diocesan clergy. We know today that representation matters; if you can see it, you can be it. Vatican officials took this view, encouraging the development of an indigenous clergy in the U.S., including Black men for the priesthood. However, during this period, most Black men and many would-be Black women religious in the U.S. were turned away from their vocations due to deeply entrenched racism. Thus, the Black children at these many Catholic schools and parishes had few to no examples of priests and religious of their own race to emulate. The effect of this early failure to establish an indigenous clergy lingers today in the scarcity of Black priests, bishops and religious from the United States.

To prevent such tragedies from continuing to hamper the growth and flourishing of Black Catholicism in the U.S., this institutional arm of the Black Catholic Movement sought to establish ecclesial autonomy and self-determination

for the Black Catholic community. To concretize these efforts toward ecclesial self-determination without advocating separation from the Church (as some certainly did), Dr. Flipper detailed the ultimately unsuccessful efforts in the late 1960s and early 1970s to develop a Black Catholic ordinariate, or special independent ecclesial jurisdiction headed by an “ordinary” or bishop. (An example of such an ordinariate that functions today is the one that governs Catholics in the United States military as its own “umbrella” Archdiocese.) Dr. Flipper did not speculate on why this effort failed but argued that, given the present-day closure of many Black Catholic parishes in diocesan restructuring and the continued dearth of African American vocations to priesthood and religious life, the question of establishing a Black Catholic ordinariate should be re-examined as a means for Black Catholics to both remain true to the Catholic tradition while achieving a genuine sense of self-determination, without which the tradition cannot thrive.

Dr. Flipper’s lecture was an effective example of the point of these “special observance” months like Black Catholic History Month. They afford us the opportunity to reflect on complex truths about the past that deeply impact our present realities — and help us chart a course for the future.

In that same vein, Ohio Dominican’s final event for this year’s Black Catholic History Month will explore the life and legacy of a young Black man in the 1950s who beat the odds, becoming the first African American ordained for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati: Father Clarence Rivers. Rivers went on to compose some of the first English-language music widely sung in Catholic liturgy. A lover of the Latin Mass from his childhood, Fr. Rivers’ compositions combined the solemn reverence of plainchant with the gravitas and beauty of the Spirituals. On Nov. 17 at 7:30 p.m. in the Griffin Student

Center, Eric T. Styles, a seminarian with the Josephite order, and Emily Strand, ODU’s Director of Campus Ministry, will discuss their efforts to practice “Sankofa,” a West African concept that encourages reaching for truths of the past as we move into the future, through their podcast, Meet Father Rivers. In the podcast, Strand and Styles introduce a new generation to their friend and mentor, Father Rivers, whose long, illustrious career helped foster active participation in liturgy by Catholics of all colors. Strand and Styles will share pastoral lessons they learned from Father Rivers along their journey with him, both before his death in 2004, and afterward as they conducted interviews with those who knew and worked with Rivers. They will share hopeful, helpful and often humorous stories about Father Rivers from four years of creating their podcast.

The night before this event, on Nov. 16 at 7 p.m. in Christ the King Chapel (Sansbury Hall), Ohio Dominican will also celebrate its annual Gospel Mass for Black Catholic History Month. The public is welcome to join in prayer the ODU community as we celebrate with Vernon Hairston and the St. Dominic/Holy Rosary/St. John choir as our special musical guests, and Deacon Royce Winters of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati as guest homilist.

All are invited to join us as we practice “Sankofa”: reaching back for the truths of the past to chart a sure course for the future of this beautiful and holy tradition that is Black Catholicism.

Emily Strand is Director of Campus Ministry and Liturgical Music and adjunct faculty in Humanities at Ohio Dominican University. She is also a lector, cantor, accompanist, ensemble director and catechist at her parish, Immaculate Conception in Columbus. With Eric T. Styles, she hosts the podcast Meet Father Rivers.



MARIAN EVENING: Women hear from religious, Continued from Page 5

or a priest, you should think of heaven because they’re not living for this world,” she told young women. “They’re living for the wedding feast of the Lamb. We do see our vows — our consecration — as a wedding.

“Many religious will wear wedding rings, and I see my habit as a wedding garment. In heaven, there will not be marriage as we know it, but Christ will be married to each soul, and religious men and women incarnate that right now. So through our vows, we are living the wedding feast of the lamb.”

Sister Ave Maria concluded with an allegory of a young girl who was given a set of fake pearls. She loved and wore them

constantly. When asked to give them up, the girl refused.

She told her father that he can have her stuffed animals or anything else, but not the pearls. Eventually, in tears, she relented and gave her father the jewelry.

The man pulled his daughter onto his lap, reached down and handed her a blue box labeled Tiffany & Co. Inside was a string of real pearls.

“That image to me,” Sister Ave Maria reflected, “is like God the Father. He wants to give us the real pearl, which is really Himself.” children get to heaven. You don’t want to be deadlifting, dragging dead weight all the way to heaven.”

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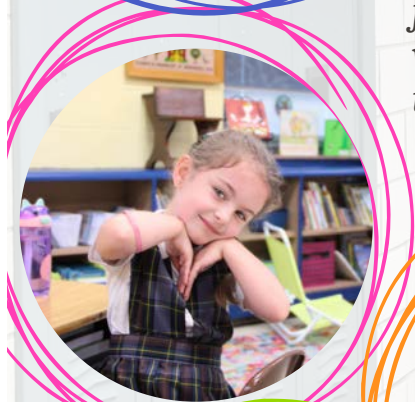
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Cristo Rey Columbus to add middle school

By Doug Bean
Catholic Times Editor

Cristo Rey Columbus announced late last month that a middle school will be added to the existing high school starting with the 2026-27 academic year.

The expansion plan will begin with the admission of 25 to 30 sixth-grade students next fall and continue with the addition of seventh and eighth grades in each of the following two years, principal Ryan Pettit said last week.

The school has already begun to receive inquiries about admission to sixth grade since the application process opened Nov. 1. Most of the new students are expected to come from public and non-Catholic schools in the Columbus area.

"One big plus side of this mission is we are going to be offering a Catholic education to more families who aren't currently getting a Catholic education," Pettit said.

The middle school will be housed within the high school at 400 E. Town St., but will have a separate spaces and schedules. With as many as 25 percent of the high school students out of the building daily for its work study program, Pettit there is sufficient room to accommodate a middle school.

Cristo Rey Columbus High School opened in 2013 in downtown Columbus to provide a Catholic education with a rigorous curriculum for students from low- to moderate-income families in the city. The school began with ninth grade in 2013-14 and added classes each of the next three years. The 2016-17 academic year was the first with freshmen through seniors in the building.

The first graduating class comprised approximately 50 students. Since then, enrollment for grades 9-12 has consistently been around 400.

Cristo Rey is part of a network of Catholic schools across the country that offer a college preparatory education to students from financially challenged backgrounds. Since the school's opening in Columbus, 100 percent of its graduating seniors have gone on to college.

The Cristo Rey Network, a not-for-profit organization, was established in 2000 and modeled after Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago, which was founded four years earlier. Schools in the network integrate academics with professional work experience, which can help fund the cost of Catholic education for youth from low-income families.

Cristo Rey Columbus will be the first in the national network to add a middle school. The expansion news was announced during an Oct. 25 after-school soiree that included Bishop Earl Fernandes and Dr. Adam Dufault, the diocese's superintendent of schools.

"The Cristo Rey model has already transformed lives through its blend of rigorous academics, faith formation, and real-world experience," Dufault said. "Expanding to include a middle school is an innovative and mission-driven way to reach students earlier, support them more intentionally, and form them to discover who God is calling them to be."

"By beginning that journey in middle school, Cristo Rey can strengthen both faith and opportunity for young people across our community."

The idea to start a middle school germinated from faculty recognizing that some

of the students entering ninth grade at Cristo Rey lacked foundational academic skills that would help them in their educational development.

"As you're helping students and they're trying hard and you realize, 'If I could have just had them in sixth grade' ... that was the seed that planted the idea," said Pettit, who was a math teacher at the school before becoming principal. "I think we've all felt as teachers that if we could have just had them longer, we could have helped them more."

Last summer, she said Joe Patrick, the school's president since 2020, challenged her to determine whether starting a middle school was feasible.

"I never even considered we could house it here," Pettit said. "We were discussing it and realized that this could be a real possibility. So we worked over the summer with various entities to make sure we had the support."

With the backing of the diocese's Office of Catholic Schools, Bishop Fernandes and the Cristo Rey Network, the school administration decided to move forward with the plan.

"I think it's a testament to the support of the community in Columbus," Pettit said. "We have a great faculty and staff here. There's so much enthusiasm."

Cristo Rey's curriculum will follow the standards established for all diocesan middle schools.

"We've been meeting with them and learning some of that things that are happening in other middle schools," Pettit said. "That's where our standards will come from, with the full intention that our students will be ready to pursue our high school college prep curriculum their fresh-

man year."

She expects two middle school teachers to be hired for next year. The faculty will expand as the middle school adds grade levels in subsequent years.

Pettit said the addition of the middle school will provide leadership opportunities for high schoolers to assist future Cristy Rey middle schoolers. High school students currently visit Catholic elementary schools to serve as reading buddies.

"I already received an email from a student who's thinking of things we could do to help our sixth graders feel welcomed and supported," Pettit said.

Extracurricular opportunities in athletics will be available through the diocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). A middle school student council will be established, and opportunities for students to form other clubs will be encouraged.

"There was a lot of conversation initially about should we do seventh and eighth grade, or sixth, seventh and eighth, and many things point to, developmentally, at age 11, the student is really ready for more abstract and complex thinking, and we wanted to get them at that turning point and that transition," Pettit explained.

"So, as they finish fifth grade at an elementary school, they can transition to us one time at sixth grade, and we're eliminating a real challenging transition from eighth to ninth because they'll stay with us. The three years of foundational skills just helps to create a nice, cohesive base for students to build on."

For more information on Cristo Rey, visit www.cristoreycolumbus.org.



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Catholic school leaders journey to Rome for Jubilee for Educators

By Dr. Adam J. Dufault

Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Thirty administrators from the Diocese of Columbus Office of Catholic Schools, led by Bishop Earl Fernandes, traveled to Rome at the end of October to take part in the Jubilee of the World of Education. The event drew thousands of Catholic educators from around the world for prayer, reflection and renewal in their shared vocation. The Columbus delegation was, in part, supported by generous funding provided by The Catholic Foundation.

The pilgrimage was an opportunity to step back from daily responsibilities and be reminded of the deeper purpose of Catholic education -- that our schools exist not only to provide academic excellence but to form disciples who know and love Christ.

The group included principals, assistant principals and members of the Office of Catholic Schools staff who traveled together with Bishop Fernandes. We spent time in prayer, shared conversation, and celebrating Mass at some of the most significant churches in Rome, engendering a spirit of fraternity and common purpose.

Throughout the week, Bishop Fernandes encouraged us to see the trip not simply as an educational conference but as a moment of renewal. "When educators have an experience like this — meeting the Holy Father and seeing the global Church — they begin to understand more deeply that this is not just a job. It is a calling," he said in an article published by Vatican News.

That message set the tone for the days that followed. As we visited holy sites and participated in Jubilee events, I found myself reflecting on how easily the pressures of administration can obscure the spiritual dimension of our work. In Rome, it became clear again that Catholic education is fundamentally a ministry of evangelization.

Hearing the Holy Father: Interiority, unity, love, joy

The central event of the pilgrimage was the audience with Pope Leo XIV in St. Peter's Square. His address to educators was characteristically clear and deeply rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition. He spoke about four essential qualities that define Christian education: interiority, unity, love and joy.

When the Pope reflected on interiority, quoting St. Augustine's words, "The sound of our words strikes the ears, but the Master is within," I was struck by how countercultural that idea has become. In an era where the pace of life is constant and the noise of technology ever-present, helping students to listen to the voice of God within them may be one of the most radical and necessary things we can do.

His emphasis on unity also resonated deeply. Referring to his episcopal motto, *In illo uno unum* ("In that One, we are one"), he reminded us that education is always relational. We learn and teach in communion with others. As I listened, I thought about the faculty and staff in our schools who work together, often quietly and without recognition, to build authentic Catholic communities. That daily labor of unity is the true foundation of Catholic education.

The Pope's reflections on love and joy were equally pointed. He reminded educators that teaching is an act of love before it is an act of instruction, and that joy — especially when tested — is a sign



Dr. Adam Dufault (right), diocesan superintendent of schools, is interviewed at the Vatican.



Columbus educators get a close-up look at Pope Leo XIV during a procession in St. Peter's Square.

of faith. His phrase "those who educate with a smile" stayed with me. It was not sentimental; it was a challenge to bring the joy of the Gospel into our classrooms, even when circumstances make it difficult.

Afterward, our group discussed how those four qualities might shape our leadership back home. We spoke about the need for schools to cultivate silence and reflection, to build unity among faculty, to lead with love in moments of conflict, and to witness to joy even when we face institutional or cultural challenges. Those conversations were honest and practical — rooted in our shared reality but guided by the Pope's vision.

On the Solemnity of All Saints, Pope Leo presided at the Jubilee Mass for Educators in St. Peter's Square. In his homily, he described education as a "pilgrimage of hope." He spoke about teaching as participation in God's creative and redemptive work, and about the need for educators to help students see the world through the light of faith.

At one point, the Pope posed a question that has stayed with me: "Are the weak of lesser value as human beings?" He made clear that the answer to that question defines not only the moral direction of education but the character of society itself.

Lessons for Catholic educators

Throughout the week, the Holy Father's message was consistent: The renewal



Educators pause for a photo during their pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee of Education.



Bishop Earl Fernandes celebrates Mass for the diocesan educators in Rome.



The administrators on pilgrimage for the Jubilee of the World of Education prepare to enter the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. Photos courtesy Office of Catholic Schools

of education begins with the renewal of educators. In his Oct. 31 address to teachers and leaders, he described educators as "craftsmen of humanity," called to form hearts open to truth and goodness. He spoke less about programs and structures, and more about the formation of the person — both the student and the teacher.

That emphasis struck a chord with many of us. It was a reminder that professional competence alone is not enough for those who lead Catholic schools. We must cultivate the interior life, practice unity and live the joy we hope to instill in others. As one of our principals put it during a reflection session, "We can't give what we don't have."

Throughout our pilgrimage, our group prayed together and discussed our individual experiences and takeaways from what we heard and where we visited. Those conversations were perhaps the most meaningful part of the pilgrimage. The setting was Rome, but the substance was local: how to continue strengthening the Catholic identity in our schools; how to form our teachers spiritually; how to keep Christ at the center of every decision. The week created not just personal renewal but a shared sense of mission among our leaders.

Returning home with purpose

By the time we returned home, what struck me most was the coherence of

the Pope's vision. Across his homily, his address and his writings, he returned again and again to the same conviction: Education is not merely about transmitting knowledge but about forming persons capable of seeking the truth and living it in love.

That conviction will shape our work in the months ahead. The pilgrimage clarified what it means to be a Catholic educator today — not simply someone who works in a faith-based setting, but someone who teaches and leads in the name of Christ and in service to His Church.

Rome also made visible the global scope of this mission. Speaking with educators from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America underscored how shared our challenges are, and how essential it is to keep our work grounded in the universal life of the Church.

For me, the most lasting grace of the pilgrimage is a renewed sense of our purpose. Catholic education exists to form disciples who know the truth, live in charity and radiate joy. Everything else — curriculum, operations, planning — flows from that.

As Pope Leo reminded us, "The true teacher is within." That insight captures what we carried home from Rome: that Christ Himself is the one who teaches in every Catholic school, forming hearts through our words, our witness and our work.

Leading with hope: Reflections from administrators on pilgrimage

The following are reflections from Catholic school administrators from the diocese who traveled to Rome on pilgrimage in late October and early November with Bishop Earl Fernandes for the Jubilee of the World of Education.

"I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in this special pilgrimage to Rome with my fellow Catholic school administrators, staff from the Office of Catholic Schools, and most especially Bishop Fernandes. This pilgrimage allowed me to step away from my daily work at school and experience firsthand a Jubilee Year in Rome during a week dedicated specifically to the World of Education. What a treat!

"While there, we heard directly from the Holy Father, Pope Leo XVI, about our vocation and mission as educators, including a call to lead our schools with a focus on the principles of interiority, unity, love and joy. We experienced the proclamation of St. John Henry Newman as Doctor of the Church and a co-Patron of the Church's education mission.

"Seeing the Holy Father up close was quite extraordinary. We strategically positioned ourselves along the railing to be as close to the Pope as possible while he journeyed throughout St. Peter's Square, greeting everyone and blessing babies. With joyful hearts, we joined the chorus of pilgrims chanting with affection, "Papa Leone," as he drove past. Our hearts were full after these events.

"Little did I know that spiritually moving encounters would happen again and again. Some encounters moved me to tears, some sparked action and some instilled in me a desire to be a witness to others. Those special moments are now deeply rooted in my heart. We walked through Rome, stepping into cathedrals and basilicas tucked between ancient structures, and down side alleys, each location holding significant historical relevance, relics of saints, famous paintings or vast mosaics that would keep you enthralled for hours. The highlights were unending as our hearts continued to swell with emotion.

"We celebrated Mass together every day in some of the most beautiful places, including St. Paul Outside the Walls, St. Peter's Basilica (twice), the Basilica of San Clemente and St. Mary Major. We passed



Colleen Kent, principal at Columbus Immaculate Conception School, and Bishop Earl Fernandes pause for a photo in St. Peter's Square.

through the Holy Doors of the four major basilicas. Bishop Fernandes preached beautiful homilies in each of these locations, touching the hearts of the pilgrims.

"We've been home for three days now, and it is wonderful being back in school, seeing the students and fellow staff members again. A commonly asked question is, 'What was the highlight?' I honestly share that the whole trip was a highlight. Yes, my feet were tired after walking over 15,000 steps a day, but that doesn't compare to the significant highlights that happened every day.

"The fruits of this trip will continue to unfold as the days/weeks/months approach. My prayer is that we, Catholic school administrators, take the experiences we have encountered and allow those to guide our actions and future plans within our Catholic schools." -- **Colleen Kent, principal, Columbus Immaculate Conception School**

"The pilgrimage to Rome for the World Jubilee of Education was a tremendously precious experience. Not only was this my first trip to Rome, but it was also my first trip to Europe. I feel truly blessed to have experienced it under the leadership of



Colleen Wendt, assistant principal at Mount Vernon St. Vincent de Paul School, lights a candle. Office of Catholic Schools

Bishop Fernandes and Dr. Adam Dufault.

"To call this trip a vacation would be a mistake. It was truly a call to a closer encounter with Christ through the lens of prayer, church history and fellowship. My top moment from the pilgrimage was the first time seeing the Holy Father. At the moment of laying eyes on the Pope, unobstructed by screens or other pilgrims, I experienced only pure joy.

"With spiritual preparation led by Sister John Paul, I was able to intentionally plan my daily prayers and spend meaningful time with the Lord. Furthermore, the pilgrimage offered each of us time to connect with other administrators from around the Diocese of Columbus. As a new administrator, I greatly valued this time to observe the camaraderie of my colleagues and spend time getting to know them.

"I feel as though I am still processing everything that we encountered on our journey, but I know that I am eternally grateful for this experience." -- **Courtney Kreber, assistant principal, Hilliard St. Brendan School**

"This experience bore so much spiritual fruit and many opportunities to connect to the sacred traditions and rich history of our Catholic faith." -- **Cecelia Pitt, principal, Mount Vernon St. Vincent de Paul School**

"I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of the pilgrimage to Rome with my fellow administrators. It has changed me in ways that are indescribable. To be able to return to school and share even a small part of the experience with my students has been a blessing. This is an experience I will not soon forget." -- **Carey Wrigley, assistant principal, Columbus St. Mary Magdalene School**

"This was a true journey for me. One that touched my mind, heart and spirit in unforgettable ways. As I walked through Vatican City, I was immersed in the living history of our shared Catholic faith. From celebrating Mass with the Holy Father, receiving confession at St. Peter's Basilica to standing in silent prayer at the tombs of the apostles and saints, I felt deeply connected to the universal Church and honored that I could witness the centuries of those that came before me that were witness to Christ. Each site that I visited -- the Sistine Chapel, the Vatican Museums, the major basilicas, the spot St. Peter was martyred -- reminded me of the beauty and hope that has helped to shape our faith throughout time. Beyond all of the sacred and beautiful sites, this pilgrimage strengthened my sense of community. I was so honored to bring prayer intentions from our students, families and staff along with me to put them before the Lord." -- **Angie Eisenacher, principal, Columbus St. Christopher School**

"This pilgrimage provided a connection to the past and to Christ, and what his mission was on earth has become our mission. We are His hands, His feet, His eyes, His ears, and we have to take what we've learned and pass that on to our teachers, who then, in turn, pass it on to our students. As a person who has always walked by faith and not sight, seeing all the amazing relics and memorials to the believers who came before, just strengthened my faith in God." -- **Gina Stull, principal, Columbus St. Mary German Village School**

Pilgrimage to Rome the trip of a lifetime

By Carli Saliba

For The Catholic Times

Genesis 12:1 says, "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land I will show you."

In the months leading up to the administrator pilgrimage to Rome, I felt excitement and gratitude but did not know exactly what to expect. I had never been to Europe before, let alone Vatican City with the opportunity to see the Pope. I knew I was in for a treat, but truly did not know the extent of the gifts God had in store for me.

We had a whirlwind week, starting with walking through the Holy Doors and Mass celebrated by Bishop Earl Fernandes in a small chapel at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls; checking into our quaint but beautiful hotel; enjoying a welcome dinner and, a highlight for me, a private tour of the Vatican museums and the Sistine Chapel. Imagining all of the Cardinals convening in that historic place to pray together, discern and vote for our Pope is a gift I will never forget.

The following days included a surprise



The group from the Diocese of Columbus uses St. Peter's Basilica as a backdrop for a photo.

Photo courtesy Office of Catholic Schools

visit to the Santa Marta house, Mass in front of the tomb of St. Peter in the Vatican Grottoes, walking through the Holy Doors

at the Basilica of St. Peter, and a Papal audience in St. Peter's Square where Pope Leo XVI met with educators for the Jubilee of

Education. We also celebrated Mass at a beautiful, old basilica called San Clemente that is currently being restored to its original, charming beauty. We ended that day with a fun, pasta-making class. Who knew Bishop Fernandes was exceptional at making gnocchi?

We were fortunate enough to spend All Saints Day in St. Peter's Square, taking part in Mass, where Pope Leo named St. John Henry Newman a Doctor of the Church. We then visited the Basilica of St. John Lateran, which had the third of the four Holy Doors we would be walking through during this pilgrimage. Bishop Fernandes led some of us a little way down the road to the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, where we were able to see relics of the Holy Cross, thorns from the crown Jesus wore during his crucifixion, as well as St. Thomas' finger. A small group of us ended our night on a rooftop terrace overlooking St. Peter's, which was a view too exceptional to even describe.

My entire trip was spent experiencing

See PILGRIMAGE, Page 16

LOCAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Newly ordained priest to speak to luncheon club

Father Sam Severance, who was ordained as a priest of the Diocese of Columbus in May, will speak to the Catholic Men's Luncheon Club on his first six months as parochial vicar at Hilliard St. Brendan the Navigator Church.

His talk will be at the club's meeting on Friday, Dec. 5, after the 11:45 a.m. Mass at Columbus St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave. No reservations are necessary. A \$12 donation covers the lunch and meeting.

The club's next meeting will be on Friday, Feb. 6 and will feature a talk by Ismael Rodriguez, founding headmaster of the Chesterton Academy of St. Benedict, an independent Catholic high school in the Diocese of Columbus.

The club also is preparing for selection in January of the recipient of its annual Catholic Man of the Year award.

The Dec. 5 luncheon will be sponsored

by the Serra Club of Columbus, a Catholic organization committed to promoting and supporting vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

With active chapters in downtown Columbus and the city's north side, the club's mission is to create a culture where young people are encouraged to hear and respond to God's call.

If you are interested in sponsoring a luncheon, contact Dave Kilanowski at dkilano@aol.com.

Father Beal to speak on the Eucharist

Father Brian Beal, pastor of Coshocton Sacred Heart Church, will present a talk titled "Eucharistic Amazement" at 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7 at Columbus St. Timothy Church, 1088 Thomas Place.

The talk will focus on the Real Presence

of Jesus in the Eucharist and how Eucharistic Adoration can enhance a person's faith journey. It will be preceded at 5:30 by light hors d'oeuvres and followed at 7 by Eucharistic Adoration and an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Father Beal also will preach the parish's Masses at 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6 and at 9 and 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 7.

Zanesville parish to present carol service

A service of Advent lessons and carols will be presented at 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7 at Zanesville St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 144 N. 5th St.

The service will combine Advent scriptures and carols of the season, sung by the parish choir and congregation in the English collegiate and cathedral traditions. Because of the rebuilding that closed the

main church building for several years, this will be the first time the service has taken place at St. Thomas since 2019.

A reception will follow in Rosary Hall.

Newman Center concert will be Dec. 5

The choir at the Columbus St. Thomas More Newman Center, 64 W. Lane Ave., will present an Advent concert titled "O Magnum Mysterium," a reflection on the mystery of the Incarnation, at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5.

The concert will be a prayerful meditation on the beauty and wonder of Christ's coming into the world. To RSVP, go to <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/choirconcert/event/bc2025/>. For questions, contact Father Adam Streitenberger at astreitenberger@columbuscatholic.org.

Father Gardner installed at St. Francis de Sales



Father Tom Gardner stands before Bishop Earl Fernandes (top photo) at a Mass on Sunday, Oct. 26 when he was formally installed as pastor at Newark St. Francis de Sales Church. Father Gardner also renewed his promises to the bishop and his oath of fidelity. Father Gardner became the parish's pastor in July.

Photos courtesy Aaron Christy

Our Lady of Peace pastor installed



Father Anthony Raj Bellamkonda Irudayam renews his promises to the bishop and his oath of fidelity during a Mass on Saturday, Oct. 25 at Columbus Our Lady of Peace Church. The priest came to the parish in July and was formally installed as pastor at the Mass by Bishop Earl Fernandes.

CT photos by Ken Snow

PILGRIMAGE: Trip of a lifetime to Rome, *Continued from Page 15*

these incredible, once-in-a-lifetime moments, but it was not until our last day when I could see how God was pouring out his love, goodness and beauty. After some time in Vatican City, we drove to a special church, the Basilica of St. Mary Major. This was the church that Pope Francis used to celebrate Mass and now rests. After some time exploring this beautiful basilica, Bishop Fernandes celebrated Mass for us in the

Sforza Chapel, which was designed by Michelangelo and directly next to the tomb of Pope Francis. Bishop's homily spoke volumes to me and filled me with overwhelming gratitude for the opportunity to be on this pilgrimage. I felt God very near and knew in that moment He desired for me to be in Rome, enjoying the history and beauty before me.

I feel like a bottle about to bubble over

with joy in sharing my experiences. I have started to share with the students in my building. One highlight I was so excited to share was getting to see original Raphael paintings, like the School of Athens and the Disputation of the Holy Sacrament in the Vatican museums. We have large prints of these in our upper hallway for hundreds of students and staff to walk by each day. I can only hope and pray they will someday

have the joyful opportunity to see them in person as well. This was truly a trip of a lifetime and one that I could not be more grateful to have shared with not just my colleagues but fellow pilgrims.

Carli Saliba is the vice principal at Newark St. Francis de Sales School.

St. Paul third grader granted wish of 'dream' meeting with Pope Leo

By Hannah Heil
Catholic Times Reporter

It's not every day that lay people get to meet the Pope. For some, that day never comes. For Dominic Ramler, 8, that day came on Sept. 24.

The third-grade student at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle School had wanted to meet Pope Leo since he was elected earlier this year.

When Ramler was seven months old, doctors discovered that he had congenital glaucoma. The condition, which occurs in about 1 in 10,000 births, consists of chronic and progressive visual neuropathies that result in blindness.

Since his diagnosis, Ramler has undergone 14 surgeries – seven in each eye – and suffers from low vision. It is a matter of time until he completely loses his sight, but it is uncertain when that will be. Blindness could occur in a year or several years down the road.

Ramler's parents, Darren and Jacqui (Racine) Ramler, want their son to do as much as possible and see various places before losing his vision.

"Dominic voiced to us earlier this year that one of his bucket list places would be to go to Italy, and to Rome specifically, and meet the Pope," Jacqui recalled.

"For the past year, he's been telling us that he wants to be a priest, and he's now kind of changed it up. He's now saying that he wants to be a deacon because he wants to also get married."

Jacqui noted that her 8-year-old is "very into" his faith. Asked what he likes about it, Dominic replied, "I was just born to love the Catholic faith."

He made his First Holy Communion last spring around the time that Pope Leo was elected pontiff in May.

"Both of those heightened his joy around the Catholic faith and also made him want to go to Italy even more," Jacqui said. "He said that his dream was to meet the Pope."

Jacqui's cousin, Ashley Kovacs, an Olympic track and field throws coach, and her husband, Joe, a three-time silver medalist in men's shot put, gifted the Ramlers with their airplane miles so the third-grader could take a trip of his choosing.

Dominic's choice was, perhaps unsurprisingly, the Vatican.

Jacqui immediately got to work to make the trip happen. In June, she wrote the Holy See a letter explaining her son's glaucoma and requested disability seating.

Dominic's vision does not extend much past his face. If seated with the general audience, he likely would be unable to see the Pope.

Within a couple of weeks, the Ramlers received an official letter from the Vatican's Prefecture of the Papal Household confirming three tickets would be reserved for them to attend a papal audience at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 24.

It was unclear where the Ramlers would sit, but on the morning of the 24th, as they picked up their tickets, it indicated specialty seating. The family was seated in the third row from Pope Leo.

"It was a dream come true," Dominic said, adding that he wrote a narrative about the experience.

After the papal audience, the Ramlers joined rows of people in disability seating coming forward to greet the Pope under an awning. They each shook his hand.

"I don't know if he could tell by the way that we said, 'Ciao' that we weren't Italian, but then he started speaking English," Jacqui recalled. "In English, he said, 'Where

are you from?'"

After sharing that they traveled from Columbus, Ohio, the Ramlers told Pope Leo that Dominic wanted to be a priest. For Halloween the year prior, he had dressed the part.

The family showed the Holy Father a photo of Dominic in costume.

"My mom actually made the chasuble (a vestment worn for the celebration of Mass)," Jacqui said. "He specifically asked for green last year because Halloween is during Ordinary Time."

The Ramlers informed the Pope of Dominic's glaucoma, which will lead to blindness, and shared a photo from his surgery earlier this year. They requested a blessing for Dominic.

"He said, 'Absolutely,'" Jacqui recalled. "Pope Leo bent down, placed his hands on Dominic's eyes and gave him the most beautiful blessing."

"It means the world to me to be able to have him experience that, not even with low vision, just in general, that this was his dream, this is what he expressed. Seeing your child's dream come true before your eyes is unlike anything I could ever dream of," Jacqui added.

She, Darren and Dominic each received a rosary after meeting the Pope.

The family also received tickets for a private tour of the Vatican Museums designed for low-vision and blind individuals. Dominic was permitted to touch several statues and articles.

He was also given a tactile picture of the Sistine Chapel to feel an imitation of paintings in the chapel while a tour guide explained how they look.

Asked his favorite part of the trip, Dominic responded, "Meeting Pope Leo and eating pasta."

The Ramlers returned home to their daughter, Camryn, 6, and son, Elliot, 4, who also attend St. Paul School. Grandparents Deacon Dean – who serves at Columbus St. Josephine Bakhita Parish – and Robin Racine, and Tom and Sharon Ramler, helped watch the younger two.

Dominic brought back a stuffed animal, journal from the Vatican Museums and prayer cards with medallions for each of his classmates.

"This experience for our son was beyond our biggest wish for him," Jacqui said.

"We hope and pray he can bring forth all the images of this trip and that day meeting Pope Leo when his vision fades."



The Ramler family includes Darren and Jacqui and their children Dominic (center), Camryn (right) and Elliot.



Pope Leo XIV greets Dominic Ramler, 8, a student at Westerville St. Paul the Apostle School and his family before giving him a blessing during a visit to the Vatican on Sept. 24. Dominic has a congenital eye condition that will eventually result in blindness.

Photos courtesy Ramler family



Members of the Bishop Watterson cross country state championship team are (from left) assistant coaches Katie Caskey and Dan Workman, head coach Steve Taliaferro, Samantha Schmiesing, Emma Drab, Karine Bhowmick, Kaitlyn Van Zandt, Lilli Glatz, Elsa Allen, Berkley LaCount, Cecilia Keller, Campbell Retzke and assistant coaches Justin Kubatko and Tom Tuohy.

Photos courtesy Bishop Watterson High School



Bishop Watterson sophomore Kaitlyn Van Zandt leads the Eagles to a Division II team cross country championship with a fifth-place individual finish in the 5,000-meter race on Nov. 1 at Fortress Obetz.

Watterson, Newark Catholic win state championships

By Tim Puet

For The Catholic Times

Three diocesan high schools won state championships in early November.

Columbus Bishop Watterson captured the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) girls Division II cross country title on Saturday, Nov. 1, Newark Catholic completed an undefeated season by winning its ninth state championship and first since 2004 in Division VI girls volleyball on Saturday, Nov. 8 and Bishop Watterson won the Division III boys soccer championship on Sunday, Nov. 9.

Watterson finished with 158 team points in the state cross country meet at Fortress Obetz, edging out Shaker Heights Hathaway Brown, which had 161.

Newark Catholic (27-0) was victorious over St. Henry in straight sets in the volleyball final at Wright State University, winning by scores of 25-22, 25-23 and 25-18. More details on the Green Wave's victory will appear in the next issue of *The Catholic Times*.

Tuscarawas Central Catholic's girls volleyball team advanced to

a Division VII state semifinal before losing by scores of 25-7, 25-13, 15-11 to eventual state champion Tiffin Calvert on Thursday, Nov. 6.

Watterson's boys soccer team (16-6-3) defeated Aurora 3-0 in a Sunday evening game at Historic Crew Stadium in Columbus to win its first OHSAA crown since 2014.

Sam Meacham had a goal and an assist, Alex Das and Michael Quinn scored goals and goalkeeper Aedan Richardson made five saves to finish with a shutout for the Eagles, who opened a 2-0 lead in the first half and added their final goal in the second half.

Two other diocesan soccer teams reached the state semifinals before losing.

The Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School boys were defeated 1-0 by Cleveland St. Ignatius on Nov. 5 at Bellville Clear Fork High School and Bishop Watterson's girls fell 2-0 to Hudson in Ashland.

Things didn't look promising for Watterson's girls cross country team early in the season when seniors Addie Reineck and Lilly Glatz were lost to the team because of injuries and illness.

But a bunch of speedy underclassmen stepped up in their place and brought the Eagles their first state championship in the sport.

The state title completed a sweep for Watterson, which also finished first on successive Saturdays in the district meet at Hilliard Darby and the regionals at Pickerington North and in invitationals at Newark Catholic and Seneca East and the Midwest Catholic meet at Dayton Carroll.

Sophomore Kaitlyn Van Zandt was Watterson's top runner at the state meet, finishing fifth in a field of 216 runners with a time of 18:03.34 over the 5-kilometer course. Other point-scoring runners for the Eagles were freshman Karine Bhowmick (29th, 19:07.88), sophomore Campbell Retzke (44th, 19:14.61), senior Cecilia Keller (50th, 19:20.65) and sophomore Berkley LaCount (71st, 19:38.67). Non-scoring members of the team were juniors Elsa Allen (74th, 19:39.82) and Emma Drab (86th, 19:47.41).

Many championship teams place two or more runners among the top 15, but that wasn't the case with Watterson. "We've been successful because this team has an unusual amount of depth, with all

of our girls finishing at least 86th," said Stephen Taliaferro, who's in his fifth year as the Eagles' coach and his 30th year in coaching.

"That's more depth than many of the larger schools we ran against in invitationals. These girls never let up from start to finish at Obetz, making 230 passes – more passes than there were girls competing. They may be inexperienced in terms of years, but they took a veteran approach in training and trusted fully in their routine."

Taliaferro said team members began to realize they may be a part of a special season when they finished third in a Sept. 13 meet at Dublin Jerome. Finishing first in that event was state Division I champion Gahanna Lincoln, followed by Olentangy Orange, which had the second-place individual finisher in the big-school division.

"After that race, I thought 'I'm ready for state. I think we've got a real team here which can win it all' and I think the girls felt the same," Taliaferro said.

He said Keller's leadership and the strength of her Catholic faith played an important role in bringing the team together. "You can't underestimate her impact on

the program," he said. "She approached Deacon (Chris) Campbell (the school's principal) and Father (Paul) Noble (its chaplain) to ask for a special Mass before practice on the day before the state meet and they were happy to do it."

"She talked about the season being a gift of God and wanted to do this for herself and her teammates, with the idea of the Mass being a moment of calm in the midst of the state meet, Halloween and other things."

Taliaferro said Keller is a multi-sport athlete who didn't get involved with cross country until last year after playing soccer and basketball as a freshman and being on the track team in her sophomore year.

"She's a great student and will be able to go to college anywhere," he said. "One thing I know she's looking at is the quality of the Newman center (for Catholic students) at the schools she visits."

Taliaferro said the girls' championship celebration was rather subdued because the Watterson boys, whom he also coaches, finished 11th in their state meet on the same day in the same place and were disappointed at the result.

"It was tough because the girls were celebrating and the guys were pretty low," he said. "While sharing in the girls' joy, I knew I needed time to sit down and talk with the guys to make sure they were OK. It was an awkward balance."

"To make sure the girls receive proper recognition, I'm reaching out to coaches (Scott) Dempsey and (Brian) Kennedy to see how they handled their celebrations last year," Taliaferro said. Dempsey's girls soccer team and Kennedy's football team won state titles for Watterson in 2024 and the football team remains alive in this year's state tournament.

"With winter sports getting ready to start, we'll probably delay the schoolwide celebration ceremony for us until the school



Bishop Watterson's boys soccer team celebrates its Division III state championship on Sunday, Nov. 9 at Historic Crew Stadium.

Photos/John Hulkenberg



Watterson's Alex Das (4) contends with Aurora's Griffin McMaster for the ball in the state final. Das scored one of the Eagles' three goals in their 3-0 win.

See STATE, Page 19

2025 All-Central Catholic League Boys Soccer

First team

Ryan Sullivan, Grant Brokaw, AJ Boiarsky, Thomas Thornton, Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School; Sam Gabrielli, Gary Tre Berry, Jackson Reed, Colin Johnson. Columbus St. Francis DeSales; Max Meacham, Sam Meacham, Michael Quinn, Columbus Bishop Watterson;

Nahom Hunde, AJ McDaniel, Dominic Woods, Columbus Bishop Hartley

Second team

Owen Sugar, Sam Lofthouse, St. Charles; Eddy Diaz, Owen Cofojohn, DeSales; Connor Adkins Davidson, Alex Das, Grayson Davis, Bishop Watterson; Rhitesh Acharya, Justin Kowalski, Bishop Hartley

2025 All-Central Catholic League Girls Soccer

First team

Emma Miller, Gabby Smullin, Suzie Roginski, Sophie Scott, Columbus Bishop Watterson; Chloe Conway, Caroline Cross, Allie Mann, Columbus St. Francis DeSales; Grace Eiselstein, Sadie Klein,

Kaytlynn Murphy, Columbus Bishop Hartley

Second team

Sasha Smith, Gwynn Griffin, Bishop Watterson; Juliet Pekarcik, Albree Aaron, Lilian Hemmert, DeSales; Naomi Sokari, Jayonna Harris, Bishop Hartley

2025 All-Central Catholic League Girls volleyball

First team

Layla Hoying, Maddie Lane, Jana Egglitis, Columbus Bishop Watterson; Lyla Stewart, Gwen Stein, Columbus St. Francis DeSales; Mallory Matheny, Columbus Bishop Hartley

Second team

Ashley Moreland, Molly Johnson, Bishop Watterson; Meredith Scott, Chloe Smith, DeSales; Karah O'Malley, Maddie Ryan, Bishop Hartley

League standings

Bishop Watterson

3-1

St. Francis DeSales

2-2

Bishop Hartley

1-3

Bishop Hartley names new boys volleyball coach

Columbus Bishop Hartley High School announced last week that Blair Arms will become the new boys volleyball coach.

Arms, a 2006 Bishop Hartley graduate, began her coaching career in 2010 and joined the school's girls volleyball staff in 2013 and the boys coaching staff in 2023 as an assistant coach. In addition to her work at Hartley, Arms has coached national-level girls club volleyball.

"I'm honored and excited to accept the head coach position," Arms said. "Over the past five years, the program has grown tremendously, and I look forward to continuing that growth while maintaining the strong culture that has been built."

"Blair Arms exemplifies the values and spirit of Bishop Hartley," principal Chris Kowalski said. "Her dedication to our students, her deep understanding of the game, and her unwavering commitment to our mission make her the ideal leader for our boys volleyball program."



Blair Arms is the new boys volleyball coach at Columbus Bishop Hartley High School. Photo courtesy Bishop Hartley High School

STATE: Watterson, Newark Catholic win, Continued from Page 18

athletic banquet in May."

In football, Columbus St. Francis DeSales in Division II and defending state champion Watterson in Division III advanced to regional semifinal games on Friday, Nov. 14 with second-round victories on Nov. 7 after having first-round byes.

DeSales quarterback R.J. Day set a school record with 482 passing yards as the Stallions got by Ashland 33-29 and will play Massillon Washington. Watterson, as it has all season, had a dominating performance in shutting out Granville 56-0 and faces

Dresden Tri-Valley next as it hopes to extend its winning streak to 27 games over two seasons.

Lancaster Fisher Catholic, also with a first-round bye, lost its second-round game to Danville 59-8.

Two other diocesan Division VII teams lost high-scoring first-round games on Friday, Oct. 31 as Bowerston Conotton Valley defeated Zanesville Bishop Rosecrans 78-46 and Cedarville posted a 41-37 victory over Portsmouth Notre Dame.

2025 All-Central Catholic League Football

First team

Drew Bellisari, sr., QB, Columbus Bishop Watterson; Carter Bellisari, jr., WR/DB, Watterson; Michael Boyle, jr., DL, Watterson; Ben Uhlenhake, jr., LB/RB, Watterson; Pete Eglitis, sr., OL, Watterson; Davis Seaman, jr., OL, Watterson; Jack Schuler, jr., DL/TE, Watterson; Frankie McAllister, sr., DL/TE, Columbus St. Francis DeSales; RJ Day, jr., QB, DeSales; Jordan Karhoff, jr., TE/DL, DeSales; Dax Middleton, jr., WR/DB, DeSales; Jonathan Brown, sr., RB/DB, DeSales; Kaleb Kitzmiller, jr., LB, DeSales; Matt Galich, sr., QB, Columbus Bishop Hartley; Robert Lathon, sr., RB, Hartley; Jake Beatty, sr., OL, Hartley; Jay Zang, sr., LB, Hartley; Marcus Hemphill, sr., LB, Hartley; Jack Brandt, sr., DL/OL, Columbus St. Charles Preparatory; Nick Grilli, soph., DB/WR, St. Charles; Nick Kummer, sr., LB/RB, St. Charles; Ben Nickey, jr., WR, St. Charles; Michael Zarick, jr., LB/RB, St. Charles

Second team

Jack McCoy, sr., RB, Watterson; Kaden Jones, jr., LB, Watterson; Rocco Purcell, jr., LB, Watterson; Joe Hayes, jr., DB/WR, Watterson; Nate Henderson, jr., DB/WR, Watterson; John Hockaday, sr., LB/RB, DeSales; Ryan Bangert, jr., K, DeSales; Jeff Fields, sr., LS, DeSales; Kaleb Johnson, DB, DeSales; Jayden Amalaman, sr., OL, DeSales; LaRon Gualden, sr., LB, Hartley; Ezra Kahassai, sr., DL, Hartley; Jakhi Calloway, sr., WR, Hartley; Jahmari Stokes, sr., WR, Hartley; Roderick Gates, sr., DB, Hartley; Nate DeLucas, sr., OL, St. Charles; Patrick Malouf, jr., DL/OL, St. Charles; Tommy Moore, sr., DL, St. Charles; Liam Nordstrom, jr., DB/WR, St. Charles

Varsity regular-season standings

League Overall

Bishop Watterson

3-0

10-0

St. Francis DeSales

2-1

8-2

Bishop Hartley

1-2

5-5

St. Charles

0-3

3-7

Junior varsity standings

Bishop Watterson

5-1

St. Charles

7-2

St. Francis DeSales

2-1

Bishop Hartley

0-6

Freshman standings

Bishop Watterson

7-0

St. Francis DeSales

4-3-1

St. Charles

4-5

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All Preorders must be picked up by 1:00pm or items will be offered for general sale.

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33rd Sunday or Ordinary Time Year C

Liturgical year nears the end with two mysteries of faith

Malachi 3:19-20a
Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9
2 Thessalonians 3:7-12
Luke 21:5-19

We are in the month of November, the last month in the liturgical year, when the Church turns Her eyes to contemplate the ultimate realities, the lasting ones (called *novissima* in Latin or *eschatological* in Greek). We began the month by celebrating the Blessed ones (All Saints), by praying for those who have left us (the Faithful Departed), and we close with readings that help us to consider the brevity of our time on earth and the value of the eternal ones.

This Sunday can be considered the last Sunday of the current liturgical year. Formally speaking, the last one is next Sunday, consecrated to the feast of Christ the King to remind us of the universal reign of Jesus Christ achieved by way of His Paschal Mystery. The refrain of today's Responsorial Psalm anticipates it: "The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice."

The first reading echoes this same idea: "for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays" (literally, "healing in its wings"). This reading comes from the book of the prophet Malachi, which is, in the traditional arrangement of the Catholic biblical canon, the last book before the gospels.

Today's passage is almost the end of the book and promises divine intervention to establish justice. When you turn the page, the next thing you read is the gospel, which proclaims that such an intervention has taken place. No surprise then that Malachi, which means "my messenger" in Hebrew, is echoed in Mark 1:2 when referring to St. John the Baptist.

Thus, the end of the liturgical year is characterized by a juxtaposition of two mysteries of our faith: the first coming, the Incarnation (somehow prophesied by Malachi,) and the coming at the end of times, the Parousia. The expectation of the Jews for the coming of the Messiah helps us to understand better how we are to be ready for the coming of Jesus at the end of times.

In the Gospel passage, which is only the first part of the entire speech, Jesus indicates that many things will happen: wars, persecutions, earthquakes, famines, plagues, awesome sights and mighty signs, betrayal, etc. Still, none of these events must create restlessness or panic in us: "not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives."

The Greek term under "perseverance" is *hypomoné*, which has been variously translated: "steadfast endurance," "patience," "constancy." It means literally "to stay (*meno*) under (*hypo*)," like supporting a weight, being under pressure. It describes the endurance



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Ervens Mengelle, IVE, SSL

Father Ervens Mengelle, IVE, SSL, is an Assistant Professor of Scripture and Dean of Men in the School of Theology at the Pontifical College Josephinum. He holds a licentiate in biblical exegesis from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome with further biblical studies at the Toronto School of Theology.

of hope being sustained by faith and lived through charity. The ultimate reason is indicated in the Alleluia verse: "Stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand."

The expectation of the last coming of Jesus (Parousia) was powerfully experienced by the first Christians. The impact of Jesus' resurrection, so fresh in their minds because it had so recently happened, seems to have created an

intense expectation for Jesus' final coming. As a matter of fact, the oldest writing of the New Testament, the First Letter to the Thessalonians (dated around 59 A.D.), contains very expressive passages in that regard, so much so that it seems that some Christians stopped working because of the imminence of the end. Such a response prompted St. Paul to write the Second Letter, a passage of which is today's second reading. The Apostle had to calm down the expectation and bring the faithful back to understanding that they still needed to work and support themselves (the scholars' presumption was that some of faithful were taking advantage of the situation).

The Apostle's advice is valid for us as well. It is what we pray for in today's Collect Prayer: "Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you," repeated in the Prayer over the Offering. This is what the expression "those who fear my name" in the First Reading means, the devotion or dedication to the work of God (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1070: "In the New Testament the word 'liturgy' refers not only to the celebration of divine worship but also to the proclamation of the Gospel and to active charity. In all of these situations it is a question of the service of God and neighbor.") It is echoed in the Communion Antiphon: "To be near God is my happiness, to place my hope in God the Lord."

Solemnity of Christ the King Year C

There's only one King – Christ

2 Samuel 5:1-3
Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5
Colossians 1:12-20
Luke 23:35-43



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Father Robert Jager, Ph.D

Father Robert Jager, Ph.D., is pastor of Columbus St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church.

dwell in it and then say, I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me, you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose. One of your brothers, you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother (...) When he sits on his royal throne, he must make a copy of this law on a scroll given to him by the Levitical priests. It must be with him constantly, and he must read it as long as he lives, so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and observe all the words of this law and these statutes and

carry them out. Then he will not exalt himself above his fellow citizens or turn from the commandments to the right or left, and he and his descendants will enjoy many years ruling over his kingdom in Israel. (Dt 17:14-20)

The first highlighted verse shows the treachery of the high priests. They rejected the Lord and excepted a foreigner to reign over them, Caesar, the Roman emperor. They betrayed the very command they received at Sinai.

The historical context in the time of Jesus was shameful for Israel. No Davidic king but an Idumean, Herod the Great, ruling the subdued nation. His sons ruled portions of the land and were far away from the ideal described in Deuteronomy.

There was a widespread expectation that the Lord would "clean up" this mess and restore his kingdom. By the time of Jesus, it has already been centuries and centuries that Israel suffered under foreign rulers. The apocryphal book Psalms of Solomon expresses the longing for the Messiah King, who would free Israel and restore the kingly rule of the Lord.

Isaiah speaks of the Lord as king who once liberated Israel from the bondage of Egypt and again, he was about to free them from the Babylonian exile. The Lord announces new things, asking the nation not to remember the old ones but to pay attention to the new

ones. "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Is 43:19). The new thing is accomplished in Jesus, the Prince of Peace and Ruler on David's throne (cf. Is 9:6-7), who will save his people from sins (Mt 1:21-23). With the second highlighted points from Deuteronomy, we recognize the faithfulness of Jesus in his mission to help his brethren, that is, to save them from the darkest bondage imaginable, from the bondage of sins.

His kingly rule consists in forgiving and freeing! The hymns of the Byzantine liturgy praise Christ as the true king: "Behold, o faithful, where Christ is reigning – on Golgotha he is pending from the cross and thus he overthrows the laws of nature (...) let us worship him as our King!" (Second seasonal hymn of the Feast of Christ the King). "Your kingly rule, Oh Christ, our God, freed us from the bondage of darkness and brought us to the kingdom of your mercy. Lord, you are everlasting. You always were, and you always shall be. Eternal praise to you, for you revealed yourself as our King!" (troparion hymn of the Matins of the Feast of Christ the King). *Let us give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light. He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Col 1:12-14)*

This is our king!

THE WEEKDAY BIBLE READINGS

11-17/11-22 MONDAY 1 Maccabees 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63 Psalm 119:53, 61, 134, 150, 155, 158 Luke 18:35-43	Luke 19:11-28	11-24/11-29 MONDAY Daniel 1:1-6, 8-20 Daniel 3:52-56 (Ps) Luke 21:1-4	THURSDAY Daniel 6:12-28 Daniel 3:68-74 (Ps) Luke 21:20-28
TUESDAY 2 Maccabees 6:18-31 Psalm 3:2-7 Luke 19:1-10	FRIDAY 1 Maccabees 4:36-37, 52-59 1 Chronicles 29:10b-12 (Ps) Luke 19:45-48	TUESDAY Daniel 2:31-45 Daniel 3:57-61 (Ps) Luke 21:5-11	FRIDAY Daniel 7:2-14 Daniel 3:75-81 (Ps) Luke 21:29-33
WEDNESDAY 2 Maccabees 1:7-1, 20-31 Psalm 17:1bcd, 5-6, 8b, 15	SATURDAY 1 Maccabees 6:1-13 Psalm 9:2-4, 6, 16, 19 Luke 20:27-40	WEDNESDAY Daniel 5:1-6, 13-14, 16, 17, 23-28 Daniel 3:62-67 (Ps) Luke 21:12-19	SATURDAY Daniel 7:15-17 Daniel 3:82-87 (Ps) Luke 21:34-36

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION: Mass Schedule: Weeks of November 2 and 9

SUNDAY MASS
10:30am Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio AM820, Columbus, FM88.3, Portsmouth, and FM106.7, Athens, and at www.stgabrielradio.com and diocesan website, www.columbuscatholic.org.

Mass from St. Francis de Sales Seminary, Milwaukee, at 7:30 and 10 a.m. on WWHO-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus. Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 10:30 a.m. on WHIZ-TV, Channel 18, Zanesville. Check local cable system for cable channel listing.

Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Spectrum Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or Breezeline Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).

Mass from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee at 6:30 a.m. on ION TV (AT&T U-verse Channel 195, Dish Network Channel 250, or DirecTV Channel 305).

Mass from Massillon St. Mary Church at 10:30 a.m. on WILB radio (AM 1060, FM 94.5 and 89.5), Canton, heard in Tuscarawas, Holmes, and Coshocton counties.

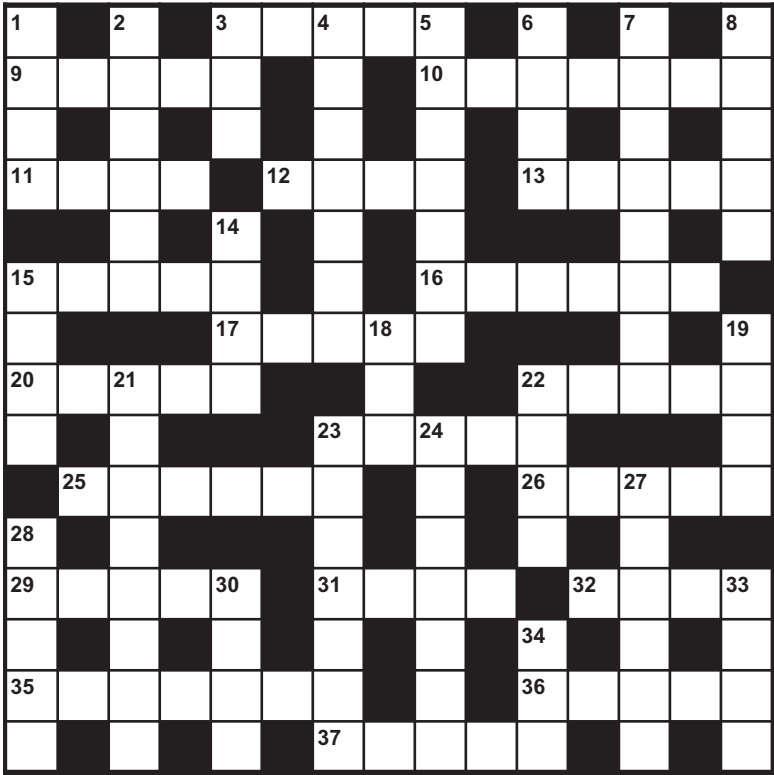
DAILY MASS
8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight). See EWTN above; and on i-Lifetv (Channel 113, Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City, Washington C.H.; Channel 125, Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia; Channel 207, Zanesville); 8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

12:05 p.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. Saturdays, Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com and diocesan website, www.columbuscatholic.org. (Saturdays on radio only).

Videos of Masses are available at any time on the internet at these and many other parish websites: Mattingly Settlement St. Mary (www.stannstmary.org); Delaware St. Mary (www.delawarestmary.org); Sunbury St. John Neumann (www.saint-johnsunbury.org); and Columbus Immaculate Conception (www.iccols.org). Check your parish website for additional information.

We pray the propers for Weeks I and II of the Liturgy of the Hours

CATHOLIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS
3 "When we eat this ___ and drink..."
9 The Jesuits, for example
10 He saw the wheel
11 Some fell on the path, some on rocky ground, some among thorns, and some on rich soil
12 Jerusalem's Mount ___
13 Paul's companion during his missionary travels
15 Catholic actress Holmes
16 Holy objects
17 Sister ___, hermit
20 "...many ___ and wonders were being done by the apostles" (Acts 2:43)
22 White silk garment worn by the Pope
23 Jesus said this divided could not stand
25 Holy one, in Paris
26 Number of humans in Noah's ark
29 Jesus praised her generosity
31 Ancestress of Jesus
32 The Mass is both a sacrifice and a ___
35 "His Eye is on the ___"
36 "Quo ___?"
37 Commandment place

DOWN
1 Members of orders take these
2 Season during which the Joyful Mysteries are prayed
3 Some Carmelites (abbr.)
4 "Kyrie ___"
5 Formed by several parishes
6 Papal symbol
7 Pertaining to Scripture
8 "The cup of blessing that we ___" (1 Cor 10:16)
14 Good ___
15 "Greet one another with a holy ___" (2Cor 13:12)
18 "Gloria in excelsis ___"
19 The ___ Supper
21 "Angel of God, my ___ dear"
22 "___ my sheep." (Jn 21:17)
23 Book before James
24 Extreme ___
27 This kind of person stirs up strife, according to Proverbs
28 Nationality necessary to be in the papal guard
30 Liturgy of the ___
33 "For whoever wishes to save his life will ___ it" (Mk 8:35)
34 Benedict's number

Upcoming Feast Days

- 11-22 St. Cecilia
- 11-23 Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
- 11-30 St. Andrew



All You Holy Men and Women,
Ora Pro Nobis

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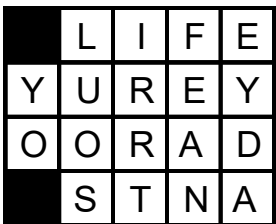
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by Pat Battaglia, aka Dr. Fun

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PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

- BAKOS, Mary Jane, 93, Oct. 21**
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

BANKS, Diane C. (Casanta), 78, Oct. 23
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

BOMTEMPS, Joseph Victor, 67, Oct. 18
St. Francis de Sales Church, Newark

CANNON, Joseph "Jack," 89, Oct. 22
Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel, Columbus

COOK, Gary G., 85, Oct. 27
St. Paul the Apostle Church, Westerville

CORNELIUS, Audrey Mae, 84, Oct. 9
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

DELEWESE, Jessanna M., 71, Nov. 1
St. Margaret of Cortona Church, Columbus
- FESTI, Angeline (Battalio), 94, Oct. 27**
St. Joseph Church, Dover

FILICHIA, S. James, 81, Oct. 27
St. Agatha Church, Columbus

FORNADLEY, Raymond, 95, Oct. 21
St. Pius X Church, Reynoldsburg

GRESSEL, Betsy L., 84, of Westerville, Nov. 3
St. Michael Church, Carlisle, Ohio

OMODIO, Cathleen, 68, Oct. 19
St. Peter St. Joan of Arc Parish, Columbus-Powell

PELINO, Dominic A., 32, Oct. 23
St. Patrick Church, Columbus

POVICK, James J., 78, Oct. 25
Immaculate Conception Church, Dennison
- SAHLIN, Catherine Grota, 64, Oct. 24**
St. Paul the Apostle Church, Westerville

SCHILZ, Beverly J., 85, Oct. 26
Sacred Heart Church, New Philadelphia

SHAFFER-TOOLE, Velma A., 96, Oct. 22
St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville

SHEARN, Catherine, 76, Oct. 31
Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel, Columbus
- THOMPSON, Barbara A. (Zagata), 84, of Worthington, Oct. 17**
St. Kenneth Church, Plymouth, Mich.

WAGY, Tricia S. (Thoman), 62, Oct. 29
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

WILES, James M., 80, Oct. 26
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

WOLLENBERG, Melissa (Fuchs), 59, Oct. 23
St. Rose of Lima Church, New Lexington

Margaret A. Lowry

Funeral Mass for Margaret A. Lowry, 86, of Pickerington, who died Thursday, Oct. 30, was celebrated Tuesday, Nov. 4 at Steubenville Triumph of the Cross Parish. Burial was at Mount Calvary Cemetery, Steubenville.

She was born on May 19, 1939 in Toronto, Ontario, to Dr. Earl and Margaret (Copp) Steele. She earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto before serving as a high school teacher.

She was preceded in death by siblings Dr. John, Bob and Pat. Survivors include her husband, Douglas; a son, Kevin (Kathi), chief financial officer for the

Diocese of Columbus; two daughters, Sharon and Susan; siblings Bill, Don and Barbara; 11 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

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WORDS OF WISDOM SOLUTION


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The risk of responding to God

Within the structure and content of Sacred Scripture, there is a simple yet poignant formula that exists between God and man. As God speaks, man has the opportunity to respond. It can be summed up in the following phrase: As God reveals, we respond in faith, or revelation and the response of faith.

The intimacy between how God chose to communicate to man, as revealed in Sacred Scripture, provides us with an intimate view of God's desire to maintain an active relationship with us. As with all good things, because communicating with our Lord, especially through his Son Jesus Christ, should be considered a good thing, there are risks involved with responding to God.

In the story of the call of Abram, we encounter God telling Abram to leave his own country and travel to a land that he will show him. God tells Abram that the following will happen during his journey,

And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves. So, Abram went as the Lord had told him; (Gen 12:1-4)

The interaction between God and Abram is both simple yet profoundly significant because what we read in this passage is Abram's free response to the will of God. In the book of Hebrews, we read an affirmation of the faith of Abram: By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive



CALLED TO TEACH, NOT JUDGE

Dr. Marlon De La Torre

Dr. Marlon De La Torre serves as the senior director for the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis in the Diocese of Columbus. His professional catechetical background spans more than 30 years.

as an inheritance; and he went out not knowing where he was to go. (Heb 11:8) The interaction between Abram and God reveals Abram's ability to listen, obey, and freely submit to the will of God. These three facets of faith are very important because they detail the risk of responding to God.

We encounter in the following chapters of Genesis, Abram's relationship with Lot, the blessing from Melchizedek, the birth of Ishmael, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the birth of Isaac as promised to Sarah by God, and the testing of Abraham's faith with the apparent sacrifice of Isaac. These examples express a reality that we

often ignore: a response to God requires the virtue of faith, obedience, trust, and surrender to the will of God.

The risk of responding to God unveils the reality that there is someone far greater than yourself who exists, and He desires to have an intimate relationship with you. This means that the totality of my word can no longer serve as the reason for my existence. The premise that someone can honestly claim a religious or spiritual identity without assenting to the author of all things religious and spiritual is a contradiction in faith. The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us,

By Faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God. With his whole being, man gives his assent to God the revealer. This is known as the obedience of faith.

Another risk associated with a response to God is the change in demeanor and habits that are contradictory to the law of God revealed in the Ten Commandments and fulfilled by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, in his Sermon on the Mount. Jesus makes an ominous statement to all present who choose not to follow the way of the law and what has been prophesied,

Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 143)

A private and public profession of faith, now that you are no longer a slave of this world, but allow yourself to be claimed by God for His Kingdom. The friendships you thought you had in good faith may no longer exist. The community that was once very supportive may now be very distant or possibly hostile to your newfound faith in God. There is a great possibility that you may be alone, and all you have is God the Father to console you. Even more, the possibility of developing new friendships that will challenge you to be Christlike may result in your response to God.

A greater risk in responding to God is the willingness to die for Him, that our love for God our Father becomes so profound that our true joy is to be with him in heaven. St. Paul reminds us that our first obligation is to obey God in faith (Rom 1:5) and the risk of this response to God is to believe and bear witness to Him, even if it means surrendering our life to Him by way of the Cross.

Really humble people are never scandalized: they know their own weakness too well; they know that they themselves are so close to the edge of the precipice and they are so afraid of falling over that they are not at all astonished to see others do so...We have no reason to despise anyone. A humble man sees only his own faults. It is a sign of little virtue to notice the imperfections of others. A person may be imperfect today who, in a little while, recognizing this, may rise to great sanctity.

Saint Claude La Colombière

Unsinkable faith: daughter of the Edmund Fitzgerald

It was a Monday afternoon in November when Debbie Champeau got the call. The 17-year-old, a senior at St. Pius XI in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, left school immediately, taking two buses to get home.

There, she found her mother and grandmother parked by the telephone, distraught. They feared the worst: that Debbie's father, Buck, had gone down in a shipwreck.

The Edmund Fitzgerald.

That evening, confirmation came — and with it, rain.

Debbie bolted outside and ran three blocks to the rectory, where she frantically rang the doorbell and pounded on the door.

"I was desperate for some kind of consolation," she said. "Why? How could God do this? I needed answers. I wanted to talk to one of the priests."

Father Dennis answered, sitting down with the teen and calming her.

"This isn't for us to question," the middle-aged priest told her.

"For me, that was so unacceptable as an explanation," she said.

Being Catholic had been central to Debbie's life. She'd always attended Catholic school — her dad had insisted on it. She



TWENTY SOMETHING Christina Capecci

Christina Capecci is a freelance writer from Grey Cloud Island, Minn.

never missed Mass on Sunday. She taught CCD. She sang in the choir. And she worked for the Notre Dame nuns who ran her school. "I loved all the nuns there," Debbie said. "I was doing what I could to help the church."

But her world no longer made sense. Beneath the sorrow burned a raw anger at God.

Debbie stopped going to Mass.

She still talked to God, but she couldn't reconcile her loss with her faith. A loving God. A brutal storm. Her father, at the very worst spot at the very worst time.

Closure was hard to come by. No body, no casket. Just an empty grave.

Debbie had a recurring nightmare of seeing her dad's hand stretching out of Lake Superior and trying to clutch it but not reaching it in time.

A year later, Debbie found her way back to church.

"Finally, I just accepted it," she said. "I came to peace with everything, and my faith made me stronger instead of pushing me away in anger. We give it up to God because there's nothing we can do to bring him back."

Now 67 and a widowed grandmother, Debbie's Catholic faith has become an anchor to her father, who always cherished his Catholic faith.

"It connects us," said Debbie, who belongs to St. Charles in Hartland, Wisconsin. "There are times I feel his presence — especially when I go to church and I'm praying. I say a prayer that he's at peace in heaven and joined with my mom and all his friends and now Gordon Lightfoot playing

his guitar."

Sometimes she imagines her dad's final moments as the ship broke in half, engulfed by 50-foot waves. She assumes he was praying Hail Marys.

"I think he really dug into his faith because that's your stronghold during those times," Debbie said.

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the Edmund Fitzgerald's sinking. Debbie will gather with other family members of the 29-member crew at Whitefish Bay to ring the bell rescued from the ship.

Their stories are chronicled in a fascinating new book by John U. Bacon called "The Gales of November: The Untold Story of the Edmund Fitzgerald."

With exhaustive research and reporting, Bacon's undertaking was inherently Catholic: to dignify each crew member, to demonstrate that they had mattered, that they still matter. The book illuminates "the faces and names of the wives and the sons and the daughters," as Lightfoot famously sang.

For Debbie, it's another way to honor her dad. "I've tried very hard to keep his memory alive and make him proud."

CHAPLAIN: Combat around the world, *Continued from Page 6*

the carrier but the only priest in the entire strike group. So I would take a helicopter every week or so and fly to as many of the various cruisers and destroyers in our fleet as I could to bring the sacraments to the Catholic sailors. I must have made close to 30 flights this last deployment.

"Daily Mass takes place in the ship's chapel, but Sunday Mass is so large we have to do it in the ship's foc'sle, which is where the anchor chains are kept. On the destroyers and cruisers, we have Mass wherever we can find space."

The Truman is one of 10 U.S. nuclear-

powered aircraft carriers considered part of the Nimitz class of vessels, named after Adm. Chester Nimitz, the Navy's commander in chief in World War II. "The Nimitz class is roughly 3½ football fields long and is roughly the size of the Empire State Building laying on its side," Father Swartz said. "If you imagine two nuclear power plants with a hotel full of sailors and then an airport slapped on as the roof, that is the idea behind the Nimitz class."

Father Swartz is always available to his "congregation" of 5,500, most of them men, and said, "There is no popular topic

among sailors when they come to talk to me. Topics can range from homesickness to confession to personal development to relational issues to stress from combat. It is not just the Catholic sailors who seek out their chaplain, but the whole crew.

"There is no such thing as a general workday on a deployed ship. I try to maintain a few concrete places in my schedule for daily Mass at the same time, food, sleep and working out. As for my private prayer and study, I have to be adaptive and creative sometimes on how I make time for that. The key is always being

'Semper Gumby' or 'always flexible.'"

Anyone wishing to contact Father Swartz may send him an email message at dswartz@columbuscatholic.org. "Email is the best way to contact me, or someone can simply contact the Diocese of Columbus who can then forward messages to me," he said.

"Since we are back in port, we are not accepting care packages for the crew, since we would prefer those efforts go towards other ships that are currently deployed, though I do appreciate the offer."

Not just pro-life but pro-eternal life

By Mary Kristof

For The Catholic Times

With the celebration of All Saints Day, we are reminded of our final goal: the glory of heaven. Heaven is populated by those saints who are not officially canonized and whose sanctity, on this side of heaven, will remain unknown. This feast day serves as our reminder that each person is called to be a saint amid the various crosses and circumstances of his or her life.

Each person is made in the image and likeness of God. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, “Endowed with ‘a spiritual and immortal’ soul, the human person is ‘the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake.’ From his conception, he is destined for eternal beatitude” (CCC 1703). Out of His infinite love and goodness, God has willed each person into being. God calls each person to be a saint, to praise Him forever in heaven.

“Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary,” Pope

Benedict XVI said.

Each person is an unrepeatable gift. Each person has a part to play in the plan of salvation.

The saints are those whose lives have been transformed by an all-consuming love for God. They are our guides to beatitude. As St. Athanasius teaches in his work *On the Incarnation*, “For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.” By his Incarnation, Christ has remade us as adopted sons and daughters of God, as those who can participate in the very life and nature of God by knowing and loving God ever more deeply.

The saints teach us that we make God’s love visible by loving our neighbor. In the Gospel of John, Christ says, “I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

Considering that each person is called to be a saint, being pro-life takes on a greater meaning. Life is a gift bestowed from God that should be respected and cherished. The dignity and inestimable

worth of each human person does not stem from an arbitrary set of rights or rules. Each person is sacred, because each person was created by God and destined for eternal life with God.

One charge against pro-lifers is that they are pro-birth; they do not care about the life of the child once it has been born. The Church is striving to love both mom and baby and accompany them in their need because the Church understands that love demands sacrifice. Love demands that we sacrifice for our neighbor, just as Christ sacrificed for the Church, so that they too may reach the glory of heaven.

Inspired to love both mother and child, the diocese and others continue to create new groups and initiatives. Pregnancy centers help provide free ultrasounds and counseling to help moms make a life decision. Mommies Matter accompanies moms who have chosen life.

It is important to remember that the Church is a field hospital for sinners and not a museum of saints. While we are certainly called to greatness, the Church recognizes that each person is imperfect with faults and failings. We also recognize this in the pro-life movement.

The diocese will soon have an active Project Rachel Ministry, which is a healing ministry of the Church that seeks to provide healing and hope to those who have an abortion. Project Rachel helps provide confidential counseling and spiritual direction by trained priests, and it is open to women and men. Many of the men and women who have participated in Project Rachel have been transformed by God’s merciful love.

At the end of life, it can be difficult to remember that life is a gift. Oftentimes, those who are suffering from illness or old age may view themselves as a burden to their loved ones. Yet, human suffering has a mysterious and salvific power that is bestowed upon us through Christ’s cross. By caring for those who are dying, we have the unique opportunity to help prepare them for eternal life.

May we ask the saints in heaven to intercede for us as we strive to create a culture of life and love that is pro-eternal life.

Mary Kristof is the associate director for the diocese’s Office of Pro-life Ministries.

Laws provide cover for unethical actions in medicine

In recent decades, lawmakers have been pressured to provide legal cover in the form of “immunity from prosecution” for medical personnel who participate in various unethical practices.

One involves physician-assisted suicide. Politicians and lawmakers in many jurisdictions are drawn into the process of creating legal “carve outs” to insulate health care professionals from lawsuits and liability when they help patients commit suicide.

For example, Colorado in its 2016 “End of Life Options Act” puts the exception this way: “No person shall be subjected to civil or criminal liability or professional disciplinary action solely for participating in good faith in the death with dignity process or for any other action taken in good faith compliance with this article” (§25-48-119).

Writing a prescription for a toxic dose of a drug to help a person commit suicide, of course, involves a fundamental contradiction for a medical professional whose mission and work are directed to healing and saving lives. By supporting the suicide of his patient, the medical professional upends the delicate relationship of trust at the heart of the physician-patient relationship

and abuses his position of authority. To exempt him on principle from such medical malpractice, and to provide professional and legal cover for patient abandonment, is a morally indefensible course of action.

In his famous encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (On the Gift of Life), Pope St. John Paul II recognizes this legislative trend as a particularly devastating form of cultural decline:

“The fact that legislation in many countries, perhaps even departing from basic principles of their Constitutions, has determined not to punish these practices against life, and even to make them altogether legal, is both a disturbing symptom and a significant cause of grave moral decline. Choices once unanimously considered criminal and rejected by the common moral sense are gradually becoming socially acceptable. Even certain sectors of the medical profession, which by its calling is directed to the defense and care of human life, are increasingly willing to carry out these acts against the person. In this way the very nature of the medical profession is distorted and contradicted, and the dignity of those who practice it is degraded.”



MAKING SENSE OUT OF BIOETHICS

Father Tad Pacholczyk

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as Senior Ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org and www.fathertad.com.

Another form of legal protection for unethical practices involves laws that encourage “anonymous abortion pill prescriptions.”

California Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed a measure allowing doctors anonymously to prescribe abortion pills. This means that the prescribing doctor remains anonymous — even to the patient receiving the abortion pill — and the physician’s identity is accessible only via a subpoena within California. Pharmacists who dispense the abortion drug are also legally allowed to omit their names, as well as the names of the patient and prescriber, from the label on the medication bottle.

Such policies constitute another example of patient abandonment. Health care professionals have a responsibility to provide careful medical supervision and oversight to patients seeking dangerous pharmaceuticals. This requires significant interaction with the patient in the form of medical testing, interviews and in-person exams. That attentive oversight vanishes as lawmakers and politicians start promoting misguided laws to bolster anonymous prescriptions, undermining sound medical practice and depersonalizing both the medical professional and the vulnerable patient.

Politicians, the media and many in the medical profession have decided that abortion deserves an entirely different and much lower standard than the rest of medicine. We would never sanction such an undisciplined approach with other potent pharmaceuticals like opioids or cancer medications.

Rather than treating women and doctors as anonymous entities, pregnant women deserve the supportive medical care and focused attention of their health care team. Ideally, such personal care should help them feel strengthened and empowered to bring their pregnancies to term rather than defaulting to a fear-driven and desperate attempt to end their baby’s life.

A third example involves in-vitro fertilization. The State of Alabama in 2024 passed legislation that protects IVF providers and patients from civil and criminal liability for death and damage to human beings who are still embryos. It gives a pass to the infertility industry by granting near total indemnity with regard to a host of potential medical malpractices.

We have to wonder why such carve outs are tolerated at all, given that the legal establishment has long defended the rights of those who bear the brunt of serious malpractice by medical personnel. When it comes to the most vulnerable classes of human beings at the beginning and end of life, we should be especially vigilant not to relax accountability.

As a society, we cannot overlook or grant a pass to those who systematically campaign for the legalization of corrosive medical practices like physician-assisted suicide, abortion and the production, freezing and destruction of embryonic human beings. Seeking to provide legal cover for medical personnel in the form of “immunity from prosecution” inflicts a serious wound on medicine, society and culture, especially when those efforts are spearheaded, as Pope St. John Paul II has noted, by political leaders, lawmakers and public policy experts “who ought to be society’s promoters and defenders.”

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Should music at Mass be more contemporary sounding?

Dear Father,
I have been a Catholic for my 61 years of life. I remember the more jazzy songs from my youth that seem to be used less and less these days for church services. The youth music groups are getting older and I don't see many young people playing these days. Now we're being told by the bishop that we have to use a certain kind of church music. He really pushes the Source and Summit books. Honestly, it seems to be very traditional stuff. Why can't we have a mix of everything? If he wants more young people in church, he should appeal to their tastes.
-Xavier

Dear Xavier,

Music at Mass is one of the biggest hot-button issues in the Catholic Church in our country. Some say it is generationally driven (young vs. old). Others claim that there is a push to return to the long-past glory days, when the Mass was all prayed in Latin. Still others think that Vatican II eliminated traditional music.

The Mass is the Church's principal way to worship God. The Mass derives from Christ's own mandate to make present His one sacrifice of Himself continually. This occurs during the second part of the Mass, known as the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word, which comprises the first part of the Mass, is based on the Jewish practice of proclaiming Scripture readings, commenting on them and offering prayers.

Just as the form of the Mass drew on Jewish forms of prayer, so too did the music used for divine worship. The human voice had precedence in expressing praise of God and various forms of prayer, such as intercession and thanksgiving. King David may have used a lyre when singing his psalms, but it was the singing voice, not the lyre, that worshiped God.

No sound from a musical instrument compares with the beauty of the human voice. Mothers and fathers treasure the sound of their infants' and children's voices. Spouses want to hear their beloved's voice. Friends who have not heard from each other for a while often say, "It's so good to hear your voice." Probably the most ubiquitous device on our planet is the telephone, invented precisely to carry the human voice.

From antiquity, human singing has fascinated listeners. Throughout the ages, various instruments have been created to mimic the sound of the human voice (such as the pipe organ), but nothing compares to the real thing. Even today, the best auditions of singers happen when they sing *a cappella*, devoid of accompaniment.

Our spiritual ancestors, the Jews, chanted their prayers, believing that melody made them even more pleasing to God and expressed the meaning of the words pouring from the heart more deeply. The first Christians, like our Lord and His apostles, continued to chant prayers and psalms, with the same music they inherited from of old.

The essential difference between Jewish chant and Christian chant was that the latter focused on worshipping Christ. The chanted psalms, prayers and songs all converged on Him. Christian chant, inspired by Jewish chant, has endured through the centuries as the primary means of singing to God.

Like David's lyre, musical instruments assisted Christian chant. Eventually, the pipe organ took pride of place as "the traditional musical instrument which adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man's mind to God and to higher things" (Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, no. 120).

That said, I underscore Pope Pius X's



SACRAMENTS 101

Father Paul Jerome Keller, OP, S.T.D.

Father Paul Jerome Keller, O.P., S.T.D., director of the diocese's Office of Divine Worship, is a priest of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph. His doctorate is from Rome in sacramental theology. He currently assists at Columbus St. Patrick Church.

teaching that "the music proper to the Church is purely vocal music." The organ is "permitted," he says, and "within due limits and with proper safeguards, other instruments may be allowed" (*Tra le sollecitudini*, no. 15). Musical instruments are meant to aid our singing, not replace it.

As a young friend told me, "singing is democratic." "Everyone," he said, "has a voice. Not everyone has a pipe organ or a guitar." He makes an excellent point. God created us with a voice to communicate with one another, but primarily with Him. The Church may be hierarchical, but the hierarchy serves the laity to lift them and their prayers to God. In the Catholic Church, hierarchy and democracy coexist.

Singing our prayers to God sends them in a better way, as my friend says. Imagine a mere recitation of "Happy Birthday." Worse yet is the recitation of Christmas or Easter hymns. "Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! The strife is o'er, the battle done; the victory of

life is won; the song of triumph has begun. Alleluia!" sounds more like a dirge when recited rather than sung.

This is true of so much of the Mass. Reciting the Gloria, or the Holy, Holy, Holy, or the Lamb of God can convey a sense of merely going through the motions of attending Mass. Indeed, there are times it is appropriate to recite the prayers of the Mass when, for various reasons, the use of sacred music is not possible. The point here is to emphasize the beauty of chant.

Singing our prayers makes them more pleasing to God, taking the focus off ourselves. Prayer, especially sung prayer, lifts us to God. Our prayers and our singing should point to God, not to ourselves.

Finally, Xavier, appealing to people's tastes is the way that the world works. That's the basis of commercialism. When the Church tries to be more like the world, it loses its identity as the guide and means to the Kingdom of God. Every experiment the Church has attempted at being more appealing to the populace has ended in disaster and disintegration.

Young adults actually want something different. The church music of 60 years ago doesn't appeal to them. Nor does jazziness. Young adults understand clearly that the Church must live in the contemporary world without being part of it. See John 17:15-16 and Romans 12:2.

I submit that what the Bishop is pushing is holiness, the attainment of which results from proper worship due to God. The Judeo-Catholic tradition of chant has been used in every age by sinners to become saints. And saint-making is what we do with God in our prayer, and what God does with us through His sacraments.

Questions
about the sacraments should be sent to sacraments101@columbuscatholic.org.

Give thanks for God's presence

As we look toward Thanksgiving and Christmas, I realize that 2025 is quickly coming to an end, and so is the Jubilee Year of Hope. What will be our takeaways from this special time of grace?

Hope has become more real for me this year thanks to a certain definition I could really lean into: "For a Christian, to hope means the certainty of being on a journey with Christ toward the Father who awaits us," Pope Francis once said during a general audience. "Hope is never still; hope is always journeying and it makes us journey."

In his encyclical *Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict XVI defined hope in a similar way with a quote from St. Josephine Bakhita, a former Sudanese slave: "I am definitively loved and whatever happens to me – I am awaited by this Love. And so, my life is good."

Benedict elaborated, "We see as a distinguishing mark of Christians the fact that they have a future: It is not that they know the details of what awaits them, but they know in general terms that their life will not end in emptiness. Only when the future is certain as a positive reality does it become possible to live the present as well."

Finally, this famous line from Pope Benedict XVI is one that often comes to mind: "The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life."

And so, as the close of this Jubilee Year draws near, let us ask ourselves how we will live differently thanks to hope.

How will we live our lives more fully in



THE LITTLE SISTERS

Sr. Constance Veit, LSP

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the present, while also looking forward in hope to the certain future that awaits us?

One of this year's defining moments for me was a talk given by a young religious sister to a group of teens and young women at a discernment event this summer.

She suggested that we employ two interrelated practices to prepare the soil of our souls to receive the gift of hope. They are memory and gratitude.

She suggested that we make a list of 15 or so extraordinary moments in our lives and that we read through them on a regular basis to bring to mind the presence of God on our journey and to express our gratitude to him.

Through gratitude, she said, we fix our gaze on God; we see him at work in our lives, creating for us a positive reality and a certain future.

Each of us has a number of these extraordinary events in our lives – when Jesus became real to us in a personal way, when he showed us our vocation, or changed us in some way, when the Lord visited us at a difficult time.

Pope Francis also encouraged the faithful to think back on such moments of inspiration and to relive them in order to find strength and to be able to continue moving forward, even when the journey is difficult.

"Christian memory is the salt of life," he said.

There are a number of passages from Scripture that can help us to remember and give thanks.

Psalms 103 invites us, "Bless the Lord my soul, and do not forget all his gifts ..."; and Psalm 136 repeatedly evokes the everlasting mercy of God.

We can make both psalms our own as we incorporate our experiences into the texts.

An uplifting passage from the prophet Isaiah (63:7ff) may serve as an introduction to our own prayers of gratitude: "The loving deeds of the LORD I will recall, the glorious acts of the LORD, because of all the LORD has done for us, the immense goodness to the house of Israel which he has granted according to his mercy and his many loving deeds."

But my favorite Scripture passage for remembering and expressing gratitude is Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), in which Our Lady recalls the amazing things God has done for her and her people. May each of us be able to say, "The Almighty has

done great things for me and holy is his name!"

As you prepare for Thanksgiving this year, take time to remember and give thanks for God's loving presence in your life. Encourage those with whom you gather to do the same.

And may you take hold of hope in a future of unending life with God! for in it is made present the sacrifice of Christ which has reconciled us with God. Through the Eucharist, those who live from the life of Christ are fed and strengthened. It is a remedy to free us from our daily faults and to preserve us from mortal sins. (CCC 1435-36)

Here is a practical example of a daily examination of conscience:

Lord Jesus, I come before you, just as I am, I am sorry for my sins, I repent of my sins, please forgive me.

In your Name, I forgive all others for what they have done against me.

I renounce Satan, the evil spirits, and all their works. I give you my entire self, Lord Jesus, now and forever.

I invite you into my life, Jesus. I accept you as my Lord, God, and Savior.

Heal me, change me, strengthen me in body, soul, and spirit.

Come, Lord Jesus, cover me with your Precious Blood, and fill me with your Holy Spirit.

I love you, Lord Jesus. I praise you, Jesus.

I thank you, Jesus.

I shall follow you every day of my life.

Amen.

Seven Mountain Mandate emphasizes cultural change

Jesus told his disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden" (Mt 5:14). Since then, Christians have pondered how best to live up to those words, and how best to be a positive influence in the affairs of this world.

Today, one popular approach is called the "Seven Mountain Mandate." The story goes that around 1975, three Protestants, Loren Cunningham (founder of Youth with A Mission), Bill Bright (founder of Campus Crusade for Christ) and Presbyterian theologian Francis Schaeffer, all received a revelation that Christians were supposed to take over seven key areas that shape human society: family, religion, education, media, arts and entertainment, business and government.

The true origin of the Seven Mountain Mandate is less dramatic. It goes back to the beginning of the 20th century and the thought of the Dutch neo-Calvinist pastor (and later Prime Minister) Abraham Kuyper. He argued against state control of certain "spheres" or social institutions that did not owe their existence and obedience to the state but to God.

As examples, Kuyper mentioned family, business, science and art. He inspired Dutch-American Calvinist theologian Cornelius Van Til, who argued that since human nature was totally depraved on account of original sin, there could be no neutral common ground between Christians and non-Christians.

Van Til influenced the "Christian Reconstruction" movement led by Calvinists R. J. Rushdoony, Greg Bahnsen and Gary North. They advocated a reconstruction of society by Christians, beginning with the individual and family, then the reformation of other "spheres"



A SHEPHERD'S CARE

Father Thomas Buffer

Father Thomas Buffer is the pastor at Columbus St. Cecilia Church.

up to and including the state and its laws, emphasizing the areas of philosophy, politics, economics, business, education systems and sciences.

This anticipated four of the Seven Mountains. Although Christian Reconstructionists represent a theological minority in American Protestantism, since the 1970s they have played an outsized role in American politics.

When Cunningham and Bright first spoke of the "seven mountains," and then found that Schaeffer was saying something very similar, their emphasis was on evangelism. The emphasis shifted when New Apostolic Reformation figures latched onto the seven mountains idea and took it in a new direction.

In 2013, NAR leaders Lance Wallnau and Bill Johnson published the book *Invading Babylon: The 7 Mountain Mandate*, which included contributions from NAR leaders C. Peter Wagner and Che Ahn. This book

shifted the emphasis from evangelizing and bearing witness to taking over and dominating the seven spheres of influence. Christian believers, it taught, should not only preach the Gospel and win converts but also "establish the Kingdom of God on the earth" and bring about cultural transformation.

Militaristic metaphors abound. Believers are told to "see themselves as active agents of change who can establish strongholds of truth and justice" and "begin taking land for our King." Believers should "invade" Babylon and "strategically" transform the seven mountains. The Great Commission Jesus gave to make disciples of all nations (cf. Mt 28:18) is reinterpreted as the restoration of man's original commission to rule the planet. The citizens of the Kingdom, then, must "invade" and then display God's "dominion and rule" within the seven mountains. This may involve "covert ministry," believers acting like secret agents who work to change the culture while hiding their true identity and goals. Many of our cities are dominated by demonic powers who "occupy the gates;" believers must learn to "retake" the gates and "cast down the ruling spirits."

Johnson's thinking aligns with Van Til's. "The Western mindset values reason as the only proper measure of truth, and this has undermined the Gospel."

Wallnau wants to see Christians take over the seven mountains. Making more converts to Christ does not solve the problem of unbelievers controlling the seven mountains. Christians do not need more conversions to shift a culture but more disciples "in the right places, the high places." If the Church focuses on changing the world from within, it will lack "cultural

power," and he sees that as a bad thing.

Catholics look at these matters differently. On the one hand, we do believe that Christians should transform the culture. Pope Leo XIV wrote in his apostolic exhortation *Dilexi te*, "... we must never forget that religion, especially the Christian religion, cannot be limited to the private sphere, as if believers had no business making their voice heard with regard to problems affecting civil society and issues of concern to its members." At the same time, the Pope affirms that the Church must show a preference for the poor and powerless as opposed to focusing on "the high places."

Also, Catholics do not have the same negative view of human reason as Van Til and Johnson. Pope St. John Paul II famously compared faith and reason to "two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth." Last month, Pope Leo XIV wrote to participants in an International Congress on Philosophy: "Faith and reason not only do not oppose each other, but support and complete one another in admirable ways ... " He reminded participants that Pope "Pius XII, in his encyclical *Humani generis*, warned against the attitude of those who, pretending to exalt the Word of God, ended up demeaning the value of human reason."

If reason and faith can work together in the believer, it is also true that Christians can cooperate with all people of good will, including non-Christians, to improve society. This includes the possibility of working together with non-Christians in "high places" toward cultural improvement and transformation.

Newman and the new ultramontaniam

The All Saints Day proclamation of St. John Henry Newman as a Doctor of the Church was entirely welcome, if not without a certain irony.

First, the good news.

Newman was one of the most creative Christian minds of the 19th century, a truth seeker whose lifelong search for the face of Christ took him from evangelicalism through reformist, High Church Anglicanism into Catholicism. Along that sometimes-stony path, Newman was misunderstood and slandered, frustrated by ecclesiastical bureaucracy and beset by clerical jealousies. Yet the vicissitudes of his life led him to write several of the most consequential books of his time, volumes that retain their salience a century and a half later: *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (with Augustine's Confessions, one of the great Christian autobiographies); *The Idea of a University* (required reading for those working in institutions of higher learning claiming to be Catholic); and *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (a masterpiece in both the philosophy and psychology of faith). His Parochial and Plain Sermons are homiletic and stylistic gems,

and his Prayers, Verses, and Devotions make for rich spiritual reading.

And then there is *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. This brilliant explication of how doctrine develops organically from within, while never displacing or distorting the truths of biblical revelation or Christian tradition, not only led Newman into full communion with the Catholic Church. In the century after its 1845 publication, the Essay helped create the theological conditions for the possibility of the Second Vatican Council's teaching on the Church, on divine revelation, on religious freedom, on ecumenism, and on issues of Church-and-state.

Moreover, Newman's criteria for distinguishing true developments of doctrine from fallacious ruptures with the tradition remain a powerful refutation of those who claim that, at Vatican II, the Church underwent a "paradigm shift." Confronting that notion, I am confident that our newest Doctor of the Church would respond (with more elegance than I can muster) that such claims display an ignorance of what a "paradigm shift" is, an ignorance of how doctrine develops, or both.

Yet for all that he is, today, a touchstone of Catholic orthodoxy, in his time Newman was held in the deepest suspicion by 19th-century ultramontanists, whose absurdly expansive view of papal infallibility tended to turn the pope into an oracle



THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

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who spoke divinely warranted truth on virtually any subject. Newman's far more precise understanding of both the fact and the limits of papal infallibility won the day at the First Vatican Council but further aggravated his relationship with his fellow English convert, Cardinal Henry Edward Manning, a leader of the ultramontanist party. Yet it was Newman, not Manning, who, in his Letter to the Duke of Norfolk, offered the most persuasive defense in Great Britain of what Vatican I had taught about the pope and the papacy.

Pope Leo XIII put paid to the ultramontanists' anti-Newman campaign by naming Newman a cardinal in one of the first historic acts of one of the most important pontificates in centuries. So it was vere dignum et iustum that the new

Leo, the fourteenth of that papal name, should have declared Newman a Doctor of the Church (although I can report that John Paul II said over dinner in December 1997 that he hoped Newman would be Doctor Ecclesiae one day, a view certainly shared by Benedict XVI).

The irony of Newman being given this rare honor just now lies in the fact that the unity of the Church is threatened by recrudescing ultramontaniam: not the old, 19th-century reactionary model, but a new hybrid combining Catholic progressivism in the realm of ideas with liberal authoritarianism in Church governance. It's the kind of ultramontaniam that leads commentators to describe respectful disagreements with aspects of Pope Francis's teachings as "not just dissent from, but animus towards, the papal magisterium of the late pope." That ridiculous charge — a calumny, really — was not uncommon over the past 12 years; was it a factor this past August when three distinguished faculty members were summarily cashiered from their positions at Detroit's Sacred Heart Major Seminary? Be that as it may, progressive ultramontaniam is like its reactionary antecedent in that it tries to shore up weak arguments by appeals to papal authority.

The new ultramontanists can be as brutal as the old ultramontanists and their persecution of exploratory theology, an intellectually stultifying and Church-dividing practice roundly criticized at Vatican II. St. John Henry Newman, Doctor of the Church, was severely discomfited by the old ultramontaniam. He would surely deplore, elegantly, its 21st-century mirror image.

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The power of regular prayer

Pray always without becoming weary. That point is made a number of times in varying ways in sacred scripture. St. Luke goes straight to that point in the 18th chapter of his Gospel: "Jesus told his disciples a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary (Lk 18:1)."

This parable is about a poor widow crying out for justice, but the only source of relief available to her is a corrupt judge – one who neither feared God nor respected anyone else. But – like a parable from our Lord typically does – the expected outcome is reversed.

The judge could easily have had her tossed out of his way, which is what I think a corrupt judge in those days would likely have done. I believe Jesus' listeners expected that. Instead, our Lord tells us the judge unexpectedly relents in the face of her persistence and says, "I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me (Lk 18:2-6)."

I doubt a judge at that time would have been fearful of a lowly and poor woman, but Jesus is leading us into a deeper reality: real trust in God and how regular prayer is an avenue toward that goal and its benefits. Jesus shows us a judge reacting to persistence in order to set up the marvelous contrast between what is holy and what is of this world.

I believe God hears the prayers of those who reach out to Him. Jesus concludes this parable with these words: "Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to Him day and night?" Perseverance in prayer is the pathway to a deeper faith and trust in God. Praying



THE CHANCELLOR'S ARCHIVE Deacon Tom Berg Jr.

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without growing weary means trusting God and His timing and remaining faithful even when the answers seem delayed – even when it seems there is no answer at all.

So, it is clear that regular and persistent prayer is not about getting swift or easy answers; it's about cultivating our faith in ways that make it enduring. St. Monica is a perfect example of this truth. She prayed for many years for the conversion of her son, Augustine.

Her untiring hope and trust were, in time, rewarded when her wayward son changed his ways and eventually became one of the Church's greatest saints, a bishop and Doctor of the Church whose teachings inform our faith around the world to this day. St. Monica's life

reminds us that while God's response to our prayers may not come right away, He does answer, and God's responses often exceed our desires, expectations, and understanding.

With all of this in mind, I want to offer readers some practical takeaways from these understandings of prayer. First, let's look for ways to build up our prayer lives. Our Catholic faith tradition is deep and rich, filled with so many ways to pray.

Take time to explore ways to pray. If anyone needs guidance, turn to the Church: the clergy, its books, and its resources. There is an enormous amount of good and approved material available to us. Our lives will be enriched when we work at our prayer practices, when we learn, and when we grow in the faith as a result.

Next, practice praying with trust in God. Don't just ask for results. Let our minds and hearts lead us deeper every day into a truly humble and complete trust in God.

Lean on the community of faith when spiritual fatigue sets in. This is why we ask others to pray for us and why we tell others we are praying for them. That communal prayer does make a difference. I doubt we'll need others to hold up our arms literally as Moses did in the Book of Exodus (Ex 17:8-13), but that can happen spiritually when we pray for others and they pray for us. I know I have felt the benefits and support of others' prayers for me in times when I have suffered illness or loss.

Prayer calms our hearts and minds. It anchors us in God's presence. Think of how many times people experience a

sense of serenity, even when difficult or even terrible things are happening. I know I've been blessed with that experience, such as when my mother died or I was fighting cancer a few years ago.

Prayer draws us toward true humility and reveals just how much we need to give ourselves over to God and depend on Him, to surrender our desire to be in control, to let go of our pride. I cannot emphasize enough how important true humility is to a life of genuine faith.

Remember that when God seems quiet, we are being prepared for answers that will surprise us, that will take us in new and unexpected directions. When that happens because of our humble trust in God, we will see that the right things are happening in our lives.

Prayer should shape our souls, not just our situation. God calls us to radical friendship with Him. Prayer is the way there. By radical, I mean that word in original sense, from the Latin word *radix*, which means root. Think of the dandelion plant that has a long root that can grow several feet down in the ground.

If we are deeply rooted in our faith and in that radical friendship with the Lord, then we are in a loving relationship with our creator. It will no longer be about obeying the Lord and His laws just to save ourselves but a mutual loving relationship, like a parent or grandparent loving a child who loves them unconditionally in return, a mutual response to each other out of pure love.

God created all of us and wants to hold all of us close in that same way.

St. Gertrude and the Sacred Heart

By Father Ed Dougherty, M.M.
The Christophers

Nov. 16 is the feast of St. Gertrude the Great, a mystic associated with devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was born in 1256 on the Feast of the Epiphany, and it is believed that she may have been orphaned because she came to be cared for by Benedictine nuns at the Abbey of Helfta in Eisleben, Germany.

At Helfta, Gertrude excelled in the study of philosophy and literature, and she loved to study classical authors like Virgil, Cicero and Aristotle. She also engaged in painting and singing, so the community assigned her the role of second cantor due to her beautiful voice.

Eventually called to devote her life to God, Gertrude decided to become a Benedictine nun. She progressed in her spiritual journey until experiencing

a sense of malaise in her vocation. However, the following year, at age 25, Gertrude had the first of many visions that changed her life.

The writings of St. Gertrude the Great were compiled into the book "Herald of Divine Love," where she recounts her mystical experiences, such as a vision she had on the feast of John the Evangelist. Gertrude was resting her head near the wound in Christ's side and heard the beating of His heart. Overwhelmed by the experience, she asked John if he heard the same beating and felt the same pulsations on the night of the Last Supper and, if so, why he never reported on it. Then she recounts the reply of John, who told her it was only something to be revealed in a time when the world had grown cold and needed to have its love of Christ revived.

In another vision, Christ drew Gertrude near enough to hear two separate beatings

of His Heart and explained, "One of these beatings works the salvation of sinners, the other the sanctification of the just. The first speaks without intermission to My Father, in order to appease His justice and draw down His mercy. By this same beating I speak to all the Saints, making excuse to them for sinners, with the zeal and indulgence of a good brother, and urging them to make intercession for them. This same beating is the incessant appeal I mercifully address to the sinner himself, with so unspeakable a desire to see him come back to me, that I never weary of awaiting his return. The second beating I continually say to my father how deeply I rejoice in having given my blood for the ransom of so many just souls, in whose love I take such manifold delight."

These and many other visions of St. Gertrude the Great shed light on what came to be known as the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus that developed over

centuries and traces to Christ's words in the Gospel of Matthew, where He places an important emphasis on the nature of His heart as a sign of humility, saying, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

It's clear that Gertrude found this rest in her soul in her mystical encounters, drawing so close to Christ that her experiences provide profound insight into the inner workings of the very body and soul of our Lord. May her account continue to inspire souls to draw close the heart of Jesus, and especially those most in need of discovering His peace and mercy in their lives.

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