

THE CATHOLIC ADVOCATE

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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A new season of sacraments



Submitted photos

After being delayed several months due to the pandemic, parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Newark are once again beginning to celebrate the joy of the sacraments. See page 5 for more.



Archbishop Myers passes at age 79

The Most Reverend John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D., archbishop emeritus of Newark, entered into eternal life on Sept. 24. He was 79 years old.

Upon hearing the news of Archbishop Myers' passing, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., said, "On behalf of my brother bishops and the entire family of God here in our lo-

cal Church of Newark, I extend my heartfelt prayers and condolences to his family. Let us thank God for Archbishop Myers' service and his love of our Church. I entrust him to the loving arms of our Blessed Mother Mary, and I pray that Our Lord grant him peace."

A funeral Mass was celebrated in

Peoria, Ill., on Sept. 30. Cardinal Tobin celebrated a memorial Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark on Oct. 7. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Mass was not open to the public, but it was livestreamed online.

Turn to pages 14-15 for more coverage.

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Faithful citizenship



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Whom should we vote for in the upcoming election? Can faithful Catholics who are conscientious about their religious beliefs and fundamental human values vote for candidates or political parties that have taken positions that are contrary to our deepest convictions?

Like many Catholics, I have spent considerable time prayerfully contemplating the untenable nature of such questions, because both of the national party platforms contain seriously flawed moral positions.

While I cannot and do not endorse one candidate over another, I think faithful Catholics, and all Americans, must challenge key planks of both the Republican and Democratic platforms, noting that one party seeks to remove the unborn child from the moral equation and the other party endorses capital punishment and fails to treat migrants with human dignity by taking away their faces, their significance. Both candidates must be held accountable for their past actions and proposed plans. This can never be reduced to a single issue—as gravely serious as these issues are. Instead, we must pray, reflect and act based on applying Gospel values to the full range of moral and social issues that are at stake. Our faith must inform our politics.

Our Church never tells anyone who to vote for, and we don't tell faithful Catholics who they should not, or "cannot," vote for. Instead, the Church asks that everyone have a properly formed conscience in accordance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the clear and consistent teachings of our Church. This sometimes frustrates those who wish that Church leaders would make things simple for voters by telling them who to vote for, but that is simply not possible or advisable. Every responsible adult must make his or her own decisions when it comes time to vote. The place where such decisions are made is the sanctuary of each one's conscience.

The U.S. bishops have published a statement entitled "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" that provides valuable guidance regarding the exercise of our rights and duties as participants in our democracy. Number 35 of that statement teaches, "A Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position on policies promoting an intrinsically evil act may

decide to vote for that candidate for other morally grave reasons. Voting in this way would be permitted only for truly grave moral reasons, not to advance narrow interests or partisan preferences or to ignore a fundamental moral evil." This means that a candidate's position on one or more fundamental moral issues must be considered seriously, but it does not automatically determine how we should vote. "Other morally grave reasons" may persuade us to vote for someone even if his or her position on an important issue is unacceptable to us.

Catholic social teaching provides an excellent framework for reflecting on fundamental social principles, including:

- The sanctity of human life (including abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, capital punishment, respect for strangers)
- The dignity of family life (based on marriage between a man and a woman) and the protection and formation of our children
- Just and compassionate immigration reform and care for migrants and their families
- Protection for the poor and vulnerable through health care, housing and just wages
- Racial equality and special concern for the rights of minorities
- The dignity of work and the rights of workers
- The pursuit of peace and social justice here at home and internationally
- Religious liberty for people of all faiths and cultures both here at home and throughout the world
- The stewardship of God's creation (care for the environment)

These issues, and many others, are vitally important to the health and well-being of our society, and they must be considered carefully in the exercise of an informed conscience whether in a voting booth or in completing a mail-in ballot.

Consistent with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, and in continuity with 2,000 years of Christian faith and practice, our Church vigorously renews its call for a manner of political discourse that does not involve name calling, class warfare or divisive tactics. We urge faithful Catholics, and all people of good will, to exercise faithful citizenship by focusing on three guiding moral principles: 1) the defense of life, 2) the needs of the weakest members of our society, and 3) the pursuit of the common good.

To paraphrase the teaching of Vatican II, as followers of Jesus Christ and faithful citizens of this great nation, nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in our hearts (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, #1). We participate actively in shaping the world we live in because this type of moral and political engagement reflects both the social teaching of our Church and the best traditions of the United States of America.

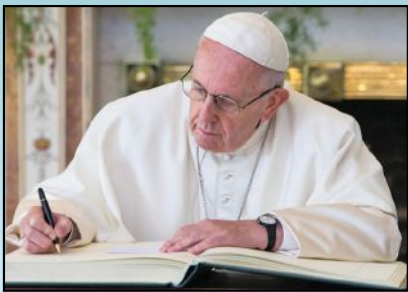
The fact is that as faithful Catholics and responsible citizens we must make difficult choices. That's why we turn to Mary, Mother of the Church, and to all the saints to show us the way. There are no easy solutions to the dilemmas we face today. There is only our solemn obligation to participate in the governance of our nation as co-responsible members of a free society and as missionary disciples called by Jesus Christ to transform our society and care for our common home.

May Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, intercede for us as we exercise our sacred duty as faithful citizens of this beloved nation.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

A message from Pope Francis: Words of challenge and hope



We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern. (Address to members of the U.S. Congress, Sept. 16, 2015)

Indifference, self-centeredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time. We want to ban these words forever! They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives. May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of His glorious day, a day that knows no end. (Pope Francis, April 2020)

My prayer for you

Holy Mary, during this election season, when our differences seem to divide us irreconcilably, help us to come together as sisters and brothers and to genuinely seek what is best for our nation. Help us to defend human life and dignity, to meet the needs of the weakest members of our society, and to work together in pursuit of the common good of all. Amen. ✠

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New bishops reflect on the early days of their assignment

By Jai Agnish

Communications Manager

Bishop Gregory J. Studerus has observed an increased willingness among priests to collaborate and support one another—something he says is especially important right now in the face of a pandemic.

“The priests of Hudson County have great, challenging work to do,” he said. “What I find in the priests is real dedication, creativity, willingness to try to figure out a way to respond.”

Bishop Studerus is one of three new auxiliary bishops appointed by Pope Francis in February to the Archdiocese of Newark. Since being ordained three months ago, he has been getting to know the people and the priests of Hudson County, where he is assigned. He hopes the increased spirit of collaboration amongst Hudson’s parish communities will carry forward, and toward that end, he is planning a series of interactive forums for priests and lay parishioners.

At a recent meeting with the seven deans of the county, the group discussed topics such as Mass attendance and the future of virtual Mass.

“It was a very, very good discussion coming from a lot of different viewpoints,” he said. “We had lunch together and then an open-ended conversation about how their parishes are dealing with the pandemic. Dealing with Mass attendance or not attendance, opinions about virtual Mass and the continuation of that. The possibility maybe we have to discontinue that.”

Bishop Studerus was raised in West Orange and spent nearly four decades as an archdiocesan priest serving in Hudson County. In 2015, he was appointed as the county’s episcopal vicar. Prior to being named bishop, he had been serving since 2005 as pastor of St. Joseph of the Palisades in West New York, the largest Hispanic parish of the archdiocese and among the largest overall.

“My role with the Hispanic community still remains and it’s important, but I think right now my role has been mostly helping and supporting the priests themselves over a number of different issues,” Bishop Studerus said in discussing his new position. “I have felt very good about my ability to effectively stand by the side of pastors who are dealing with troubling issues. At present, that’s where my focus has been mostly. Knowing the parishes better and knowing the pastors of all the parishes better is my next big challenge.”

While he is familiar with Hudson County, there is still more to learn, he said.

“I’ve been in Hudson County all my priesthood, but I was focused on my parish. Even when I was the vicar, I was still also pastor, so my focus was mostly on my parish. Now it’s much broader.”

In the past, auxiliary bishops served as pastors, but that has changed under Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., who wants the men to be “free to know the people of their



Photo courtesy of Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish

county in a particular way,” to experience “the problems and joys of working the vineyards” and to assume diocesan-wide responsibilities.

Bishop Studerus said he was recently asked by Cardinal Tobin to collaborate with the Office of Clergy Personnel. Details of the assignment are still in development.

“I think Cardinal Tobin is driving at the specific idea of increasing priest morale, increasing priests’ sense of being supported across the board, and I look forward to that,” Bishop Studerus said. “That’s exciting to me. It will demand me getting to know a lot more priests throughout the diocese.”

While many aspects of his new role have come into focus, Bishop Studerus, along with the other auxiliaries (Bishops Elias R. Lorenzo, O.S.B., Manuel A. Cruz, D.D., and Michael A. Saporito), is further developing other aspects of the job. He and his fellow bishops meet weekly with Cardinal Tobin, and they went on retreat together recently in Mantoloking. The three new auxiliaries also went on a canonical retreat at Seton Hall prior to their ordination. The retreats are an opportunity for the bishops to pray and celebrate Mass together, reflect on their ministries and develop their relationships with one another.

Bishop Studerus praised the cardinal’s new vision for the role.

“This is new, and I just think it’s exciting,” he said. “It’s important and necessary. The cardinal has called us together, he calls us together regularly, he has expectations of us, and he expects us to be able to say that each of us knows what’s going on in the county that we’re responsible for. He has been sharing the issues of the diocese with us. He’s been very graciously open to us and to our comments. So, it’s been a great experience.”

Bishop Studerus said the pastors and deans who he’s met with have been extremely gracious and lovely to him. He was recently invited to celebrate an outdoor Mass at Our Lady of Czestochowa in downtown Jersey City on a pier overlooking the Hudson River with a view of New York City as the backdrop.

“It was a beautiful, beautiful experience,” he said, adding that he is looking forward to more invitations from pastors to celebrate Mass together.

“I’m hesitating to just sort of impose myself,” Bishop Studerus said. “In the next weeks and months, I think that’s one of the things I need to do. I’ve been a little cautious about overdoing things because of the pandemic.”

Since he was ordained three months ago, Bishop Elias R. Lorenzo, O.S.B., one of three new auxiliary bishops for the Archdiocese of Newark, has been getting to know the priests, deacons, religious and pastoral staffs in Union County, where he is assigned. The primary work of a bishop is building relationships, he said. One of the ways he’s been doing this is by celebrating Mass, confirmations and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults at different parishes every weekend.

“I’m happy to do it because it gives me the chance to spend the day in a parish,” he said. “[In August,] I was in Scotch Plains at St. Bartholomew and I had three confirmations—the 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.—and so I was able to have lunch with the priests and the staff. I was able to stay for supper and get to know people. There are one or two retired priests who also live there.”

Bishop Elias has also been getting to know parishioners after Mass but admitted it’s an odd greeting.

“You can’t shake hands,” he said. “You can just stand there and say hello and people walk by. You do the best you can in this environment. Many of them have positive comments: ‘Thank you for opening up our churches,’ and, ‘Thank you for letting us come back to Mass.’”

As Bishop Elias gets to know more of the priests of Union County, he said he finds they are “good and zealous.”

“They are as frustrated as we all are with COVID,” said Bishop Elias. “They want to be able to do pastoral work. And a lot of the protocols that we are all frustrated with, but know are essential and necessary, limits what they can do in their parishes. I think that level of frustration also reveals a good zeal in them for priestly ministry, pastoral ministry, of service to their people.”

Priests are also working harder than ever because of the pandemic, he said, and they are learning how to use technology and social media in new and useful ways.

“Parish life is changing quickly,” he noted. “How we do catechetics is changing. How we reach couples for marriage prep is changing. How we welcome students and teachers to our school is changing. There’s a lot of hard work going on, and people are really generous and creative. They are creating new solutions and new ways of doing things. It’s wonderful on one level and inspiring to see that.”

Since being ordained, Bishop Elias took up residence in a small home on the property of St. Teresa of Avila in Summit. You will often find him at the parish food pantry Wednesday mornings after Mass.

“You don’t think that Summit has poor, but the poor are everywhere,” he said. “So, I usually say the Wednesday morning Mass and then go over and greet people who are coming up, and I thank the volunteers.”

Bishop Elias said Summit is an ideal location to live because it’s a 20-minute drive to any parish in Union County. It’s also close to his monastery, St. Mary’s Abbey in Morristown.

“I do get to go home about once a week to have lunch or supper with the brethren, which is nice to reconnect with my commu-



Photo courtesy of St. Mary Parish, Plainfield

nity,” he said.

Prior to his appointment in Newark by Pope Francis, Bishop Elias had several roles in the monastery, including director of liturgy, prior of the abbey and rector of church. Since 2016, he was abbot president of his order, the American Cassinese Congregation, which includes 25 monasteries and 23 schools throughout the world. He also served as president of the International Commission on Benedictine Education.

His work often involved traveling to these different monasteries and schools nearly every week. He stepped down from that role on April 15. Church leaders cannot hold two offices in the church simultaneously.

“I miss the visits to the houses and the visits with the brethren,” Bishop Elias said. “I certainly don’t miss being in Newark Airport every week. That’s not as glamorous as it sounds. The visits with the brethren and to share their life and to walk with them, that was the wonderful part about being the president.”

The broad governance work he oversaw as president of the schools and monasteries is valuable experience he can apply to his new position with the archdiocese.

“It can only be an advantage moving forward,” he said. “All of that personnel work will hopefully help in whatever problems surface in the lives of our priests and religious in Union County.”

While many aspects of his new role have come into focus, Bishop Elias and the other auxiliaries are working out the nuances of their roles. Bishop Elias said he and the other auxiliaries meet once a week with Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., and they recently went on retreat together. The three new auxiliaries also went on a canonical retreat prior to their ordination.

“We’re getting to know each other,” Bishop Elias said. “We’re developing a working relationship.”

Auxiliary bishops support the archbishop in the pastoral care of the archdiocese. Each of them is assigned as a regional bishop of the parishes in a particular county.

Continued on page 20

'Unforgettable' memories of the pope's visit

By Msgr. Richard Groncki

Oct. 4 brings back memories of a quarter century ago because it marks the 25th anniversary of the papal visit of Pope John Paul II to New Jersey and to Newark's Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart—a once-in-a-lifetime event and probably the most memorable experience in my 54 years of priestly service. Although I met the Holy Father in 1976, two years before he became pontiff, nothing could prepare me for the unforgettable meeting we would have in 1995.

The papal visit was originally scheduled for Oct. 21-22, 1994. The Holy Father's sudden indisposition (he broke his right leg in a fall in April) forced a rescheduling. The extra year turned out to be a blessing for the planning process. I was part of the local planning committee for the visit and was the local master of ceremonies, and I chaired the committee responsible for preparing the liturgy for the evening prayer service at the cathedral and the Mass at Giants Stadium.

On Oct. 4, 1995, the papal party arrived at Newark's cathedral. The Holy Father went directly to the cathedral rectory, where he met in private audience with President Bill Clinton.

Following that meeting, the pontiff was driven in the popemobile to the front of the cathedral, right up to the front doors.

A liturgical entrance procession had been planned, but when the master of ceremonies



Advocate file photo

invited him to vest, the pope waved the vestments off and indicated his preference for a less formal entrance. So, he entered dressed in his house cassock. As soon as he became visible within the cathedral, the assembly broke into thunderous applause and shouts of welcome drowned out the organ music.

It was at that point that the thought of the Vicar of Peter in our cathedral became overwhelming. Pope John Paul II slowly walked up the aisle reaching out both arms to members of the congregation. It was not easy for many to maintain their composure, I among them. The faithful stretched out their arms

in an attempt to shake the pontiff's hand and Pope John Paul II took a moment to speak with some of them. Finally, the Holy Father and his staff made their way to the head of the aisle. He greeted the Clintons in the front pew and ascended the steps of the sanctuary. The organ rumbled more loudly, and the continuous roar of the crowd grew.

For years, it had been the custom in the archdiocese to burn incense in a brazier during the singing of the first psalm of evening prayer. When the Holy Father passed by the brazier in the sanctuary, he asked the papal master of ceremonies, Msgr. (now Archbishop) Pierro Marini, what that was, and the pope, who was reported to like incense, nodded in approval. Since that experience, the smoking brazier has appeared at papal ceremonies in the Vatican, the most recent being the *Urbi et Orbi* papal blessing during the time of pandemic. This is Newark's little contribution to the liturgy of the Universal Church!

When the Holy Father arrived at the cathedral, the master of ceremonies again sought to vest him for evening prayer, but the pope declined and put a simple stole over his cassock.

St. Francis' "Canticle of the Sun" was the evening prayer hymn chosen for the occasion, the memorial of St. Francis of Assisi. It still rings in my ears after all these years.

All of this was preliminary to a Mass in Giants Stadium the next day. The stadium was filled with 90,000 rain-drenched people.

A torrential downpour continued all through the day into the evening. People were required to arrive hours in advance of the late afternoon Mass. By the time it began, everyone was soaked, but no one seemed to mind.

After Mass, in the Giants locker room, which had been set up as a sacristy, the pope starting moving in my direction. I froze and was numb (and teary eyed) to think that the pope is coming to me. He thanked me and kept repeating, to my embarrassment, "You are a good master of ceremonies. Yes, very, very good!" It was humbling, but I thanked him and thought he must say that to everyone.

On Sunday, when the papal party was leaving from Newark Airport, invitees assembled for an informal farewell. The pope took his time to engage each person in conversation.

When it was my turn to speak with the pontiff, I had a surprise for him. I had met the pope in 1976 at the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia when he was the Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow. I had a couple of pictures taken with him that I had kept in my breviary ever since. When he came to me, I pulled them out and the Holy Father looked and finally said, "Philadelphia, 1976!" I was amazed!

Now every time I pull them out, I say, "Saint John Paul II, pray for the Church in Newark!"

To read this story in its entirety and for more photos, visit www.rcan.org/news.

Msgr. Richard Groncki is the rector emeritus of the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark and currently lives in Paramus.

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First Communicants 'ready' to receive Jesus

By Jai Agnish
Communications Manager

In recent weeks, a group of second-graders from St. Rose of Lima in Short Hills said, "I'm ready" to Jesus as they prepared to receive First Communion. It was a beautiful sunny day for the occasion, which was marked by little suits, dresses and, of course, face masks worn by the 7-year-olds.

"Second grade is crucial because they're just ready," said Louann Carangelo, a teacher at St. Rose of Lima Academy. "Oh, they're ready. We eat, live and breathe religion in second grade. They're going to hold that host in their hand and they're going to stop, and they're going to feel it in their mind and their heart and they're going to say, 'Welcome Jesus, I'm ready for you now.'"

Msgr. Robert E. Harahan, pastor of St. Rose of Lima, said it was a very special day for the parish.

"Our kids have waited since last March to make their First Communion," he said. "It's very special to celebrate with the children, with their families, grandparents and friends. Miss Carangelo was especially helpful and devoted in preparing our kids."

Carangelo described the age of 7 as a beautiful time.

"It's rainbows and colors," she said. "It's this willingness to love unconditionally, but then to stop and question and want answers, which is so exciting because you're starting to think about things in such a bigger way."

Carangelo said it truly is a gift watching each little child's faith grow and that she gets the chills when she prays with them.

"I feel Jesus in me when I see Him in my room," she said. "When I see Him with the children, I know He's there. I feel Him with me. I just say we're on a faith journey and we're on it together. And I feel that. I can cry just saying it because it is truly my honor because I feel that they feed my spirit as much as I am feeding theirs. When I'm teaching about Jesus and all He gave up and all He did, I'm filling my spirit myself."

First Holy Communion is accepting Jesus into your body, into your heart knowing that now He is a part of you, Carangelo added.

"Their journey brought them to this moment where they now hold Jesus in the palm of their hand," she continued. "We're saying, 'Jesus, now my mind and my body is ready for you to come into me,' and now He's inside us because we're ready."

"When we stop and we just say, 'In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen,' I say, 'Stop. Do you even know what that means?'" Carangelo continued as she made the sign of the cross. "You're saying God is in my mind. Jesus is in my heart and the Holy Spirit is wrapped around me. That's what you're doing. That's what you're saying. And once you put those things together everything is a blessing."

This article is based on a video entitled "First Communion Day" by Sean McCourt/Courtesy of St. Rose of Lima in Short Hills.



Photo courtesy of Sean McCourt

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Advocate photo-Melissa McNally

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., recently welcomed representatives of the Tri-State Italian-American Congress to the Archdiocesan Center in Newark to thank them for their scholarship donation of \$25,000. The donation was given to a group of students of Italian heritage from 25 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Newark. An event to congratulate each student had been planned for April 28, but due to the COVID-19 health crisis, it was canceled. Pictured left to right is: Barbara Dolan, associate superintendent for academics and general administration; Cardinal Tobin; President of the Tri-State Italian-American Congress Louis Vele; and Treasurer/Executive Director Ralph A. Contini.



OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS

CARDINAL JOSEPH W. TOBIN, C.Ss.R., HAS ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:

– ARCHDIOCESAN AGENCY/ MINISTRY –

Reverend Jakov Vidov has been appointed coordinator of the archdiocesan Croatian Apostolate, effective immediately.

– ADMINISTRATOR –

Reverend Gabriel Angel Perdomo Jimenez has been appointed temporary administrator of Corpus Christi Parish in Hasbrouck Heights, effective immediately.

– CHAPLAIN –

Reverend Monsignor Robert E. Harahan has been appointed chaplain of the St. Rose Council No. 6386 at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Short Hills, effective immediately.

– IN RESIDENCE –

Reverend Joseph Udeze, C.M.F., has been assigned to residence at St. Joseph Parish in East Orange, effective immediately.

Reverend Eugenio P. de la Rama has been assigned to residence at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in South Orange, effective Nov. 1, while continuing as archdiocesan director of Vocations.

– RETIREMENT –

Reverend Patrick M. Mulewski has been granted retirement, effective Sept. 15.

– RELEASED –

Reverend Sebastián José García has been released to the Diocese of St. Augustine, Fla., for a period of three years, ending July 1, 2023.

– PRIEST PERSONNEL POLICY BOARD –

Reverend Monsignor Edward Bradley has been elected to the archdiocesan Priest Personnel Policy Board for a term of three years, effective immediately.

Reverend Monsignor Joseph Chapel has been elected to the archdiocesan Priest Personnel Policy Board for a term of three years, effective immediately.

Reverend Brian Needles has been elected to the archdiocesan Priest Personnel Policy Board for a term of three years, effective immediately.

– COUNCIL OF PRIESTS –

Reverend Paul Cannariato has been elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Pedro Bismarck Chau has been reappointed as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Esterminio Chica has been reappointed as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Antonio da Silva has been re-elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Thomas Iwanowski has been elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Brian Needles has been elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Pedro Repollet has been re-elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Joseph Scarangella has been elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Kevin J. Schott has been elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Ivan Sciberras has been elected as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Michael Hanly has been reappointed as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

Reverend Yuvan Alvarez has been reappointed as a member of the Council of Priests for a three-year term.

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Holy Angels students teach American Sign Language, deaf culture

DEMAREST—Two Academy of the Holy Angels students who connected over their lifelong interest in American Sign Language recently established “Sign with Gabi and Shiv.” Sophomores Gabriella Callaghan of Nanuet, N.Y., and Shivani Sahu of Paramus founded their nonprofit as a platform to educate people about ASL and deaf culture. Together, the students launched an Instagram account (@sign_with_gabi_and_shiv) where they post tutorials, current events in the deaf community and fun facts. They plan to expand by offering ASL livestreams.

Both students were babies when they began learning American Sign Language from relatives who are deaf. Callaghan received instruction from her mother.

“I learned the alphabet, numbers and basic phrases when I was really young, and I have gradually been learning more over the years,” said Callaghan, who is on track to be fluent in ASL by the time she graduates from Holy Angels. “I always watched TV with closed captions on to assist my mother and, as a result, I started reading words at one year of age, and I was able to begin reading full sentences by two.”

Sahu said she was coached by her aunt.

“My aunt is an incredibly artistic and smart person. She is a teacher at a deaf school and does so many amazing things,”



Photos courtesy of Academy of the Holy Angels

Sahu noted. “She has been my ASL teacher from the beginning, and learning ASL gave me a way to better connect and communicate with her. She opened my eyes to the prejudices and stereotypes in the deaf community, which sparked my want to inform anybody and everybody of this injustice.”

Sahu met Callaghan and her mother when they were purchasing their school uniforms in 2019. “She and I bonded over having deaf relatives, and then we both joined the American Sign Language Club at AHA,” Sahu explained.

During the summer of 2020, Sahu and Callaghan decided to bring free ASL lessons to the families at St. Joseph’s

Home in Jersey City, which provides supportive emergency shelter and transitional housing for parents and their children.

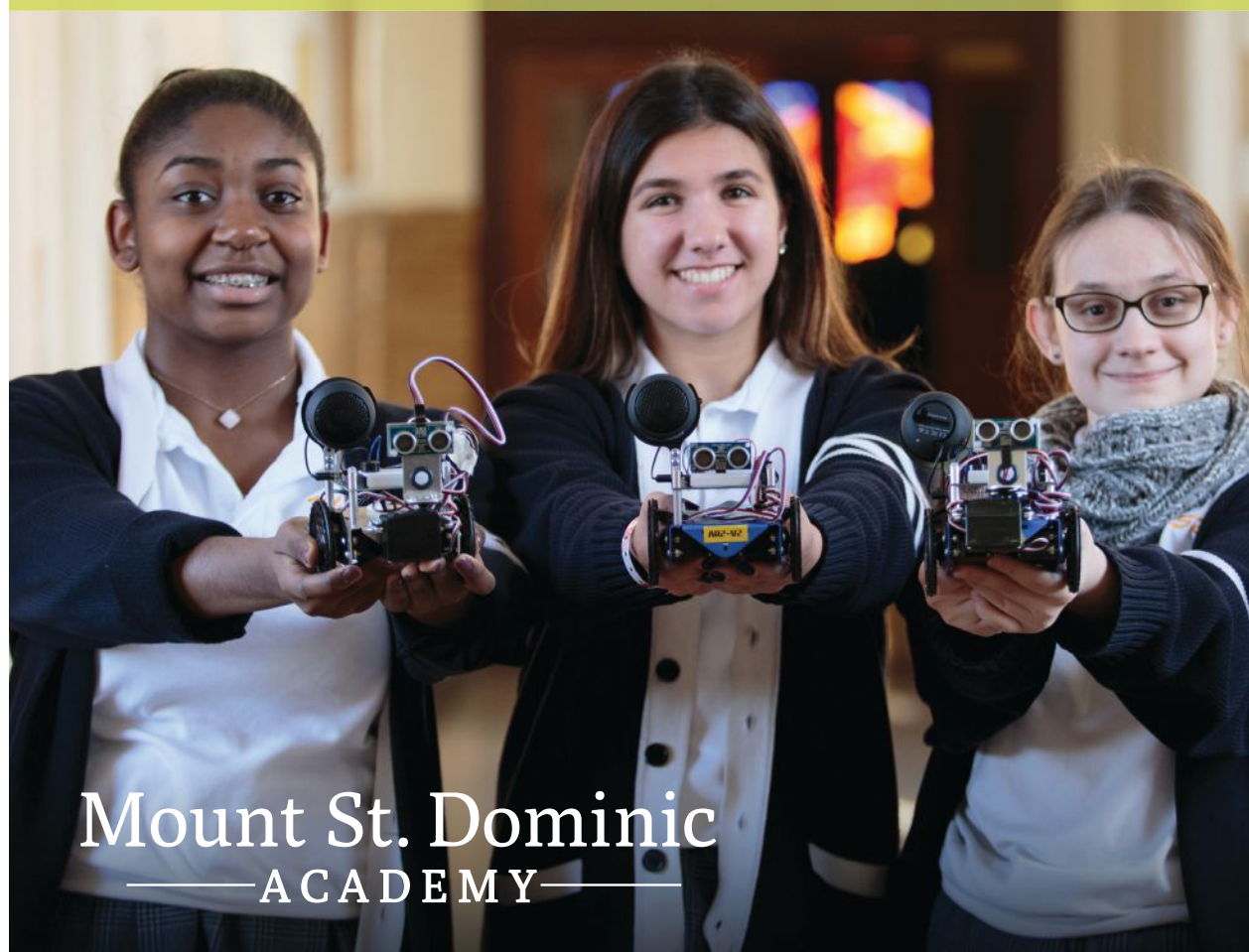
“Because of COVID, we are unable to teach the toddlers and children at St. Joseph’s sign language in person as of right now, but we are excited to hopefully teach them ASL basics in the near future,” Sahu reported. She added that learning ASL improves communication in babies and toddlers, and aids in the development of motor skills.

The girls also expressed the effect the pandemic has had on the deaf community.

“Lip reading is a major component of ASL, so when everyone is wearing a mask

during this COVID period, lip reading has been virtually impossible,” explained Sahu. “Some people have been making masks with transparent shields, but said masks cost upwards of \$20, which is not always affordable. Virtual meetings between hearing and deaf people over platforms like Zoom are extremely difficult. Oftentimes, the closed captioning services are unreliable, so a hearing member who does not know ASL has to translate via writing in the chat. This is time-consuming and tedious and, quite honestly, unfair to deaf people. I hope that by bringing awareness to these everyday issues, people will feel better educated and informed about the deaf community.”

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Caldwell University celebrates commencement day

CALDWELL—The Class of 2020 finally got their day in the sun. Caldwell University's 78th annual commencement was held outdoors Sept. 20 in beautiful, fall-like temperatures.

Four months after the originally scheduled event, which was delayed by coronavirus, the now alumni walked across the stage and were cheered on by their loved ones both in-person and remotely. To ensure social distancing, three separate ceremonies were held—two undergraduate and one graduate.

"We displayed resiliency and persevered through the pandemic ... we stand here today in celebration, better, stronger

and wiser for it," said Marisa Juliano, who gave the student commencement address at the graduate ceremony.

Juliano, who earned a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling with art therapy specialization degree, said students of this year's class were forced to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances. Juliano, who has an undergraduate degree in psychology from Caldwell, said her life's journey into young adulthood was shaped by her time on the Caldwell University campus.

"The experiences that I had here were a crucial part of my development," she said. During the pandemic, Juliano served

COVID-19 patients and high-risk seniors providing art therapy services at a senior citizen community. "The Caldwell mission of giving back, lives within each of us."

Dr. Matthew Whelan, who became Caldwell's ninth president July 1, noted that if it were not for the pandemic, he would not have crossed paths with the graduates.

"When out of the ordinary things like this happen, I like to ask myself, 'What is this teaching me?'" Whelan said. He commended them for their hard work while juggling jobs, internships and other responsibilities.

"You have taught me that when you carry the Caldwell University mission and the core values of respect, integrity, community and excellence, nothing is impossible. Class of 2020, you are an inspiration to us all," Whelan stated.

Former University President Dr. Nancy Blattner could not attend due to travel restrictions, but sent her remarks virtually from St. Louis, where she is now president of Fontbonne University.

Blattner told graduates that she was among many people "who are not able to be physically present, but nonetheless are cheering for you and want you to know how proud they are of all you have accomplished during your time at Caldwell University."

Lamar-Shea Chang gave the student



Photos courtesy of Caldwell University



commencement address at the undergraduate ceremonies. Chang, who received a bachelor's degree in computer information systems and biology with a minor in chemistry, said Caldwell gave the students "the perfect gift for a lifetime."

"We all received a great education, which will have ripple effects in all our individual communities. A great gift from Caldwell, a great take away," Chang said.

It was "surreal" to be attending the ceremony, said Stefani Konboz, who received a bachelor's degree in biology and is now pursuing a master's in occupational therapy. "We finally get to see everyone again and celebrate our accomplishments."



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Photos courtesy of SFIC

In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Scholarship Fund for Inner-City Children (SFIC) hosted an outdoor lunch and concert on Sept. 19 at St. Michael School in Newark. The celebration featured the band Orquesta Yanikeke, which played music from various genres that define the South American, Caribbean and Central American music scene. Additionally, Dr. Linda Cerino, the principal of St. Michael School, announced eighth-grader Ismael Rivera as the recipient of the newly-created Bishop Michael A. Saporito Scholarship, which will provide tuition assistance during his four years at St. Benedict's Prep in Newark.



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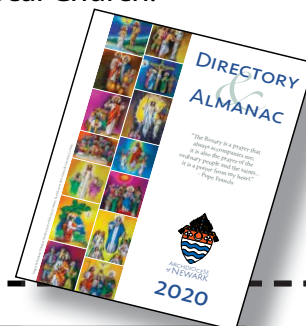
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One Sunday for the Whole World on this World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis reminds us of our baptismal call – to respond as missionaries, saying, “Here I Am, Send Me.” Today we respond to that call, through our prayers and personal sacrifices for our brothers and sisters in the Missions – in places like Uganda where people face food uncertainty and violence... in the Philippines where local clergy face martyrdom... in Oceania where peoples’ livelihoods are threatened by climate change... and in remote regions of Latin America where people are hearing the Gospel for the first time. Respond this World Mission Sunday by supporting the priests, religious Sisters and Brothers, and lay catechists who provide loving service to those most in need. Thank you!

Un domingo para el mundo entero En este Domingo Mundial de las Misiones, el Papa Francisco nos recuerda de nuestro llamado bautismal – para responder como misioneros, diciendo, “Aquí Me Tienes, Mándame A Mi.” Hoy respondemos a ese llamado, a través de nuestras oraciones y sacrificios personales por nuestros hermanos y hermanas en las Misiones - en lugares como Uganda donde las personas enfrentan la incertidumbre alimentaria y la violencia ... en Las Filipinas, donde el clero local enfrenta el martirio ... en Oceanía, donde los medios de vida de las personas están amenazados por el cambio climático ... y en regiones remotas de América Latina donde la gente escucha el Evangelio por primera vez. Responda a este Domingo Mundial de las Misiones apoyando a los sacerdotes, a las hermanas y hermanos religiosos, y a los catequistas laicos que brindan un servicio amoroso a los más necesitados. ¡Gracias!

Archbishop John J. Myers laid to rest after Requiem Mass in Peoria

By Tom Dermody

Archbishop John J. Myers was recalled as a man of faith, prayer, a scholar, a teacher and as “a really good bishop” during a Solemn Requiem Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Peoria, Ill., on Sept. 30.

The archbishop emeritus of Newark and native and former bishop of Peoria was interred in the Bishop’s Mausoleum at St. Mary’s Cemetery in West Peoria following a funeral liturgy attended by family members, representatives of several communities of religious women and nearly 100 clergy, including Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., and eight visiting bishops. The Mass was livestreamed on the Diocese of Peoria’s website.

Archbishop Myers, who guided the Diocese of Peoria from 1990 until his appointment as archbishop of Newark in 2001, died on Sept. 24 at a care facility in Ottawa, Ill. He was 79.

Bishop Daniel R. Jenky of Peoria was principal celebrant of the Requiem Mass. In opening remarks, he welcomed Cardinal Tobin, who succeeded Archbishop Myers following his retirement in 2016, as well as a delegation of priests from the Archdiocese of Newark.

Turning to the family of Archbishop Myers, seated in the front pews, Bishop Jenky said, “We share your sorrow, but most of all we share your faith in Christ’s victory over death.” He promised continuing prayers for their consolation.



Photos courtesy of Jennifer Willems/The Catholic Post, Peoria

honest, fair, merciful, just, tolerant, funny, discreet, a good mentor, teacher and example.”

Vowing not to use superlatives that are often part of recalling the recently deceased, Msgr. Rohlfs drew laughter when he answered “No” to the self-posed question if he thought Archbishop Myers was “the best bishop.”

“I don’t think any of us have ever met the *best* bishop,” Msgr. Rohlfs said, drawing more laughter as he turned to Cardinal Tobin, Bishop Jenky and other bishops present and ad-libbed, “No offense.”

But Msgr. Rohlfs repeatedly called Archbishop Myers “a really good bishop.”

“No matter what role the archbishop played in each of our lives, all of us could probably say the same thing: He was really pretty good.”

Msgr. Rohlfs shared three humorous, yet poignant, personal stories about Archbishop Myers, including one that illustrated how “he always had the care of the priests in his heart,” said Msgr. Rohlfs, his voice cracking with emotion.

He chose to speak of Archbishop Myers in the present tense, because “he is still very much alive and existing in eternity,” and ended his homily by detailing three things the archbishop would want to say now to those gathered if he had the chance. He summarized them as:

- Make sure you understand the true meaning of life, “to learn to love on earth the way they love in heaven.”
- Devote yourselves to things that make a difference in the “really real world of heaven.”
- Archbishop Myers will see us again. “He still knows us, still loves us and still cares about us,” said Msgr. Rohlfs.

Accompanying Archbishop Myers’ casket as pallbearers were five priests who served as his administrative assistants in Peoria as well as Msgr. Michael Andreano, former vicar general and secretary to the archbishop in Newark.

Four nieces of Archbishop Myers had roles in the liturgy. Kathryn Niemerg and

Zoe Myers gave Scripture readings, while Maribeth Hoffman and Denise Gould led the prayers of the faithful.

Those intentions were each prefaced by a corresponding trait of Archbishop Myers. For example, they noted his devotion to the Eucharist, his promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, how he “walked with the church in its suffering after Sept. 11,” and his concern for universities, seminaries, Catholic health care and medical ethics before adding specific related prayers for each of those subjects.

Among the concelebrating bishops were Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda of St. Paul and former coadjutor bishop of Newark, and Bishop Manuel A. Cruz.

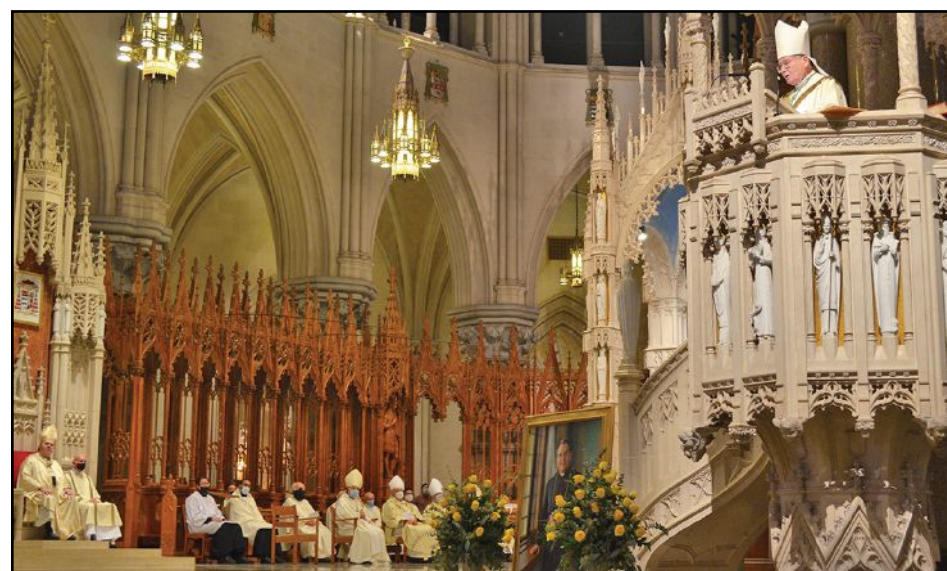
Cardinal Tobin celebrated a memorial Mass on Oct. 7 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. Several area bishops and priests attended. Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli, bishop emeritus of the Diocese of Paterson and former auxiliary bishop of Newark, gave the homily. His remarks are available at www.rcan.org.

Tom Dermody is the editor of The Catholic Post, Peoria.



The homilist was Msgr. Steven P. Rohlfs, rector emeritus of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., and a longtime friend of Archbishop Myers.

Msgr. Rohlfs, who served the Diocese of Peoria in several leadership roles during Bishop Myers’ 11 years as diocesan bishop, including as vicar general, said the archbishop had “all of the qualities necessary to be a good bishop.” He called him “a man of faith and prayer,



Advocate photos-Kelly Marsicano

Remembering John J. Myers

By Msgr. Robert J. Wister

Every human person is a complex amalgamation of many characteristics and attributes. So it was with our late archbishop, John J. Myers.

I first met John Myers in 1965 when I entered the seminary in Rome and John was two years ahead of me. Over the following two years before his ordination, I got to know him pretty well. John was a quiet man with a finely honed sense of humor. He was devout in a simple way. His most complex devotional practice was the daily rosary. He usually prayed the rosary while walking alone outdoors after dinner. His Eucharistic devotion was equally without fanfare. On our many walks in Rome, he never passed an open church (and there are hundreds) without dropping in to “visit” the Blessed Sacrament. These personal devotions he nourished and deepened over the course of his life.

Academically, John was an outstanding student with a keen and well-organized mind. Before entering the seminary, he thought about becoming a lawyer and eventually achieved this ambition, but as a canon lawyer, not a civil one.

After Father Myers returned to Peoria,

Ill., he and I kept in touch on occasion. In 1987, at age 46, he was ordained coadjutor bishop of Peoria. I remember the “boy-bishop” being amused when I asked him if “co-adjutor” meant the same as “co-agitator.” “Sometimes,” he mused with a smirk. The next year, working for the National Catholic Educational Association, I spent some time with newly minted Bishop Myers at the annual June meeting of the American bishops. I will never forget his kindness when, at that meeting, I learned of my father’s sudden death. He spent several hours with me as I made arrangements to fly home.

Like all human beings, there were contradictions in his life. He was quiet and humble but enjoyed being addressed as “Your Grace.” On one occasion, I told him that in international protocol, “Excellency” is a higher title than “Grace.” Now an archbishop, he responded, “But I like the sound of it better!” End of discussion.

Some folks criticized him as too “rigid” in his application of the teachings of the Catholic faith. However, Archbishop Myers’ episcopal motto, *Mysterium Ecclesiae Luceat* (“Let the Mystery of the Church Shine Forth”), exemplifies his pastoral approach to Church teaching and Church law. It is a summary of the central theme of the Second

Vatican Council’s dogmatic constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. He often said, “I cannot make someone believe. I can, however, explain what the Church teaches and the reasons for that teaching, and then invite him or her to be open to that teaching and embrace it.”

In his years as archbishop, his innate kindness always alleviated, wherever possible, his application of Church law in difficult situations. On more than one occasion, he quoted Shakespeare’s Portia from “The Merchant of Venice” to me: “The quality of mercy is not strain’d, it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath.” In any event, his application of canon law always was accurate, precise and true. He knew his canon law—inside and out.

During the archbishop’s years in Newark, his devotional life, Eucharistic and Marian, remained similar to his seminary days. Many afternoons would find him walking around within the great circumference of the cathedral basilica saying his rosary, ending at the tabernacle for prayer. His last prayers before retiring were before the Eucharist in a small chapel in his living quarters at the cathedral basilica.

While archbishop of Newark, he took great pride in the number of vocations to the priesthood in the archdiocese, and especial delight in the diverse backgrounds of the many priests he ordained. He also enjoyed the celebration of the Mass at the seminary

and the dinners that followed on many festive occasions. On one occasion, I was asked to toast him, and I toasted “The farm boy from Peoria” rather than “His Grace, the metropolitan archbishop of Newark.” Some of my confreres thought I would pay for that remark, but John loved it and roared with laughter.

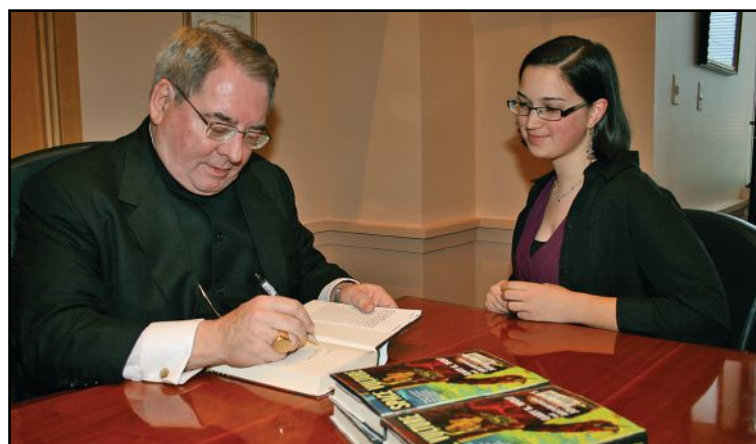
It is good to remember that his humor and imagination led him, together with his lifelong friend Gary Wolf, creator of “Roger Rabbit,” to author a science fiction novel called “Space Vulture.” Sadly, it was not a best seller, although all the seminarians received a complimentary copy.

In his last years, Archbishop Myers endured and suffered serious illnesses. Throughout the years, and especially during this difficult time, he was well-served by his closest collaborators.

As archbishop, he loved “his” cathedral, his favorite place to pray the rosary. In his early years as archbishop, he devoted much time to the renovation of the interior wood carvings and to the maintenance of the general fabric of the building. He hoped to rest in the crypt of the cathedral basilica, but his family decided otherwise. Nevertheless, his spirit always will remain within “his” cathedral.

Requiescat in pace, John.

Msgr. Robert J. Wister, *Hist.Eccl.D.*, is a faculty member at Immaculate Conception Seminary in South Orange.



Advocate file photos

Be not afraid: Awareness and support about prenatal diagnosis

By Kelly Marsicano
Associate Publisher

Studies show that when a couple receives a prenatal diagnosis that shows a disability, there's an 80 percent chance the unborn baby will be aborted.

"The statistics reveal a bias against individuals with disabilities, which denies their human dignity, indicating an attitude that says they don't deserve even to live," said Anne Masters, the director of the Archdiocese of Newark Office for Pastoral Ministry with Persons with Disabilities.

"What if parents with a prenatal diagnosis were presented with options of accompaniment," Masters continued. "There is a greater chance that mothers would bring their baby to term if they knew they were supported."

In fact, according to statistics, couples who receive information about available help to cope with the diagnosis are 80 percent more likely to carry the baby to term.

Studies further indicate the age of mothers who choose abortion with a prenatal diagnosis tend to be older and more educated. Whereas without prenatal diagnosis, the mother is typically younger and less educated.

Catholic social teaching opposes all forms of abortion. The Church believes in respecting and protecting all human life from the moment of conception. It also recognizes the difficulty of receiving a prenatal diagnosis.

"Parents who receive a prenatal diagnosis of a life-threatening condition should receive the support they need to assure that their child will be baptized 'without delay,'" the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops stated in its revised edition of "Guidelines for Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities." "Indeed, priests, deacons and other pastoral ministers should provide spiritual and emotional support to families who have received any difficult prenatal diagnosis and offer on-going support before and after the birth of a child, with special concern in the event of the death of a child."

"Sometimes (parents') fear takes over faith," said Cheryl Riley, the director of the archdiocesan Respect Life Office. "This is a different type of unexpected pregnancy."

One resource for couples is Be Not Afraid. The nonprofit organization is located in Charlotte, N.C., but serves families nationally and internationally. It provides comprehensive case management service and offers peer support at diagnosis, during pregnancy, at birth and during postpartum for up to one year. "We believe that every baby is a gift, and we support parents not only in the advocating for basic care but also in obtaining the treatment they deem appropriate for their child after birth no matter the diagnosis," the organization states on its website. Be Not Afraid follows the ethi-



Photo courtesy of Leah Sonnick

Loretta Mae Sonnick at 5 months old.

cal teaching of the Catholic Church, but serves parents of all denominations.

Leah Sonnick, a parishioner at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Ridgewood, serves as a peer support minister via phone and online forums for the nonprofit. Her third child, Loretta Mae, was born with Trisomy 18, also called Edwards syndrome, which is a chromosomal condition that affects many parts of the body. Babies with this syndrome often have low birth weight and life threatening defects in the organs.

"We were told by a neonatologist that Loretta would have a 'grim and futile existence.' He described her condition as 'incompatible with life,'" recalled Sonnick. Loretta Mae was given two to three days or two to three months at most to live. "We were broken beyond belief. I subsequently learned that these painful terms are not medical terms, but rather reflect the view of some in the medical community who may be uncomfortable with the uncertainty of a particular diagnosis."

After nine days in the NICU, the couple went home with Loretta Mae. She lived until she was eight months old. During those months, the baby surprised her parents with her capabilities. "The doctors said she wouldn't know us, but that wasn't true," Sonnick said. She reminisced about one time that she had been away overnight, and upon her return,

Loretta Mae heard her mother's voice and turned toward her and smiled—something doctors said she would never do.

"After an initial period of waiting for her to die, we started living with her," she stated. "We lived like any family with young children. We went for walks to the park. We took our normal family vacation. We went to the grocery store, appointments and visited family and

friends."

Sonnick is, of course, grateful for the gift of Loretta Mae's life and the time she had with her daughter. She now uses her experience to help other couples who are going through similar circumstances.

"Some parents are traumatized by a prenatal diagnosis," she said. "Parents grieve after learning the news and are often expected to make a decision right away while in a state of grief, without an opportunity to research options available."

If parents do decide to carry the baby to term, Sonnick explained they often feel "isolated, ignored or judged by the medical community."

Kathy Ranft has been a registered nurse for 40 years, working in NICU and pediatric homecare. She received her certification in health care ethics from the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. She explained that while there are many supportive doctors, it would be beneficial for medical professionals to become more aware of available resources for these prenatal diagnoses. "There is a great need," she said. "I think most important is awareness that needs to be out there for people so that we are able to assist parents who are in this situation."

Masters added that informed consent is also important, that patients have knowledge of the difference between

prenatal screening tests that determine the risk factor of an abnormality and tests that diagnose, and also about implications of what tests are evaluating and their accuracy rates.

Studies show many medical providers' own inclinations support the biases against carrying the baby to term. However, there are signs this could be changing. The statistics noting parents significantly decreased tendency to have an abortion when provided with support options was conducted by medical doctors. Intentional outreach to the medical community could be helpful to further this along, according to Masters.

Further, studies show mothers who choose to carry to term recover to baseline mental health more quickly than those who have an abortion, and there are no increased medical complications for the mother associated with carrying to term a baby with a prenatal diagnosis.

Be Not Afraid, which has helped more than 30 families in 2020, addresses the emotional and tangible support needed by families. Tangible support includes case management and a birth plan.

"It is remarkable to see the difference in care offered by some doctors when parents have a birth plan. It engenders compassion for families, and doctors are often more flexible when parents can articulate their needs," Sonnick noted. "We ask that, at the very least, these babies are treated like any other baby at birth."

Doctors' definition of quality of life is subjective and vague, she stated, saying that it's often synonymous with physical or mental impairments.

According to Masters, these forecasts about lives of suffering or being a burden are now being challenged within ethics discussions, noting both their lack of evidence and uninformed biases that ignore the experiences of individuals with disabilities and their families.

"Parents find comfort in the acknowledgment and support that recognizes their babies' inherent dignity as children of God, made in His image and likeness regardless of their diagnosis," Sonnick said.

For more information, visit www.benotafraid.net or www.ncbcenter.org.

The Gospel of Life in ordinary times

By Lucia A. Silecchia

Respect Life Month is an annual October opportunity to recommit to respecting the unique dignity of each human being, made in the likeness of God and created with an irreplaceable part in the human family that no other will ever fill. This year's theme, "Living the Gospel of Life," invites a thank you note to all those who live this Gospel of Life in their ordi-

nary times by welcoming the most vulnerable. So ...

Thank you to the elderly couple with full hearts and an overflowing basement bursting with the cribs, strollers, clothes, diapers, formula and toys they collect for expectant mothers in need. They know what may seem small never is.

Thank you to the man who sits in a quiet bar while his friend confides that his wife is pregnant with their fifth

child and he just lost his job. Hearing this despair and knowing the desperate thoughts that fill the fearful father's mind, this loyal friend pledges his support. He means it. This friendship means the world and can save a life, or two.

Thank you to the high school teacher with the picture-perfect family life who consoles a student facing an unexpected pregnancy and fearing her bright future is lost. After the stan-

Continued on page 23

Faith, family and Polish pride: local resident selected as parade grand marshal

By Melissa McNally
Editor

Among the countless events that have been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic is the New York Memorial Pulaski Day Parade. For more than 80 years, the parade has been held annually on the first Sunday of October to commemorate Kazimierz Pulaski, a Polish hero of the American Revolutionary War. The event runs up Fifth Avenue from 35th to 54th Streets, passing St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Heidi Jadwiga Kopala, a New Providence resident and parade committee member, was chosen as this year's grand marshal. However, the honor will have to wait another year as the celebration has been rescheduled for next October.

"The New York Pulaski Parade is the biggest manifestation of Polonia in the world; one of the oldest and biggest ethnic parades in New York City," Kopala explained. "It's the day you get to show off where you come from. All the streets are white and red that day. I always love it."

Kopala, who has been involved with the planning of the festivities for decades, was especially excited to be selected as grand marshal this year as it's the 100th anniversary of the birth of St. John Paul II, but given the current circumstances, she is grateful for the delay. "I was actually relieved when it was postponed," she said. "Everyone had concerns about their safety. Attendance would've been very low."

A member of the New York parade committee for 30 years, Kopala has served as vice president of the board and also lends her expertise in finance management. For the past 24 years, she has worked for the Archdiocese of Newark as an auditor and aiding parishes in main-



Photos courtesy of Heidi Kopala

Kopala at the annual New York Memorial Pulaski Day Parade.

taining their finances. Kopala also served many years as the chairperson of the committee's annual banquet held at the Marriott Marquis in Times Square, attended by hundreds of contingencies from the tri-state area.

Kopala was nominated to lead this year's parade by former grand marshals

and fellow committee members. She was completely surprised by the gesture.

"I thought, 'Are you crazy?' It was the greatest honor and distinction beyond my bravest dreams," she said. "I've met some wonderful people through the committee, and I've received such positive comments. People are really wonderful."



Kopala, center, received her grand marshal sash in January.



According to Kopala, faith has always been a cornerstone in her life. She described growing up in the town of Łąkie in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship in north central Poland and helping her local church as a young girl. Her relationship with the Lord continues today. "Even when I'm on vacation, I'll always find a place to celebrate Mass," she said. "My faith is just a part of who I am."

The youngest of seven children, Kopala arrived in America at the age of 19 to visit her brother who lived in Irvington. She had no intention of staying. "I know God is the reason why I am here in America," she explained.

While staying with her brother, she became friends with his neighbor Stanley. The two eventually married and have two sons, Adam and David.

For years, the young family attended Sacred Heart Parish in Irvington. Today, she is a parishioner at St. Stanislaus in Newark.

"When you come from another country, it is important to keep your language, culture and heritage alive. America is where you can do that," she explained.

Her Polish pride is also instilled in her children, who both speak the language and attended the Maria Skłodowska-Curie Polish Saturday School in Irvington. As they were growing up, the Kopala family would visit Poland every two years to see her parents. "It's important to me to keep our traditions and preserve our heritage," she said.

Now a grandmother of three, she continues to instill the customs of her homeland, especially during holidays. "Christmas Eve is always a special celebration. On All Saints Day in Poland, the cemeteries are lit with candles. It's a beautiful tradition," she reminisced.

Along with working full time and her duties with the parade committee, Kopala volunteers with other organizations and is an accountant for St. Stanislaus. She has a passion for flowers and helps decorate for special events at local parishes and the chancery.

She credits her family and her trust in God with helping to balance it all. "I feel very wealthy and accomplished having my most supportive family and so many wonderful people behind me. I thank God each day for all of them, their overwhelming support and encouragement," she said.

"People always ask me how I manage to do so much. God puts me there and He does it," Kopala continued. "There are so many times I have no idea how everything will work out and then somehow, it all falls into place. You think it's me? No way—it's God."



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Vocation ministry collaboration during a crisis

By Sister Barbara O'Kane, M.P.F.

This year has been a year unlike any other. In an unprecedented time of uncertainty and concern, one thing remains certain: God is still present and calling people to be religious priests, sisters and brothers. Throughout the year, the vocation board for Religious Life for the Archdiocese of Newark promotes consecrated life in various ways and supports those considering it.

Earlier in the year, before the lockdown, several schools held vocation events in which members of the vocation board shared information about their own call, their religious communities and ministries, and answered students' questions. This helped provide those preparing to receive the sacrament of confirmation a better understanding of the religious vocation.

An annual gathering with seminarians took place at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University as an opportunity for those preparing for diocesan priesthood to learn more about consecrated life. The keynote speaker, Delegate for Religious Sister Patricia Wormann, O.P., presented the history of religious life. Small group discussions with religious followed. The more those called to ordained and consecrated life know and support one another, the better for the Church.

Seton Hall University also hosted the Archdiocese of Newark's annual Men's and Women's Conferences. Both of these events attract hundreds of participants who come to be refreshed by worship, prayer and inspiring presenters. Members of the vocation board for Religious Life were exhibitors at each conference, meeting with attendees and providing information and materials about religious life. Brother Patrick Winbush, O.S.B., and Sister Annelyth Pandi, S.C.C., briefly addressed the attendees.

In another effort toward strengthening relationships with organizations serving in

the Church, the vocation board for Religious Life invited archdiocesan center employees to a luncheon at the chancery. In addition to sharing a meal together, this was a chance to share the commonalities and individual charisms of the numerous religious communities.

As the health crisis necessitated lockdowns and the lives and safety of all were impacted, religious responded with urgency and the power of prayer. The board's vocation directors joined weekly with those from other dioceses via Zoom. For several months, they offered prayers for those suffering from the coronavirus, for the medical caregivers and for an end to the pandemic.

Planning meetings to continue the work of vocation ministry in this new environment were conducted virtually. One discernment event via Zoom was a "Young Adult Cafe with Religious Sisters and Brothers" planned in collaboration with Marisally Santiago, the associate director for Hispanic Youth Ministry and Young Adult Outreach. Nearly 20 young adults joined with those in consecrated life to discuss points from Pope Francis' exhortation *Christus Vivit* about discovering one's life purpose and using one's God-given gifts in daily life. Based on the positive feedback, planning is underway for similar gatherings.

Collaborating with two young discerners to design an in-person experience, single women were recently invited to an event called "Come and See the Beauty of Religious Life" with sisters from eight religious communities.

Vocation ministers continue to find new ways to witness how fulfilling answering God's call can be.

If you feel the call to consecrated life, the vocation board for Religious Life is available to help you discern. For more information, call 973-497-4368 or email Sr.Patricia.WormannO.P@rcan.org.

Sister Barbara O'Kane, M.P.F., is the secretary of the vocation board for Religious Life.



Submitted photo



The path of my life

By Sister Dong Hong Marie Zhang

I was born in a devout Catholic family in the north region of China. The Catholic history of my family can be traced back to the notorious Boxer Uprising in 1900. My mother told me the story of how her grandparents and other Catholic villagers defended their lives when Boxer slaughters were waving their machetes and coming closer. My father shared the story of how foreign missionaries reclaimed wasteland, started schools in remote areas of north China and brought faith in Christ to people of the land. I was fascinated by those stories.

My father was a seminarian student at a young age. Five Catholic priests and two nuns came from his family. After his seminary was dismissed by the local communist government, my father entered a medical school where he met my mother. Both my parents had worked as medical doctors until they retired in Wuhan.

After more than 30 years of being shut down, the Church in China was reopened in the mid-1980s. The Sunday Mass became very important for my family. It took about 40 minutes for us to go to church by bus. The faith seeds were also sown in me through my

father's telling of Bible stories at our family's dining table. I sometimes wondered how he could remember so many Old and New Testaments stories, but he was truly a good storyteller and made me ponder what was happening in the Bible. Saying the rosary daily had been my family's tradition for 30 years until my mother died two years ago. I joined my parents' rosary recitation whenever I was available, since I felt the Virgin Mary was so dear to me.

After graduating from a medical school, I worked as a doctor of internal medicine at a teaching hospital in Wuhan City. Besides taking care of my own patients, I was also responsible for tutoring some medical students. My life got very busy. Many times I felt I was bound to a fast-moving train and just couldn't make the train stop. My Christian value was in conflict with the atheistic culture around me. Sometimes, I felt two forces tried to tear me down: faith value and secular vanity. The more I hung around with my atheist friends, the emptier I felt. I couldn't even find a trustful friend to share my thoughts with. One time, I shared my faith with someone I thought was close to me, but she was surprised and asked me, "How could you believe that (God) at this modern time?" Her



Sister Dong Hong Marie Zhang

opinion actually represented that of most atheists then in China: religious belief was backwards and superstitious, and only illiterate and elderly people believed it. It was difficult to make my faith public since the hospital where I worked belonged to the government. My heart was aching, and I was searching for the meaning of my life. After numerous rosary prayers and discernment, I found His call—a call to a different path of life.

I took a leave from my medical career to be a lay missionary in the Philippines for a two-year program. For

fear of Chinese government inquiry about my church activities, I pursued a master's degree in development management at the Asian Institute of Management in Manila through a scholarship.

In fall 2001, I came to the U.S. to pursue a master's in pastoral study at Loyola University Chicago. In Chicago, I met the Felician Sisters of North America and started my formal discernment for religious life. After nine years, I made my perpetual vows in 2017 in Lodi, N.J.

Currently, I serve as the liaison to the Chinese community in the Archdiocese of Newark. My ministry has been involved in spiritual formation, RCIA, Sunday Gospel reflection in Chinese in parish bulletins, evangelization, campus ministry, prison ministry, Protection of God's Children program in Chinese, and youth program coordination with Asian Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Even though sometimes there are a lot of challenges on the path of my religious life, with God's grace, I have been filled with compassion and joyfulness, and my life is meaningful. The spirit of missionary is in me, and I have been inspired by the vision of Felician Sisters: be Eucharist, be sister and be servant to all.

Sister Dong Hong Marie Zhang is liaison to the Chinese community in the Archdiocese of Newark.

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Local religious brother named president-elect of national conference

By Kelly Marsicano
Associate Publisher

Brother Kevin Griffith, C.F.C., the province leader of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America was recently named president-elect of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM). The Conference serves the leadership of the Catholic orders and congregations of the more than 20,000 vowed religious priests and brothers of the United States.

Brother Kevin was elected to the position during CMSM's virtual national assembly in August. He will immediately join the board of directors and will work alongside the current president, Father Adam Gregory Gonzales, O.C.D., before taking over the role next August.

"I intend to bring myself to the CMSM board with a view initially toward listening and learning from those already on the board," Brother Kevin said. "I hope to share my own unique experiences and insights that I believe may be helpful in promoting religious life during these unprecedented and challenging times in our religious institutes and in our country and world today. I hope to open myself up to new realities and to new experiences of brotherhood in collaboration with the CMSM board and membership. I hope to grow from these ex-



Brother Kevin Griffith, C.F.C.

periences and to assist CMSM in growing as well."

Brother Kevin, who lives in Elizabeth, joined the Congregation of Christian Brothers in September 1979 as a first-year student at Iona College in New Rochelle, N.Y. After graduating in 1983 with a bachelor's degree in English, he taught English, remedial reading and religion at Christian Brothers schools in New York and Florida. He went on to earn a master's in reading from Manhattan College in 1988.

Following a year of study at St. Louis University (1996) in Missouri, where he earned a certificate in religious formation, Brother Kevin became the director of Initial Formation for the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, a role he held for 10 years.

He was first appointed to province leadership with the Christian Brothers in 2003,

New bishops

Continued from page 3

Cardinal Tobin has said that because each of the auxiliary bishops has special gifts, there would be diocesan-wide responsibilities that they will assume.

One of Bishop Elias' areas of interest is education, in which he has more than 30 years of experience in secondary school education and administration at a Catholic high school. He recently began connecting with school leaders in Union County.

"I offered them my support and congratulations for opening up the school year," he said. "They're working around the clock to figure out how to go about school. Where do kids sit? Where do they stand? Where do they have lunch? Teachers and principals are working harder now because of the pandemic."

Bishop Elias is also very active on social media and has been using Twitter since 2013. He said he's doing his part to spread some positivity on the platform.

"There's a lot of negativity on social media," he said. "Recently, you may have seen Bishop Robert Barron call out Catholic social media as being too toxic and too negative, and I agree with him on that. I think if I'm going to post things, I'm going to post things that hopefully inspire people."

This might include a Biblical quote or a pious thought, he said. Maybe an insight.

"But not a critique," he continued. "Nothing about the Democrats or the Republicans or the election. There are enough people arguing about that. I'm trying to use the platform in a positive way, if that's at all possible. I don't know if it is. You won't find me weighing in on political or social issues. It's a vehicle to preach the Gospel. And I'm trying to use that in that way if I can."

Bishop Elias referenced the admonition from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, which states: "Say only such what is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear."

This article is part of a series featuring the four auxiliary bishops of the Archdiocese of Newark.

becoming deputy province leader in 2008. That same year, he earned a doctor of ministry degree from the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, Calif. Since 2014, he has served as the province leader, which requires frequent travels to the various communities and ministries of the Brothers in both North and South America.

Currently, Brother Kevin serves on the Praesidium Religious Accreditation Board in Arlington, Texas, and on the Iona College board of trustees. He is a member of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, and he serves as president of numerous corporations connected to the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province.

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Caldwell educators discuss faith, race and social justice

By Melissa McNally
Editor

As America continues to reel from a global pandemic, economic hardships and civil unrest, two Black Catholic women of faith are discussing their experiences during these challenging times.

Andrei St. Felix, the director of the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program at Caldwell University, and Dr. Valerie Lewis-Mosley, a pastoral theologian, social justice advocate and adjunct professor of theology at Caldwell, recently shared their thoughts on the podcast “Caldwell University Conversations.”

Both women are lay associates of the Caldwell Dominicans Sisters of St. Dominic. St. Felix said she starts her day with the Lord. “When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do, I put my knees on the floor and start praying,” she said, adding she prays not only for herself but for her family, her students and the country. “We know that God has His hands over us and He will protect us.”

“Contemplative prayer is a major component of our spiritual walk,” added Lewis-Mosley, who begins each day with an hour of prayer to center herself and protect herself from the “hatefulness and evil taking place in our society today.”

Lewis-Mosley is from six generations of Black Catholics. Her sense of faith and connectedness to God began, she explained, with her “African ancestors from the shores of Africa to the shores of the United States during the Trans-Atlantic



Photos courtesy of Caldwell University

Andrei St. Felix, back row-center, with students from Caldwell's Educational Opportunity Fund program.

ages, and she would teach us that prayer was not done only in the house but also in nature. We could meet God in nature,” she explained.

She found a community in St. Peter Claver Parish in Montclair, an historically Black Catholic church. “When I came to the United States, I was looking for a place where I could worship freely, and I found

naming the evil of racism humiliates us, since so many events in our lifetime, let alone the history of our nation, have compelled us to shamefully recognize the national sin that obliges African Americans to endure unique and relentless humiliation, indignity and unequal opportunity. Our tolerance of racism as well as collective deafness to the cry of those so grievously offended and the conscious and unconscionable promotion of divisions in this nation has encouraged the heinous evil of racism to propagate.”

Pope Francis said to a general audience in June that “we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.”

As a professor, Lewis-Mosley said she strives to teach students the “unadulterated truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” and connect Christ's experience with today. Having worked with children and youth for nearly three decades, Lewis-Mosley believes young men of color should be able to connect Jesus' suffering with modern day struggles. She described how Jesus was oppressed because of who He was. He represented a threat to the status quo and power structure. “He challenged oppression and disenfranchisement of a people and peoples. Because of that, He paid with the ultimate cost—His life,” she said. “In seeing this reality of a Christ who died for all, they begin to see a part of themselves. That is where the truth then begins to open up for them.”

As for St. Felix, she uses her platform in the EOF program to enlighten students. “What I try to bring to them in this time of crisis is how much they are valued. I teach them to know who they are,” she said.

Most students in St. Felix's EOF program are black and Latino. There are about 140 students in the program, with 38 freshmen enrolled this year.

“We preach social justice, love, empathy and understanding,” St. Felix said. “It is difficult to live with the notion that the students I serve are less than because of their skin color, therefore, are being treated differently in society. We have to keep praying and take bold action through education. I wish we could all see the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in others—all human beings are created in the image of God.”

She considers the program “a clear path to success” for students who would otherwise not be given the access to college. St. Felix instructs her students to pay it forward.

“I ask my students to see the roadblocks and ask them to create a path for other people who are oppressed,” she explained. “We have to be a part of the growth we want to see.”

St. Felix said the students in her program share their lives with her, everything from their hardships to their hopes. She encourages them to live a life to serve others.

“It is important to show students that they can be disciples,” she said. “Catholics should be more inviting to the youth and speak their language. We have to help them become aware of who they are and where they are going.”

Both educators believe their faith is a gift, especially during these trying times.

“With humility, love and by seeing Jesus in the face of others, we can change injustice and civil unrest—that's what I would hope,” St. Felix said.



Dr. Valerie Lewis-Mosley at Caldwell University's Black History Month reading last year.

slave trade. It is only by faith that they survived.” That faith evolved over time into the Christian Catholic experience that her family is so deeply rooted in today.

Her great-grandparents Marie and Daniel Livingstone were cornerstones of the Black Catholic community in Jersey City and helped establish Christ the King Parish.

St. Felix emigrated from Haiti and learned from her aunt how to live a faithful life. “She would teach us about pilgrim-

St. Peter Claver. It has a great foundation of what it means to worship and be yourself and to express yourself as Black Catholics,” St. Felix said.

Both educators have relied on their Catholic faith to sustain them in this time of crisis. The May 25 death of George Floyd by a white police officer triggered worldwide protests of police brutality and systemic racism.

In a statement following Floyd's death, Cardinal Tobin said: “The necessity of

Virtual Pirates Pitch competition

SOUTH ORANGE—High school students with a business idea or a business they have already launched are invited to participate in the sixth annual High School Pirates Pitch competition hosted by the Center for Entrepreneurial Studies at the Stillman School of Business at Seton Hall University. Learning the basics of entrepreneurship, including recognizing viable business opportunities, during this virtual “Shark Tank” style competition, the next generation of entrepreneurs will compete for more than \$50,000 in cash prizes and scholarships to attend Seton Hall.

The competition takes place during Global Entrepreneurship Week 2020 as part of a weeklong celebration that runs from Nov. 16-22. Last year, the event received more than 200 submissions from 23 states and four foreign countries.

“In today’s business climate, which has been rocked by the unprecedented COVID-19 global health crisis, entrepreneurial education is more important than ever,” said Susan Scherreik, founding director of the Center for Entrepreneurial Studies. “The nimble and flexible nature of

entrepreneurship provides crucial lessons to young people that will help them find success and make the world a better place through their innovative spirit, creativity and passion.”

High school sophomores, juniors and seniors with a 3.0 GPA or better are eligible to submit their original business pro-

posals that describe an innovative product or service in 350 words or less. Interested students should submit an individual application by Tuesday, Oct. 27.

An independent judging panel consisting of faculty members and successful alumni entrepreneurs will review all applications and invite 10 finalists to submit a

prerecorded five-minute video pitch presentation. On Friday, Nov. 20, the finalists will participate in a livestreamed five-minute Q&A session and receive feedback from the judges.

The top contestant will receive a \$2,500 cash award and a \$10,000 tuition scholarship. The second-place winner will receive a \$1,000 cash award and a \$6,000 scholarship. In addition to recognizing and rewarding all 10 finalists with a tuition scholarship, the competition will present an Audience Choice Award of \$250 to a participant who is virtually selected by parents, teachers, classmates and friends.

The contest judges include former Stillman School Entrepreneurship Club President Byran Jakovic ‘09, now president and owner of Fusion Health, which has been named to the Inc. 5000 list of the nation’s fastest-growing private companies for four years in a row. Also, Alyssa Lopez, M.B.A. ‘19, a past first-place winner in the collegiate Pirates Pitch contest and founder of FamiliesDo will be on the panel. Additionally, three Stillman faculty members will serve as judges: Ruchin Kansal, associate director of the Buccino Leadership Institute; Christine Fowler-Phillips, entrepreneurship professor and business owner; and Ben Lowe, entrepreneurship professor and serial entrepreneur.

High School Pirates Pitch helps develop and showcase entrepreneurial skills that align with the World Economic Forum’s list of the top skills that professionals need to thrive in 2020, including complex problem-solving, critical thinking and emotional intelligence.

For more information on this event and to apply, visit www.shu.edu/undergraduate-admissions/pirates-pitch-competition.cfm.



Photo courtesy of Seton Hall University



Renderings courtesy of the Shrine of St. Joseph

The Shrine of St. Joseph in Stirling is getting a new chapel dedicated to its patron. A groundbreaking ceremony was held Sept. 15 in anticipation of the Pilgrim Chapel. Bishop Kevin Sweeney of the Diocese of Paterson presided over the ceremony along with the general superior of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, Father Michael Barth, S.T., and director of the shrine, Father Dennis Berry, S.T. The new chapel will feature a mosaic that depicts moments in the life of St. Joseph. Its crown feature will be the roof, drawing visitors’ eyes heavenward. “The new chapel will draw all pilgrims to the shrine, seeking peace, solace and the experience to grow in their relationship with God,” said Father Berry. The new chapel will be built adjacent to the current chapel. It’s expected to be completed in 2021. For more information, call 908-647-0208 or visit www.shrineofsaintjoseph.com/pilgrimchapel.

Gospel of Life

Continued from page 16

dard words of encouragement fail, this teacher takes a deep breath and confides in her student what she has always kept private: "I was once there, too."

Thank you to the woman who carries her child for months, knowing she will place her greatest treasure into the heart and home of another family. She also knows this great act of love will exhaust her body and break her heart in ways few will understand. *Thank you* to the parents with full hearts and empty arms who adopt children and raise them with a love that, in turn, inspires others to see the beautiful gift of adoption and continues this circle of selfless, aching love.

Thank you to friends who console a mother who miscarries her child. They understand this grief is deep and raw because a life has ended. So, they do not blithely say, "It's better this way" or "You'll have another" because they know far more than a dream or a hope died within.

Thank you to those who speak kindly and with respect for women who give birth to and raise children in less than perfect circumstances. The children in their lives will overhear them and remember their words more than anyone will ever know.

Thank you to all who dedicate their lives to caring for, teaching, employing and advocating for those who live with disabilities. In the opportunities you provide, families facing an unexpected prenatal diagnosis might just see a glimpse of a promising future for their child. They may desperately need your witness to resist the pressures they are so likely to face as they wait to welcome their child.

Thank you to the parents of boys who teach their sons to respect the dignity of women, the sacredness of sex and the obligation to support the children they father in every way they can. *Thank you* to those same parents who care for the mother of their son's children regardless of whether she is a beloved daughter-in-law whose pregnancy answers years of family prayer or a frightened teenage girlfriend whose name they do not even know.

Thank you to the religious sisters who, in so many ways, live the radical hospitality that welcomes women in need and their children by offering the love and material support that our busy world pays lip service to say but too often neglects to do. *Thank you* to the priests who hear the pain-filled confessions of those who carry heavy burdens and lifetimes of regrets. Through the ministry of the Church, they grant the pardon and peace that frees so many who are so broken to become some of



Lucia A. Silecchia

the best protectors of life I have ever met.

Thank you to the friends of a frightened young woman, abandoned by her boyfriend, who accompany her home when she fears telling her family she is pregnant. *Thank you* to the friends of an overwhelmed father-to-be when they have the courage to tell him that fathers support both their children and the women carrying those children, and then help him to do this. Extra thanks if those friends also have the courage to tell him that, popular opinion notwithstanding, saying "I will support you in whatever you decide" is not support at all.

Thank you to the friendly Mass-goer who gives a wink and a smile to a crying infant rather than a cold stare and a judgmental glare. The harried parents trying to keep their children corralled in their pew will appreciate this and be grateful that those who celebrate the sanctity of life are not curmudgeons when they see the beauty of that life in the house of God.

Thank you to the knitters and quilters in retirement homes who make baby blankets for infants they will never know and donate them to pregnancy centers. They hold the loving hope that an exhausted mother may derive the strength to carry on just knowing a handmade gift was specially prepared for her unborn child.

Thank you, most of all, to parents who welcome children into the world in so many situations that are unexpected, unsupported and unappreciated. What you do is sacred, not only on day one but each and every day.

To all of you, and so many others, my "thank you" seems so small. May God bless you all for all the ways you live the Gospel of Life in all the days of your ordinary times.

Lucia A. Silecchia is a professor of law at the Catholic University of America. Email her at silecchia@cua.edu.

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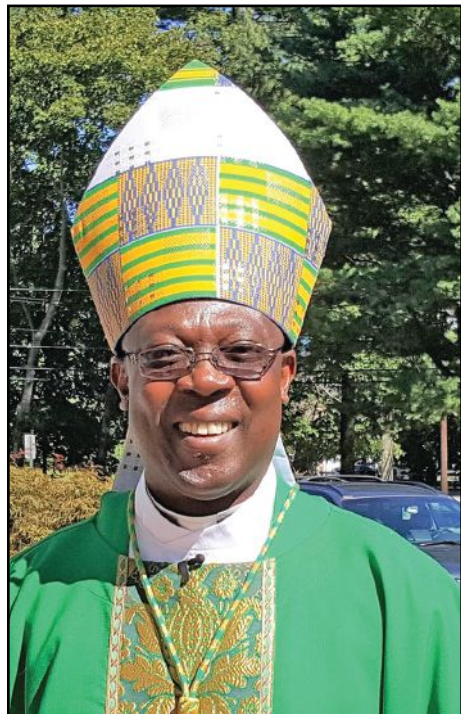
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'Will we be smiling again?'

By Msgr. Robert J. Fuhrman

The world is complex enough in "good times." When the coronavirus appeared, life became more complicated for every living person. The need this World Mission Sunday, celebrated Oct. 17-18, is greater than ever.



Bishop Dennis Kofi Agbenyadzi

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith is chief among the Pontifical Mission Societies. It is the primary means of support for the Church in mission lands, the so-called "young churches" of Africa, Asia and Oceania. On behalf of all the people of God in over 1,100 mission dioceses, and in the names of hundreds of millions of our fellow Catholics who live in those dioceses, I urgently ask for your help. I invite you to offer prayers for them and to help fund the Church in the missions as it struggles with the pandemic.

One of my friends is Sister Anila Christi, D.M., provincial superior of the Daughters of Mary, who serves in southern India. The Sisters provide three safe residences for mentally ill homeless and abused women, seven orphanages and a leper colony. Mentioning the special difficulties of mission life during the COVID crisis, Sister Anila said: "This pandemic is taking a heavy toll on our emotional well-being and creates more stress and anxiety in the minds of all whom we serve. One of our Sisters died due to COVID and many of our Sisters were infected and were suffering. We had moments in which we were thinking, 'Will we be smiling again?'

Will we be able to pray together again? Life without holy Mass and confession is terrible. But we are all in the loving hands of our Lord. He is our assurance and hope."

Far away from there, in the Central African Republic, Bishop Dennis Kofi Agbenyadzi of the Berberati Diocese wrote to me about his COVID experience. The disease is much less prevalent there than in other countries. But still, the bishop said the virus "has unmasked the hidden vulnerability of all people on the surface of the

Living Our Faith

earth. The entire humanity lives in a state of grief, fear and hopelessness sometimes." He said: "It seemed as if we were thrown far back into the maiden era of the Church. We celebrated the Eucharist in small communities where less than 20 faithful were gathered. The joy of coming together, meeting and sharing our faith, our dreams and hopes, cannot be underestimated."

The people of the Archdiocese of Newark have a long history of serious commitment and great support of the missions. The coronavirus has produced much suffering, especially among the poor. You can help to promote the Gospel, to provide the sacraments and to improve the lives of the Lord's beloved people. On World Mission Sunday please offer a gift in the second collection in your parish. Your concern and



Submitted photos

Sister Anila Christi, D.M.

goodness will help people to smile again. You will smile, too, and your works of mercy will pave the way to your union with God.

Msgr. Robert J. Fuhrman is the archdiocesan director of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

What does it mean to Vote your Conscience?

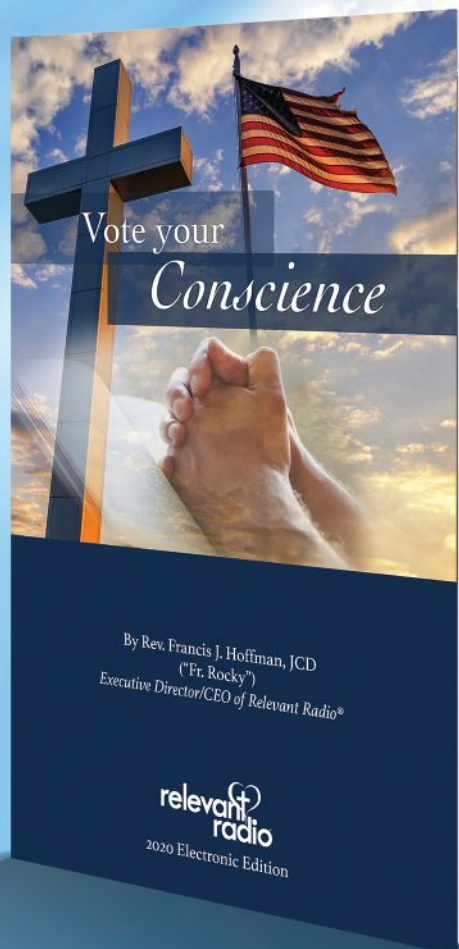
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by Rev. Francis J. Hoffman, JCD
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The pandemic didn't stop a 94-year-old tradition from taking to the streets of Hoboken. With modifications in place, the annual feast of the Madonna dei Martiri was held at St. Francis Parish. The celebration began on Aug. 31 with nightly novenas leading up to the procession of the statue of the Madonna on Sept. 12. The procession began at the church and a solemn Mass in honor of the Madonna Dei Martiri followed at Kennedy Stadium at Hoboken High School. The procession ended with benediction of the Blessed Sacrament back at St. Francis. The Italian Festival that traditionally runs along with the feast was canceled due to the coronavirus.

Photos courtesy of La Societa' Madonna Dei Martiri



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Saint artworks to inspire, enlighten visitors of St. Gertrude Chapel Mausoleum

By Maxim Almenas

For centuries, Catholics around the world have looked to the saints for inspiration, guidance and hope, especially during the most challenging of times.

While the saints and their stories are present in the form of liturgical art in Catholic churches and schools, there are also magnificent representations of the saints throughout the cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Newark to help Christians better understand the connections between their faith, and the promise of the resurrection.

"From the moment families and visitors enter the new mausoleum for a committal service or to visit a loved one, we aim to provide a deeply spiritual and uplifting experience," said Andrew Schafer, executive director of Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Newark. "The lives of the saints serve as examples of how the love of Christ follows us from baptism into the afterlife. This is just another way we fulfill the important mission of our ministry."

As the construction of the new Chapel Mausoleum of the Resurrection at St. Gertrude Cemetery in Colonia nears completion, four life-sized, handcrafted wooden statues of the evangelists and the four creatures associated with each one have been completed by Demetz Art Studio located in Ortisei, Italy, and await installation at niche



Photo courtesy of Progetto Arte Poli

banks located at the front and rear of the new mausoleum.

According to aleteia.org, St. Matthew is associated with the angel because his Gospel introduces Christ's birth and includes the genealogy of Jesus. The lion stands with St. Mark since his Gospel emphasizes the majesty of Christ and His royal dignity. St. Luke is connected to the ox as his Gospel focuses on the sacrificial character of Christ's death. And St. John is associated with the eagle, for it's a symbol of "that which comes from above."

An artwork of St. Gertrude the Great, the namesake of the cemetery, will also adorn the spiritual space for the first time in its nearly 90-year history. When the bronze statue of St. Gertrude is completed, it will be installed next to the new state-of-the-art cemetery office, which opened July 1.

Born in 1256, St. Gertrude of Helfta was a German Benedictine nun and mystic entrusted to a monastery at 5 years of age. According to the *National Catholic Register*, at 24, Gertrude received her first vision of Christ, and she focused on the study of Scripture and theology and spent hours praying daily.

Many of those prayers were miraculously answered after several monastery sisters were healed of serious diseases. She practiced a spirituality known as "nuptial mysticism," saw herself as the bride of Christ and encouraged others to pray to His Sacred Heart after the apostle St. John stood Gertrude next to Christ during a vision where she witnessed his Sacred Heart beating.

Before sketching the artwork for what would become the bronze sculpture of St.

Gertrude holding the Sacred Heart of Jesus, artist Albano Poli of Progetto Arte Poli, an art studio in Verona, Italy, commissioned by Catholic Cemeteries, studied and admired her strength, solitude and life of prayer, especially throughout her enduring illness.

"During my childhood, I would go to the mountains near a local lake to meditate and pray," explained Poli, describing a time when his family struggled to keep food on the table during World War II. "This [statue] gives me enormous strength and leads me to the creation of unique artworks that, for me, are always powerful creations between the faithful and the sacred."

Progetto Arte Poli, where every artwork is entirely hand-made, has created mosaics for the Holy See at the Vatican Gardens, stained glassworks in the Apostolic Palace and bronze and marble artworks for St. John Lateran Basilica, the cathedral church of the Diocese of Rome.

The studio has also created projects around the globe. And while studio employees carve and sculpt the religious figures out of wood, bronze, marble and other materials, they experience a unique process that bonds them with the creations.

"Every craftsman and artist at the very moment in which he is concentrated in the creation of the work becomes a metaphor of the primordial creative act, that of gen-

esis and every work of art becomes the creation, the 'child' of the artist, and in turn, the artist becomes the father of the work," Poli stated. "I hope this sculpture will also inspire equally powerful and heartfelt prayers for the salvation of beloved ones who are now facing their journey to heaven and God."

This close relationship combined with the intrinsic sacredness of the subject inevitably creates a strong bond between the author and the sacred art piece, according to Poli, and the study of the life of the saint who is to be depicted or of the particular episode of the Gospel takes on the importance not only in the initial sketching phase but also in the actual creation.

In addition to the statue of St. Gertrude, Progetto Arte Poli is also currently working on several other artworks to be installed at St. Gertrude Cemetery and Mausoleum, including a statue of Jesus being baptized by St. John the Baptist at the circle of the main entrance; a marble altar depicting bronze statues of Mary with the Twelve Apostles during Pentecost inside the new mausoleum; and the primary stained glass of the Ascension of Christ that will greet visitors as they enter the chapel mausoleum currently under construction.

Most of the new artworks are expected to be completed and installed in the new chapel mausoleum by spring 2021. For a more in-depth article on all the upcoming artworks, go to www.saintgertrudecemetery.org.

Maxim Almenas is the marketing manager for Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Newark.

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OBITUARIES

Sister Jeanne Adrienne Kierce, O.P.

A graveside service was celebrated Sept. 15 at Gethsemane Cemetery in Caldwell for Sister Jeanne Adrienne Kierce, O.P., 91, who died Sept. 11. A memorial Mass will be celebrated at St. Catherine of Siena Convent Chapel in Caldwell at a later date.



Sister Jeanne Adrienne entered the Dominican Sisters on Aug. 30, 1946, and made her final profession on May 3, 1954.

She earned a bachelor's degree from Caldwell University and a master's degree in modern languages from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. She earned certification in gerontology from the College of St. Elizabeth and continued studies in educational administration at Montclair State University.

Sister Jeanne Adrienne was a teacher at St. Francis Xavier School, Newark; St. John School, Clark; Lacordaire Academy, Upper Montclair; and St. Dominic Academy, Jersey City. She also served as assistant principal and principal of Mount St. Dominic Academy in Caldwell and principal of the Link Community School in Newark.

She was the social services director at Marian Manor in Caldwell, council member for the Sisters of St. Dominic leadership team and superior for St. Catherine of Siena Convent and Health Care Center, also in Caldwell. In retirement, she was a librarian and aftercare supervisor for Our Lady of the Lake School in Verona and a receptionist at Marian Manor.

Sister Jeanne Adrienne served as chairperson of the board of trustees for Mount St. Dominic Academy and as a board member for both Lacordaire Academy and Caldwell University.



Sister Ursula Carr, S.C.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Sept. 24 at Holy Family Chapel in Morristown for Sister Ursula Carr, S.C., 92, who died Sept. 20.

A native of Newark, Sister Ursula entered the Sisters of Charity on April 2, 1949, and was a member for 71 years.

She graduated from the College of St. Elizabeth in Morristown with a bachelor's degree in mathematics. She earned a master's in chemistry from the University of Notre Dame and a master's in religious edu-



cation from Fordham University. Sister Ursula also studied chemistry through grants from the National Science Foundation at the University of Notre Dame and Rutgers University.

Sister Ursula was a teacher at St. Cecilia High School in Kearny. She served as director of religious education at Notre Dame Parish in North Caldwell and St. Anthony's Parish in Northvale. She also coordinated pastoral services for the Sisters of Charity.

Sister Ursula moved to Convent Station in 2013 and resided there until her death.



Msgr. Joseph F. Ambrosio

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Oct. 9 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Newark for Msgr. Joseph F. Ambrosio, 72, who died Oct. 4.

A native of Bayonne, Msgr. Ambrosio was ordained on May 25, 1974. He served in several archdiocesan parishes, including as parochial vicar of Our Lady of Mount Virgin, Garfield; Holy Rosary, Jersey City; St. Anthony of Padua, Union City; as administrator of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newark; Our Lady of Fatima, Newark; Holy Trinity-Epiphaney, Newark; and as pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Newark.



Msgr. Ambrosio also served as the dean of the Ironbound Deanery for 10 years. He was a member of the archdiocesan vocation board, he served 15 years on the presbyteral council and was the coordinator for the Italian Apostolate for more than 30 years.



Msgr. Thomas P. Ivory

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Oct. 13 at Church of the Presentation in Upper Saddle River for Msgr. Thomas P. Ivory, 82, who died Oct. 7.

A native of Bloomfield, Msgr. Ivory was ordained on May 23, 1964. He earned a bachelor's degree from Seton Hall University and attended the seminary at American College of Louvain, Belgium, where he later served as spiritual director and rector.

Msgr. Ivory served in the Archdiocese of Newark as director of religious education, assistant chancellor, censor librorum and was a member of the presbyteral council. He was also parochial vicar of St. Aedan: The St. Peter's University Church in Jersey City and Assumption Parish in Roselle Park. He was pastor of Ascension Parish in New Milford and Church of the Presentation.



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