The Lenten Season has a double character, namely to prepare both catechumens and faithful to celebrate the paschal mystery. The catechumens, both with the Rite of Election and Scrutinies, and by catechesis, are prepared for the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation; the faithful, ever more attentive to the Word of God and prayer, prepare themselves by penance for the renewal of their baptismal promises. (From: The Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and the Celebration of the Eucharist)

The current discipline is as follows:

• Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence, that is, limited to a single, full meal and abstinence from meat.

• The other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat.

• The law of fasting permits only one full meal a day, but it does allow the taking of some food in the morning and a second light meal at noon or in the evening, as you prefer. Persons who have completed their eighteenth year to the beginning of their sixtieth (60) year are obligated to fast.

• The law of abstinence from meat applies to all persons who have completed their fourteenth year of age. However, it is highly recommended that children from ages seven to fourteen years also follow the law of abstinence.

• All Catholics are encouraged to receive Holy Eucharist frequently during Lent and to receive the Sacrament of Penance so that all may be prepared to celebrate more fully the paschal mystery. Those who have received their first Holy Communion are to receive Holy Communion during the Easter season.

• The determination of these days of obligatory penance, as listed above, should not be under-
Every year, the Church presents to us the saving words and deeds of our Lord, Jesus. This it does, for the most part, in a chronolog-ical fashion. So, for instance, we began the present Liturgical Year with an Advent preparation for the Birth of Christ, the celebra-tion of that Birth at Christmas and even the subsequent visit by the Magi (Epiphany) and then the beginning of Jesus’ ministry with the Baptism by John in the Jordan River. A vast majority of the year is spent on those Gospel accounts of the various teachings and miracles of Jesus. Another major section of the Year, however, is occupied with those central mysteries of Christ, namely, His Passion, Death and Resurrection. That section of the Liturgical Year begins on Wednesday, February 14, Ash Wednesday. It is important to note that this penitential season begins on Ash Wednesday, con-tinues for seven weeks and then culminates in Holy Week and Easter. The Lenten Season is not a matter of Ash Wednesday, followed by Easter Sunday. It is a prime oppor-tunity to enter into the Liturgy throughout those ‘forty days’ and, as we noted last month, to be more engaged (participatio actusosa) in the Liturgy itself. As one author noted, the Liturgical Year can (and should) be a type of annual pilgrimage during which we walk with the Lord the path of His life from begin-ning (March 25, Annunciation) to the end (the Feast of Christ the King). Even before these great inter-ventions of God in human history, the Church pays attention to the Immaculate Conception (December 8) of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her birth (Sep-teMBER 8), in anticipation of her future Motherhood. This requires us to be present for his sojourn in the desert for forty days at the beginning of His public ministry (Lent). It requires us to accompany Him as He selects and instructs His Apostles. The Liturgical Year requires us to be attentive as Jesus foretells His future rejection and death. It invites us to accompany the Apostles as they prepare for the Passover and the Last Supper (Holy Thursday). It provides an opportunity to be engaged in His agony in the garden, His scourging, His crowning, His condemnation, His crucifixion and His death (Good Friday). The Solemn Liturgy of Holy Saturday invites us to keep watch with Mary our Mother and the Lord’s disciples and to be surprised with them when the empty tomb is discov-ered again, and each Year, as if for the first time, and to realize with them that He is truly risen. This is a part of the Liturgical pilgrimage, the Liturgical journey to which the Church calls us each year. It is not really possible to reap the benefit of this pilgrimage if we are not paying careful attention or if we miss major portions of the journey. The pilgrimage did not end for the Apostles at the Resurrection. They had forty days with the Lord, following His Resurrection and then were witnesses of His Ascension into heaven as well. We also remem-ber the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin (August 15) which reminds us that the Lord’s Ascension is a foretaste of our own future. Following the Ascension, they still had the promise of the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. We relive the event of the Lord’s Ascension and the hope of that promise with our annual Pentecost Liturgy and in a particular way with the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Finally, we anticipate the Lord’s return in glory as we draw to the end of the calendar year with our last Sunday of the Liturgical Year, the Solemnity of Christ the King in which we look forward to His coming again “to judge the living and the dead”. This is an enor-mous pilgrimage and we are not capable of absorbing everything which it has to offer. After decades of living with the Church, of traveling with Her though this pilgrimage with Jesus, His Mother and His Apostles we find ourselves, in each subsequent Year, in need of remembering again, in need of remembering anew and in need of retracing the path of our Lord’s Passion, Death and Resurrection. Every Year it is the same pil-grimage and yet, every year, it is also a new pilgrimage. Every year is an opportunity to listen again to the Lord as He comes to us in the course of the Church’s Liturgy. Every year we have the opportunity to encounter the Lord again if we commit to the whole pilgrimage.

Our Yearly Pilgrimage; A Walk of Faith

CONTENTS

FROM THE BISHOP

Bishop Robert F. Vasa is the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Santa Rosa.

From the Bishop

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priests. Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments. Help our priests to be strong in their vocation. Set their souls on fire with love for your people. Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom. Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel. Allow them to experience joy in their ministry. Help them to become instruments of your divine grace. We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest. Amen.

PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

Rev. Lou Nichols, February 2, 1960
Rev. Balawasmy Govindu, February 7, 1977
Rev. John McCormick, February 7, 1999
Rev. Bob Benjamin, February 12, 2000

Prayer for Priests

Dr. John McCormick, February 12, 2020

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Onelife LA Event An Opportunity To Celebrate Life, Face Culture Of Death

By Perry West

Washington D.C., Jan 22 (CNA/EWTN News) - Thousands gathered in Los Angeles on Saturday for a rally and march supporting the dignity of every human life and proclaiming that every human person is “made for greater.”

“God made a decision to make each one of you. He decided to make you, to make me. This is how special we are to him,” said Archbishop Jose Gomez in his homily during the Requiem Mass for the Unborn, which concluded the Jan. 20 OneLife LA event.

“[God] comes to us to proclaim the Gospel of Life,” he said. “We are called to announce this good news to every person that we are made for greater things,” he said, citing the event’s theme, “Made for Greater.”

Archbishop Gomez told CNA that the event was created four years ago. The archbishop said he saw the need for both an annual celebration of life and an opportunity to address the challenges in the culture of death, such as abortion and assisted suicide.

The day began with a youth rally at 11 a.m., where young people from Southern California gathered at La Placita Olvera.

There, bands led the crowd in praise and worship, and Daniel Rangel-Santos, executive board vice president of the USC Caruso Catholic Center, shared the story of how his parents were advised to abort him when doctors discovered a likely birth defect.

“I immediately, my parents strongly refused to have the abortion. For them, despite their financially humble situation at the time, a birth defect was neither an issue nor an excuse for an abortion. They loved me and they wanted to meet the new son God sent them,” he told CNA.

Shortly after noon, dozens of students, families, seminarians, clergy, and religious made their way to the Los Angeles State Historic Park, chanting along the way, “We are the pro-life generation” and “OneLife LA.”

Karen Gaffney, worldwide pro-life speaker and the first person with Down syndrome to ever swim the 21-mile stretch of the English Channel, was the keynote speaker at the event. She decried the abortion industry’s effort to target babies with Down syndrome, saying, “They want to screen us out."

I love the fact that so many of these diverse groups can all get together and support each other…I think that’s also the other important thing – to look around and see how much support there is from all kinds of people—everybody has a stake in this,” said Heaton.

The day concluded with Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. After the liturgy, 180 candles were lit and processed to the base of the altar in memory of the 180 unborn lives aborted that day in Southern California alone.

For many OneLife LA attendees, the march is just one way to witness to the dignity of life all year round.

Father Alan Benander, a Norbertine priest prays for the unborn at every Mass he celebrates. He is also the Right to Life Moderator at St. Michael’s Preparatory School in Silverado, California, where he is also a teacher and coach.

When Fr. Benander leads his students on pro-life outings, he reassures them of the power of prayer and fasting.

“One on this trip I took 20 students, and I said, ‘We are going to pray for an end to abortion, and we might not be able to stop every abortion from happening … but pray for one particular girl right now who is thinking of killing her unborn child,’” he told CNA.

In addition to prayer, Father Benander said Catholics should aim to educate themselves more thoroughly, so that they can be sources of catechesis for those who support abortion.

Rangel-Santos, from the USC Caruso Catholic Center, agreed. He told CNA that he worked to support “The Real Sex Week” at the USC, where he is a senior. As part of the initiative, he spoke to students at the secular college about “the effects of pornogra phy, developing healthy relationships, resources for reproductive health, support for victims of sexual assault, self-defense classes, and the effects of sex in the media.”

In addition to advocating and praying for an end to abortion, march participants also focused on end-of-life care. California legalized assisted suicide in a high profile bill in 2016.

Sister Isabella, a Carmelite of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus of Los Angeles, has spent the last seven years caring for the elderly in the area. Those she works with often face suffering and depression, but Sister Isabella said the answer is not in handing them pills that will kill them.

“We are God’s hands and feet in this world, and we have to say yes to the love,” she told CNA. She recalled how an elderly man once told her, “When you all are near, the suffering doesn’t matter anymore, because the love is greater.”

“That’s what we have to do when someone is suffering. It’s a call for help, it’s a call to love to a greater degree, and if we don’t listen to that call, our brothers and sisters…won’t feel God’s love for them.”

After the liturgy, 180 candles were lit and processed to the base of the altar in memory of the 180 unborn lives aborted that day in Southern California alone.
Hundreds of thousands of people were in Washington, D.C. to attend this year's March for Life, which is in its 45th year. The theme of this year's march is “Love Saves Lives.” The march is held annually on or near the anniversary of the Jan. 22, 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision which mandated permissive abortion laws nationwide.

The president said he was “honored and really proud” to address the march. While previous presidents addressed the march while in office by phone or remote loudspeaker, organizers said he is the first president to do so via telecast.

Trump said the Roe decision resulted in “some of the most permissive abortion laws anywhere in the world,” making the U.S. comparable to countries like China and North Korea in permitting late-term abortions.

“It is wrong, it has to change,” he said. “Americans are more and more pro-life.”

Trump promised that his administration would always defend the right to life.

He touted his re-implementation of the Mexico City Policy, which bars federal funds for groups that perform or promote abortion overseas, and cited his administration’s reversal of an Obama-era policy that restricted state’s efforts to direct federal dollars away from “facilities that violate the law.” He voiced strong support for a House bill to ban late-term abortions in which supporters say the unborn child can feel pain. Trump called on the Senate to “pass this important law.”

He also cited his executive order protecting religious liberty and an effort to protect conscience rights and religious freedom of doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals.

The president also introduced Marianne Donaido, a woman whose parents supported her when she became pregnant at the age of 17. He praised her work with Room at the Inn, a Greensboro, N.C.-based maternity program that helps house and support pregnant homeless women. The charity is affiliated with Catholic Charities USA.

In a separate Jan. 19 statement, Trump declared that Jan. 22, the anniversary of the Roe decision, will be National Sanctity of Human Life Day, “to affirm the truth that all life is sacred, that every person has inherent dignity and worth, and that no class of people should ever be discarded as ‘non-human.’

Vice President Mike Pence, who addressed last year’s March for Life in person, introduced Trump in the Rose Garden. He said the Roe Supreme Court decision “turned its back on the right to life” but began the pro-life movement that continues today, a movement defined by “compassion and love.”

“Life is winning in America, because love saves lives,” he told the march. “Your compassion, your persistence your activism and your prayers are saving lives… this pro-life generation should never doubt that we are with you.”

“This president stands with you,” he said, contending that Trump was “the most pro-life president in American history.”

Trump once declared himself “pro-choice in every respect,” but increasingly advocated anti-abortion views ahead of and during his 2016 election campaign, Politico reports.

Other political leaders at the March for Life rally were House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and other Members of Congress, including U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-III.).

In previous years Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush addressed the March for Life remotely.
Francis Houle: A Middle-Class Husband and Father from Michigan . . . And A Stigmatic

By Larry Peterson, January 13 (Aleteia)

Courtesy of Association for the Cause of Sainthood for Irving “Francis” Houle

Our Lord told him, “I am taking away your hands and giving you mine . . . touch them.”

A number of saints and holy people have been known to share in the suffering of Christ in a special way: by literally having his wounds in their own flesh. Among this group are such beloved saints as Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena and, closer to our own times, Padre Pio.

Then there is Irving “Francis” Houle, just a regular guy from Michigan.

Irving was born in northern Michigan, in the town of Wilson, in 1925. He was one of six boys and one girl born to Peter and Lillian Houle. The family prayed the Rosary every day during Lent and their dad had them say the Stations of the Cross every Sunday after Mass. The Houles were surely a devout Catholic family.

Irving’s life was stereotypical middle-class midwestern, and he lived as we might imagine. He graduated from high school in 1944 as World War II was raging. The very next day he joined the U.S. Army. He served in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East and received the American Theater Service Medal and Good Conduct Medal. He was discharged in 1946.

Irving, following the example of his dad, began living the traditional life of a young, Catholic man. He married Gail LaChapelle in 1948 and they had five children: Stephen, Peter, John and twins Matthew and Margo. Raising his family in northern Michigan, Irving worked for Montgomery Ward, for a chemical supply company, and as a plant manager. He was an active parishioner at St. Joseph’s and an active member of the Knights of Columbus, where he was a District deputy and a member of the Fourth Degree with the honor of being addressed as “Sir Knight.” The Houle family could have been the subject of a Norman Rockwell painting.

Francis was 67 years old when, on Good Friday, April 9, 1993, the stigmata first began to show itself. Francis told his brother and a priest, Father Robert Fox (who would go on to write a book about him), how Jesus appeared to him when Lent began on Ash Wednesday. He told them Jesus said to him, “I am taking away your hands and giving you mine . . . touch them.”

On Good Friday, the swelling that had been obvious on the top and bottom of his hands broke open and began to bleed. Walter Casey, a retired policeman who had been appointed by the bishop to stay with Francis at all times, explained how every morning between the hours of midnight and 3 a.m., 365 days a year, Francis endured sufferings of the Passion of Christ. Francis told him that the Blessed Mother had come to him 19 times and during those visits told him that she would bring many people to him and him to many people.

It is estimated that Francis prayed individually over 100,000 people while he was still alive. Folks would wait for hours on end to see the elderly grandpa who bore the stigmata and would lay his hands on them. People would be crying and would touch him and kiss his hands.

Houle never sought any personal attention, financial donations or financial support. He was adamant in the fact that any healings were from God and that no one should look to him but rather to Our Lord Jesus Christ as the true cause of any spiritual or physical healing.

He passed away on First Saturday, January 3, 2009. He was 83 years old and had borne the stigmata of Christ for more than 15 years. He is one of the few laymen in the history of the Church who has borne the stigmata.

Two bishops in the Diocese of Marquette, Michigan, Bishop James H. Garland and Bishop Alexander K. Sample, found “no fault” with the activity of Houle and gave him their blessing. These findings have not yet been forwarded to Rome.

Houle wrote the following prayer:

Oh! my Jesus. My heart is so heavy. Your burden is too much for me to bear.

Please, my Jesus, let me take your Cross for a while. Just to let you know I care.

Look upon me, dear Lord with eyes of your mercy. May your healing hands rest upon me.

If it be your will, please give me health, strength, and peace.

Amen. ❖
Can You Spot Fake News?

By Chris Lyford

Pope Francis just released his message for World Communications Day and the entire focus is on the concept of ‘fake news’. One of the best quotes form the message:

“The effectiveness of fake news is primarily due to its ability to mimic real news, to seem plausible. Secondly, this false but believable news is ‘captious’, inasmuch as it grasps people’s attention by appealing to stereotypes and common social prejudices, and exploiting instantaneous emotions like anxiety, contempt, anger and frustration. The ability to spread such fake news often relies on a manipulative use of the social networks and the way they function. Untrue stories can spread so quickly that even authoritative denials fail to contain the damage.” —Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for World Communications Day 24 January 2018

Can you spot fake news?

1) Ballistic Missile Threat Inbound to Hawaii Seek Immediate Shelter This Is Not A Drill.
2) 35-foot Tsunami created by the 7.9 Earthquake in Gulf of Alaska headed toward Kodiak Island, seek higher ground.
3) President Obama has issued an executive order banning the Pledge of Allegiance in U.S. schools.

In 2016 the Stanford History Education Group studied middle school, high school and university students’ susceptibility to misinformation and found shocking lapses of critical thinking at all levels. Recent research shows the “illusory truth effect” is in play when we hear or read fake news claims repeated, regardless of how ridiculous or illogical they sound. In other words, the more we hear a piece of information repeated, the more we’re likely to believe it.

“Even things that people have reason not to believe, they believe them more” if the claims are repeated. Gerd Pennycook, a psychologist who studies the spread of misinformation at Yale University, says, If you are a person who has a healthy ability to spot fake news, you may have just thought to yourself: “hey Chris, using words like ‘Stanford’, and ‘Yale’, and phrases like ‘recent research’ really don’t prove that what you are saying is factual. Good for you! In this world of ‘fake news’ we even need to be careful when anyone says “here, I’ll tell you what is fake news and what isn’t”.

What is news? News is newly received or noteworthy information, especially about recent or important events. What makes something important is the degree to which it impacts our life, or the life of our loved ones. (In this life, and in the next). It’s relative; some things are more important than others because they have more or less impact on our lives.

“News” can also be “information not previously known to someone”. And like new information, can have different degrees of importance, again, because of its effects on our life; like the “Good News”: there is a God, He is the God of Scripture, and He alone can forgive sins”, or the news that in 1984, Chris Lyford won the Napa “Town and Country Fair Stand Up Comedy Competition”. Yeah, I’m definitely going for two extremes there.

Obviously, knowing that there is a God, and that He alone can forgive my sins, is a life-changing bit of information. Something I am going to want to follow up on, or as it were, begin a pilgrimage into the truth of that information.

Here are some other things to keep in mind when watching for ‘Fake News’:

1) If it sounds too ridiculous to be true, it probably isn’t. Don’t fall for clickbait. Headlines are often designed specifically to make you want to click on them.
2) Be aware of politically framed content. Check your biases. Does it take you less than 2 seconds to vehemently agree or disagree with an article or headline? Then it’s probably framed to increase polarization. If you find yourself strongly agreeing or disagreeing with an article within seconds, its purpose is probably to get under your skin and fuel conflict between different groups in society!
3) Viral content that gets shared over and over again is frequently based on things other than factual accuracy. Once a headline, video, or meme reaches a social tipping point, the fact that it’s been shared a million times becomes social “proof” in itself that it must be important, which sustains its virality, misinforming more and more people.
4) Verify the source and context. Many fake news articles state blatant falsehoods without providing a source. They get away with it because we are constantly bombarded with information. Under cognitive constraint, people are often browsing unsuspiciously or not paying close attention. Moreover, when a source is provided, these articles typically employ a “fake expert” technique. A fake expert is someone who sounds professional or accredited but actually has no expertise on the subject matter.
5) Don’t get most of your news from social media websites. Try to find reliable and accurate news outlets.

The truth of the matter is that each of us individually are the only ones ultimately responsible for deciding what the truth is. In the end, I will meet Jesus and He will say: “Who do YOU say that I am, not, “what was your group’s position on whether or not I am God’s only Son”? I can’t just ignore my conscience and go along with the crowd and not take responsibility. As the saying goes; ‘choosing not to decide is still a choice’.

The Holy Father is asking us to choose peace by “ensuring the accuracy of sources and protecting communication” and that doing this promotes goodness, generates trust, and opens the way to communion and peace. Ultimately, when we are all in communion, and agree in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, we will be standing in the Truth. Fake news will vanish in the wind.

Chris Lyford is the Communications Director for the Diocese of Santa Rosa, California

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NOTE: Views of correspondents do not necessarily reflect those of this publication.

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Dairy Farm to The Episcopate: Stockton Gets a New Bishop

By Elise Harris

Vatican City, Jan 23, 2018 / 05:06 am (CNA/EWTN News) - On Tuesday the Vatican announced that Bishop Myron Joseph Cotta, who grew up on a dairy farm and has until now served as an auxiliary bishop in Sacramento, has been tapped to take the reins in Stockton.

In a Jan. 23 communiqué, the Vatican announced Bishop Stephen Blaire, who has passed the age of 75, when bishops are required to submit letters of resignation to the Pope. After graduation, Cotta obtained an associate's degree from West Hills Junior College in 1973. He (see Stockton New Bishop, page 14)
The Impact of Abuse

By Julie Sparacio

Yesterday, I read the statement Rachael Denhollander spoke in court before the sentencing of Larry Nassar. Larry Nassar was the former gymnastic coach at Michigan University and former team doctor for USA Gymnastics who has been sentenced to 40-175 years in prison for the decades of sexual abuse he perpetrated on young athletes. Truthfully, I didn’t follow his case that closely after the initial reports came out. I find his crimes horrifying, the number of victims heartbreaking, and the lack of protection, awareness, and response by the adults in charge to be infuriating!

In her statement Rachael said several things that I think are worth noting, and worth remembering. Several times she said:

“How much is a little girl worth? How much is a young woman worth?”

She was asking in reference to his sentence, but the question is not an easy one. Can any punishment give those girls, now women, back their innocence, their childhood? Of course not, but the strongest penalty can keep him away from others, and protect the innocence of those he had not yet victimized. She pointed out that the strongest sentence also sends a message to his victims—that they matter, that the consequences for hurting them are severe.

She said “I assured myself it must be fine (the things he was doing to her), because I thought I could trust the adults around me.” She assumed that they knew and were allowing it, after all he was a doctor. She also talked about the multiple reports the university had received and did nothing about. According to her statement the university has responded that “No one who heard the reports of the assaults believed that Larry was committing the abuse.” In one of their later statements, Michigan University reported that they investigated to see if any other employee other than Nassar engaged in criminal conduct. “We have no reason to believe that any criminal conduct was found.” I have not read the results of their investigations, but if the victims statements are to be believed, not reporting abuse is a crime.

She finished her statement with a really powerful one:

“Look around the courtroom, remember what you have witnessed these past seven days. This is what it looks like when someone chooses to put their selfish desires above the safety and love for those around them and let it be a warning to us all and moving forward as a society. This is what it looks like when the adults in authority do not respond properly to disclosures of sexual assault.

This is what it looks like when institutions create a culture where a predator can flourish unafraid and unabated and this is what it looks like when people in authority refuse to listen, put friendships in front of the truth, fail to create or enforce proper policy and fail to hold enablers accountable.”

I pray the people of the Diocese of Santa Rosa take our trainings seriously, take their responsibility to report seriously, so that none of the children in our care experience what the survivors of Larry Nassar’s horrific abuse experienced. The impact is great, and her words need to echo. The impact of abuse?

“I remember the long road that it has been to let myself love and be loved without fear.”

Guarding the Vulnerable

Julie Sparacio is Diocesan Director of Child and Youth Protection.

Roe Anniversary Observed as National Sanctity of Human Life Day

By Courtney Grogan

Washington D.C., Jan 22 (CNA/EWTN News) - US President Donald Trump has proclaimed that Jan. 22, the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion nationwide, is being observed as National Sanctity of Human Life Day.

"Today, we focus our attention on the love and protection each person, born and unborn, deserves regardless of disability, gender, appearance, or ethnicity," began the president’s proclamation issued Jan. 19, the same day he spoke to March for Life participants via live video.

"This is why we observe National Sanctity of Human Life Day: to affirm the truth that all life is sacred, that every person has inherent dignity and worth, and that no class of people should ever be discarded as 'non-human,'" the President Trump explained in the proclamation.

The statement calls on Americans to recognize the human dignity of the elderly, the infirm, the disabled, the addicted, the mentally ill, single moms, orphan and foster children, pregnant mothers, and their unborn children. It also commends those who volunteer to assist pregnant mothers and legislators who work towards legal restrictions on abortion.

In the proclamation, the president explicitly highlights “the humanity of the unborn,” citing medical advances that make possible operations on babies in utero and images that "present us with irrefutable evidence that babies are growing within their mothers’ wombs—precious, unique lives, each deserving a future filled with promise and hope".

On Jan. 19, the White House also released a separate document with information related to the Trump administration’s commitment to the protection of life, stating: "President Trump has expressed strong support for the Pain- Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which would stop late-term abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, when science tells us that an unborn child can experience pain."

The U.S. is one of seven countries globally that permits elective abortions after 20 weeks. The other countries are Canada, China, the Netherlands, North Korea, Singapore, and Vietnam.

The White House document cites a study by the Charlotte Lozier Institute that “taxpayer funding subsidizes 900 health care plans that cover abortions" in the U.S.

The Catholic Church has long held the sanctity of each human person as the foundation upon which stand her social teachings. The Catechism of the Catholic Church roots the dignity of the human person in humanity’s creation in the image of God with the powers of intellect and the will. “Endowed with a spiritual and immortal soul, the human person is ‘the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake.’ From his conception, he is destined for eternal beatitude.”

2/19 St. Barbatus ❖ 2/20 St. Eucherius ❖ 2/21 St. Peter Damian ❖ 2/22 Chair of St. Peter
Damascus Bombing Kills 9 In Christian Districts

By Christine Rousselle

Damascus, Syria, Jan 22, 2018 / 06:04 pm (CNA/EWTN News) - An estimated nine people were killed in a bombing on Monday afternoon in Damascus. The shelling targeted the Bab Touma and al-Shaghour districts, which are historically Christian areas, and several churches were damaged as well. At least 18 additional people in Old Damascus were injured in the bombings.

Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the attacks. A bomb reportedly caused “severe damage” to the Maronite cathedral in Damascus. According to Archbishop Samir Nassar, the bomb also knocked out water and electricity.

This is not Archbishop Samir’s first brush with death this month: a bomb hit his bedroom Jan. 8. He survived unscathed due to an extremely well-timed trip to the bathroom before the bombing began.

The Maronites are an Eastern Catholic Church that is in full communion with Rome. There are about 3 million Maronites in the world. Although the church originated in the Levant, there are now significant Maronite populations in Brazil, Argentina, and the United States. The Maronites have faced persecution throughout their history.

The Syrian civil war began nearly seven years ago, in March 2011. More than 400,000 people have been killed. At least 4.8 million have become refugees, and another 8 million have been internally displaced.

What began as demonstrations against the nation’s president, Bashar al-Assad, has become a complex fight among the Syrian regime; moderate rebels; Kurds; and Islamists such as Tahrir al-Sham and the Islamic State.
Getting Organized for Love

By Sister Constance Veit, l.s.p.

I began the new year with 8,000 college students at the Student Leadership Summit (SLS18) of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). It was an inspiring event that enabled us Little Sisters to engage with hundreds of enthusiastic young people on fire for their Catholic faith.

As exciting as the whole event was, the most moving moment for me was completely unexpected. During Eucharistic adoration, Jesus Christ present in the monstrance started moving through the crowd, carried by a team of bishops and priests. An entourage of altar servers led the procession with candles and incense.

What caught my eye was one of the white robed altar servers walking backwards, swinging a thurible from which billowed sweetly scented smoke, his attention firmly fixed on Christ in the Eucharist. The only thing that kept him from stumbling into the crowd of young people was a second altar server who kept his hand firmly planted on the first man's shoulder to direct his every move.

It was a highly choreographed and striking scene—this entourage of clergy and altar servers walking together in perfect unity, leading one another, supporting each other's efforts to carry Christ! I was profoundly struck by this "holy teamwork," which must have required significant practice and single-minded focus.

This Eucharistic procession was a fitting metaphor for the ideals of solidarity and union of hearts and minds in continuing Our Lord's mission on earth. Imagine the wonderful things we could do for Jesus if each Catholic apostolate, religious community or lay movement were this well ordered and united around a common purpose! In his encyclical on love, Pope Benedict XVI said, "As a community, the Church must practice love. Love thus needs to be organized if it is to be an ordered service to the community."

As we head into Lent this month, we first celebrate the World Day of the Sick on Feb. 11. Just as the procession I witnessed at SLS18 kept Our Eucharistic Lord at the center as it moved through the crowd of young people – a veritable field hospital of souls – Catholic health care is called to place the human person at the center of all its activities, projects and goals.

In his message for this year’s World Day of the Sick, Pope Francis wrote, “Wise organization and charity demand that the sick person be respected in his or her dignity, and constantly kept at the center of the therapeutic process.”

Our Holy Father continued, “Jesus bestowed upon the Church his healing power … The Church’s mission is a response to Jesus’ gift, for she knows that she must bring to the sick the Lord’s own gaze, full of tenderness and compassion. Health care ministry will always be a necessary and fundamental task, to be carried out with renewed enthusiasm by all, from parish communities to the largest healthcare institutions.”

Pope Francis recognized the invaluable contribution of families, “The care given within families is an extraordinary witness of love for the human person; it needs to be fittingly acknowledged and supported by suitable policies.”

He also speaks of healthcare as a shared ministry: “Doctors and nurses, priests, consecrated men and women, volunteers, families and all those who care for the sick, take part in this ecclesial mission. It is a shared responsibility that enriches the value of the daily service given by each.”

As we observe the World Day of the Sick and then begin our Lenten practices of prayer, penance and almsgiving, let’s resolve to keep Jesus Christ and the human person at the center of our spiritual efforts and works of mercy.

And let’s endeavor to give the world a striking witness of the unity of Christ’s disciples. May the world be able to say of us, “The believers are of one heart and mind … sharing everything they have” (cf. Acts 4:32). May our united efforts to serve the poor, the sick and the most vulnerable among us lead others to believe in the power of God’s love at work in the world!

Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor.

“Rambo”

The Hero: Dog Saves Nuns from Fire

A dog named Rambo lived up to his “action hero” name, when his barking alerted sleeping religious sisters that a chapel next to their convent was on fire.

In the early morning hours of Jan. 20, a fire destroyed the Virgen de la Candelaria Chapel in the town of Calañquilén, Chile, next to the home of the Carmelite Missionary Sisters. Police suspect the fire was caused by arson.

Fr. Alejandro Gutiérrez is the pastor of San Sebastian Parish, which includes the chapel. The priest told Radio Bio Bio that the sisters’ house “is attached to the church. A much greater tragedy could have happened there. If the dog’s barking hadn’t alerted them, the fire would have spread to the convent and we would be grieving over a much more serious incident.”

Gutiérrez explained that the chapel was 80 years old and the sisters there worked mainly in education.

“This just creates a new opportunity to continue serving Jesus Christ and to strengthen our faith,” the priest said.

Sources told ACI Prensa that around 3:30 in the morning, a group of masked arsonists broke a window in the rear of the Church, and threw a fire bomb inside.

Four companies of firefighters arrived on scene to fight the flames. With the help of the neighbors they were able to keep the fire from spreading to the nuns’ convent.

The Panguipulli fire chief, Rodolfo Zúñiga, told Cooperativa Radio that the electricity to the church was shut off at the junction box, so the fire was probably caused by a third party.

“Unfortunately for our town, as residents of Panguipulli, [arson] is already becoming routine, the situation is lamentable, but once again today we had one of the most beautiful chapels in the area reduced to rubble,” the fire chief said.

The Carmelite superior, Sister Maria Daniela, told Radio Bio Bio that she believes the fire was intentional, though the sisters had not received any kind of threats.

“We are women of peace. This is an oasis of peace,” the religious explained. “I never would have imagined that people would come and do something bad.”

Sister Maria Daniela sent a message to those responsible: “you need to place yourselves in the presence of God. It’s sad to know that there are people dedicated to doing evil, because the world does not progress with evil.”

Two other churches in Panguipulli were also recently attacked and two received threats, including the town’s main church.
Priest’s Hospital Room Mix-Up Allows Dying Woman to Receive Sacraments

Diego Lopez Marina Jan. 6, 2018 (Angelusnews.com) Shortly before midnight on New Year’s Eve, Fr. Gergorio Hidalgo went to a hospital to give Communion to a patient. But a “mistake” in room numbers allowed him to administer the sacraments to a dying woman as well.

“Last night I went to the hospital at 11:32 pm for an emergency. By mistake, I go to the wrong room. Patient is dying. Confession, anointing, communion and then she passed away 2 hours later. Best mistake I have ever made. THANK YOU GOD FOR USING MY MISTAKES,” the priest, better known as Father Goyo, posted on Twitter.

Fr. Goyo, 44, is the vicar of Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Simi Valley, which is part of metro Los Angeles. He was born in La Villa de Don Fadrique, a Spanish municipality in Spain’s Toledo Province, and was ordained June 4, 2016.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles assigned him to Simi Valley Hospital to spiritually care for the patients. He explained what happened that day at the hospital.

“The person in charge of the office told me there was someone who wanted to receive Communion. It wasn’t an emergency but that woman wanted to receive Communion because it was the last day of the year,” he said.

However, the staff member accidentally wrote down the wrong room number. When he got to the room, Fr. Goyo saw a woman lying in the bed and thought she was the one who had called for a priest.

“A person there, who could have been a relative, told me she was very sick and that she was dying. I approached the woman and asked her if she wanted to go to confession and she told me yes,” he said.

After hearing her confession, Fr. Goyo gave her the Anointing of the Sick, as well as a tiny fragment of the Eucharist.

“In my mind I thought she was the person they had called me for,” the priest said. “For me it was a very normal moment, very much from God, full of joy, because I thought that it was very beautiful to bring God to someone at the end of the year.”

As he left the room, Fr. Goyo asked a nurse the last name of the person he had visited. When the nurse told him the name, the priest realized he had gone into the wrong room. He then went on to see the person he was originally called to visit.

“It seemed even more beautiful to me. That God had used a mistake of mine, that I didn’t even know about until afterwards, in order to do something so wonderful. It was amazing because it wasn’t spectacular,” the priest said.

Fr. Goyo said that the dying woman’s face showed “a lot of peace and tranquility.”

“It was a great way to start the year, remembering that God is with us, not just in the Nativity scene we have in the church, but also in everyday things.”

This article was originally published by ACI Prensa. It has been translated and adapted by CNA.

Fr. Goyo, 44, is the vicar of Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Simi Valley, which is part of metro Los Angeles.
38 Minutes in Hawaii: My Family and the False Missile Alarm

By Jason Scott Jones

I woke up abruptly. Overzealous JROTC Cadets ran and yelled on the high school track across the street. I rolled over and grabbed my reading glasses. Time to return to the book which I'd fallen asleep reading. It's Leo Strauss and the Politics of Exile by Eugene Sheppard. Thirty minutes later, I faced a tough choice. Should I go down and check on my children? Or watch an old Lomachenko fight on Youtube? Then my wife called up, "Babe, it's garbage day. Take out the trash!" So I rushed downstairs. My typical Saturday ritual. As I dragged the trash out a bizarre sound boomed from my phone. I read the message: "Ballistic missile threat inbound. Seek immediate shelter. This is not a drill!"

"So it's today," I thought. I'm a student of the bloody twentieth century, a hundred years of genocide, democide, and total war. I've lived on Oahu for almost 30 years, in sight of Pearl Harbor. It's still a key target for surprise attack today. I've long thought that Oahu could be the spot where the next great tragic war begins—though not where it ends. Decades of thinking on this inspired me to write a book on the subject with John Zmirak, The Race to Save Our Century. I also recently co-authored a white paper outlining a path to abolish city-busting, strategic nuclear weapons.

I'm Just Trying to Save My Children

Whenever someone suggests that I'm some do-gooding humanitarian, I correct them: "No, I'm just trying to save my children." Oahu is a small island. But it's one of the most important strategic locations for the projection of U.S. power to the East, confronting both North Korea and China. Knowing that, you come to accept a grim reality: Oahu is one of the most likely flashpoints for the start of World War III.

So when I saw the alert on my iPhone, I faced it with the same realism that wise Midwesterners greet tornado warnings. And like them I had a plan.

I rushed into the house. "Kids, get in the car. Babe, grab the case of water bottles." They knew the drill, and soon the minivan was fully loaded. I filled water jugs, two mugs of coffee and grabbed my 9mm.

Heading for the Cave Behind the Mountain

I was rushing to shelter my family behind the Waianae mountain range. That might shield us from whatever was about to hit Pearl Harbor. We had 10 minutes, I calculated, to get there, and hide in the Makua Cave.

As we made the turn into the shadow of the mountain, I felt we'd won a small victory. The first missile must have been intercepted. Or else the inept North Koreans had dropped a rocket in the middle of the Pacific. Before the next wave of missiles hit, we would make it to Makua Cave.

My hopes that this was a false alarm were fading. "If this was a hack or a hoax, the government would have texted us already," I thought. "This thought pressed my foot even heavier on the gas pedal. I turned into the empty oncoming lane and passed some 20 cars. A man in a pickup gunned his truck and started to follow me. He was honking his horn, and trying to get my attention.

My first instinct was anger. "This dude wants to fight me for driving like an idiot. He must have his phone off," I thought. He was a big Hawaiian dude, waving at me with animated gestures. So I slowed down and let him pull up next to me. I rolled down the windows.

But he wasn't trying to rebuke my crazy driving. He wanted help. "Bros, what should I do? You seem like you have a plan. Where should I go?"

I took a deep breath, then shouted, "Get to Makua Cave! Put as much mountain as you can between yourself and Pearl Harbor."

The man held up his phone, despair on his face. "I can't reach my wife! What should I do?"

Oh, man. My wife was right next to me. And most of my kids. I shook my head, and told this poor guy: "There is no time, bro. Drive to Makua Cave!"

He looked at me, then looked at his phone. I watched as he did a U-turn and drove his truck back toward what probably would be Ground Zero. Back toward his wife.

Nothing But Hope

Just as we pulled up to Makua Cave, my cell phone rang and the State of Hawaii finally let us know that this had all been a big mistake.

In 38 minutes I'd gone from rolling out my trash can to loading five of my seven children into our minivan in a desperate attempt to outrun a nuclear missile. I'd heard my oldest daughter's voice for what I thought was the last time. I'd given her and my mother-in-law a destination I knew offered nothing but hope. And I'd watched a total stranger turn away from safety to go try to save his wife.

So there we were at this … cave. There was only one thing left to do. Unload the kids and take a photo on Instagram. As we entered, a tourist was there with a walking stick and backpack. "I guess we won't die today," I said. He gave me a look of fear and confusion. He hadn't gotten the alert. And he saw a 9 mm gun stuck in my waist. So I told him what had just happened to the whole state of Hawaii. He looked relieved.

My Son on Nuking Pyongyang

(see False Missile, page 17)
Catholicism Is the Science-Friendly Religion

Despite lazy narratives, the Church’s enthusiasm for scientific research and discovery is actually enshrined in its Catechism. On a recent episode of The Late Show, host Stephen Colbert and frequent visitor Neil deGrasse Tyson joked about the astronomical insignificance of New Year’s Day.

Before long, Tyson was talking about the role the Catholic Church played in creating the calendar as we know it. “The world’s calendar is the Gregorian calendar after Pope Gregory,” Tyson explains. “Put that into place in 1582, because the previous Julian calendar was messing up in the year. It was off by ten days. And the pope said, ‘We got to fix this…’ There’s a Vatican Observatory to this day. At the time, before telescopes were invented, these Jesuit priests were put into the service of figuring out why the calendar was shifting in the year.”

Colbert, known for his openness about his Catholic faith, then asks Tyson if it’s true that a Catholic priest formulated the Big Bang Theory. “Yes,” Tyson responds. “Georges Lemaitre. Using Einstein’s equations … he deduces that the history of the universe must’ve started with a bang. So Catholics have been in there in multiple places.”

This little exchange might have seemed uninteresting in another era, but not today. The rise in the new atheism and Biblical literalism have made it a commonplace that science and religion are in conflict, and young people are absorbing the idea as axiomatic. In her recent book iGen, about the least religious generation (whether the actual events, or the mythical spin on the events lodged in our collective consciousness) was, at worst, a brief spat in a long and respectful friendship.

That may be true in some churches, but not the Catholic Church—and it’s worth repeating just as often as the opportunity allows. In Catholicism, belief in science and God are compatible. In fact, Tyson and Colbert’s conversation is a glaring reminder that many Catholic priests and believers have been leading scientists themselves. There are theological and historical reasons for this, but the bottom line is this: Catholicism is a science-friendly religion, and it’s enshrined in the Catholic Catechism.

Even at the peak of the new atheism and its mockery of all things religious in the 2000s, one man seemed to draw the respect and attention of people like Richard Dawkins and Bill Maher: Fr. George Coyne, a priest and astrophysicist who ran the Vatican Observatory outside of Tucson. His very existence was a challenge to the view that religion “poisons” rational, scientific thinking. Like Drummond at the end of Inherit the Wind, who marched out of the courtroom with both the Bible and On the Origin of Species in his hands, Coyne represented an intriguing third option outside of the fray.

The new atheists have largely faded, and affable agnostics like Tyson have filled the vacuum. He may not be an unwavering fan of religion (the first episode of his TV series Cosmos painted 16th-century Catholic clergers as anti-science), but he is committed first and foremost to advancing knowledge, not denigrating religion. This is a welcome turn of events, one that has resulted in more positive encounters like the one with Colbert.

And they really only scratched the surface. Catholic scientists were not only behind the formation of the calendar and the formulation of the Big Bang Theory: they were behind groundbreaking discoveries about the size of the earth (Fr. Jean-Felix Picard), pasteurization (Louis Pasteur), and genetics (Gregor Mendel). In fact, one of the first people to correctly explain rainbows was a 13th-century Dominican friar! There’s Roger Bacon, Pascal, Descartes—the list goes on and on. The Church’s unfortunate treatment of Galileo (whether the actual events, or the mythical spin on the events lodged in our collective consciousness) was, at worst, a brief spat in a long and respectful friendship. And Copernicus and Galileo, let’s not forget, were both Catholics themselves.

At the end of the interview Colbert asks what “mystery” of the universe keeps Tyson up at night. His response reveals a deep humility about the observable universe. In the future, dark energy will render the universe so large that all of the galaxies—the source of “everything we know about the history of the universe”—will be “ripped” from view. Then he wonders: was some previous chapter of the universe ripped away from us? “Here we are touching the elephant, not knowing that in fact there’s an elephant standing away from us?” Here we are touching the elephant, not knowing that in fact there’s an elephant standing there. Or maybe there’s the shadow of the elephant and the elephant has been moved. We don’t know what we don’t know.”

The shadow side of the material universe—past, present, and future—is baffling indeed. But what we do know is this: when it comes to putting the tools of observation and the light of reason to good use, science has an ally in the Catholic Church.
FROM ISLAM TO CHRIST
One Woman’s Path through the Riddles of God
Derya Little

Raised as a Muslim in Turkey, Derya wandered far in search of the truth. She rejected the Islamic faith and became an atheist. She tried to convert a Christian missionary to atheism but was converted to Christ instead. Later, during her doctoral studies in England, her amazing spiritual journey led her into the Catholic Church. Her story provides a window into both Islam and modernity. It shows that the grace and the mercy of God know no bounds.

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Which Catholics Oppose Abortion? 
A Closer Look at The Data

By Mary Rezac

Washington D.C., Jan 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - A recent Pew study shows that support for legal abortion varies widely among religious groups, with Catholics falling somewhere in the middle when it comes to beliefs about legal abortion.

Among Catholics in the United States surveyed in the study, 48 percent said they were in favor of legal abortion, while 47 percent said they were opposed to it and 5 percent said they didn’t know.

Unitarian Universalists are the most likely religious group to support legal abortion at 90 percent, while Jehovah’s Witnesses were the least likely to support, it at 18 percent, according to the study.

Among both atheists and agnostics, 87 percent support legal abortion; as do 83 percent of Jews; 82 percent of Buddhists; 68 percent of Hindus; 55 percent of Muslims; and 27 percent of Mormons. Among Orthodox Christians, 53 percent support legal abortion.

The numbers may be surprising, as the Catholic Church is one of the most outspoken opponents of legal abortion in the U.S. and teaches that abortion under any circumstance is a grave sin.

However, a closer look at other available data for Catholics helps to explain some of this discrepancy.

Overall, “the more frequently you go to Mass the more likely you are to oppose abortion,” Mark Gray, a senior research associate with the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) out of Georgetown University, told CNA.

However, responses vary significantly depending on the frequency of Mass attendance of the respondent as well as on the phrasing of poll questions about abortion, according to data from the General Social Survey analyzed by CARA.

When asked if they would support abortion if a woman wants it for any reason, 85 percent of frequent Mass attendees (those who go weekly) said they would not support abortion, while 56 percent of Catholics who attend Mass less than monthly said they would oppose abortion if a woman wants it for any reason.

Responses changed the most among Catholics when asked whether they would support abortion in situations in which the “woman’s health is seriously endangered.”

When posed this question, 26 percent of weekly Mass attendees said they would oppose abortion in this circumstance, compared with 5 percent of infrequent Mass attendees saying the same.

The discrepancy between these two different sets of responses may be attributable to a misunderstanding of the principle of double effect, an aspect of moral theology which can be used in evaluating acts which will have multiple effects.

The principle of double effect states that an act which is not inherently evil may be chosen for a good end, but unchosen, side effect of that act.

This principle of double effect is sometimes also invoked (incorrectly) to justify an abortion performed to save the life of the mother. However, the principle of double effect does not apply in this case, because the act of abortion is the direct killing of an innocent—an inherently evil act which is proscribed in all cases. Even if the act of abortion is chosen as an end to the means of saving the mother’s life, the act is itself nevertheless evil.

The more frequently you go to Mass, the more likely you are to oppose abortion.”

(Stockton New Bishop, cont. from page 6)

entered St. John’s College Seminary in Camarillo in 1980 to finish his undergraduate studies. From there, he entered major seminary where he finished his theological education and received a Master’s degree in Divinity.

He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Fresno in 1987. After his ordination, Cotta carried out several pastoral assignments, including St. Anthony parish in Atwater; the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Laton; and the Shrine of Our Lady of Miracles in Gustine.

In July 1999 he was named vicar general for the diocese of Fresno, and since that time has also served as Moderator of the Curia, Vicar for Clergy, Director of Continuing Education of the Clergy, supervisor of the Safe Environment Program and director of the office for the Propagation of the Faith.

Cotta was named “Chaplain to His Holiness” in 2002, and “Prelate of Honor” in 2009, receiving the title “Monsignor.”

He served as diocesan administrator for Fresno from 2010-2012 after the death of the late Bishop John Steinbock. In 2014 Cotta was named auxiliary bishop of Sacramento. He was ordained March 25, 2014.

Within the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cotta serves as part of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs. In addition to English, he also speaks Spanish and Portuguese.
News Briefs

**North Diocese**

ICF News Scholarships:
St. Mary’s ICF branch #144 has scholarships available for students entering St. Bernard’s Catholic School. Contact Rosemary Melendy (822-6551) for information. There is also a $400 district scholarship for first year college students. On-line applications are available at www.icf.org.

**South Diocese**

Bishop Vasa
Makes his annual visit to Diocesan Catholic Schools during Catholic Schools Week (January 28-February 3). Here are a few photos from his visit with the students at St. Helena Catholic School.

**National**

**National Marriage Week (February 7-14) and World Marriage Day (February 11)**
Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. has encouraged the clergy and faithful throughout the five-county Archdiocese of Philadelphia to join in the observance of National Marriage Week (February 7-14) and World Marriage Day (February 11). Sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), these initiatives celebrate the gift and blessing of marriage while affirming and supporting engaged and married couples.

National Marriage Week is in its ninth year and promotes marriage as a benefit to husbands and wives to the nation, as well as the best environment in which to raise children.

Priests Strap On Ski Boots for Friendly Competition in Poland

**January 25th (Catholic News Service)**

Over the weekend at the Polish ski resort of Wisla, cassocks could be spotted flying down the hills for the 21st annual Pope John Paul II Skiing Cup.

The competition, which awards the John Paul II trophy to the best competitors, has an unusual set of participants: priests and seminarians.

According to Fr. Gregory Szwarc, one of the event’s organizers, the race was named after the late Pope John Paul II because of the good example he set.

“Our Pope John Paul II went skiing so that is why we gave the competition his name,” Fr. Szwarc told CNA in a previous interview.

Participants race in honor of St. John Paul II, who was a lifelong skier and lover of the outdoors. The goal behind the cup is to give clergy the opportunity to set an example of healthy competition and prayer, while also giving them the chance to relax and enjoy the outdoors.

Dozens participated at the 21st annual event held Jan. 20 in Wisla, fewer than 30 miles southwest of Bielsko-Biala.

The oldest among the racers was Fr. Wladyslaw Nowobiski, who is 76 years old. “I am persistent,” Fr. Nowobiski said in a video, according to the BBC.

While the competition was previously reserved for priests, it was recently opened up to other religious leaders and the laity of the priests’ parishes.

Each participant also received a commemorative mug with an image of St. John Paul II.

**Freedom Stickers Aim to Combat Super Bowl Human Trafficking Embargoed until Jan 25th**

Super Bowl LIInd, a matchup between the New England Patriots and the Philadelphia Eagles, will be played Feb. 4 at US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis. As the game approaches, victim advocates warn about a darker side to major sporting events: human trafficking.

At least one group is on a mission to help.

**In Our Backyard** is an Oregon-based nonprofit that works to provide ‘pathways to freedom’ for the victims of human trafficking.

Before the Super Bowl, the group will distribute “Freedom Stickers,” and encourage Minnesotans to place them in public restrooms. The stickers, which are printed in English and Spanish, contain the number for the National Human Trafficking Hotline and encourage women who are in an unsafe situation to call or text the number for assistance.

Nita Belles, the executive director of In Our Backyard, told CNA that the idea for the stickers came from her long-time work with domestic violence survivors. She said she realized that one of the only times a woman is alone is when she’s in a bathroom stall. Belles began placing “shoe cards” in restroom stalls—small cards with a hotline number, which could be hidden in a shoe.

The Freedom Sticker is a similar concept, but since victims of human trafficking are often moved and stripped searched, the sticker cannot be removed from the restroom. Instead, Belles says a woman can store the number in her phone or text it privately from the restroom stall. After someone calls the hotline, they can be connected to law enforcement or other resources.

“Freedom Stickers raise awareness for community members who see them,” Belles added.

In Minneapolis, In Our Backyard will hold an event distributing the stickers, as well as educating people about how to spot human trafficking in their communities. In Our Backyard has held similar events for the past eight Super Bowls.

In addition to these events, Belles hopes to change cultural views of sexual exploitation, noting that demand drives human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Belles believes that the statistics on human trafficking are no more than “educated guesses,” and that the number of trafficking victims in the United States is usually underestimated.

Belles has worked to combat human trafficking for more than a decade. "Human trafficking is what I call domestic violence on steroids," she told CNA.

“We must educate people to know that the myth of ‘the oldest profession’ is really ‘the oldest form of oppression,’” she added.

“We need a change of beliefs about everyone being equal, and that it is not okay to oppress people.”

Nationally, more than 60,000 stickers have been distributed in 41 states. In 2015, Oregon passed a law requiring that the stickers be given to businesses when they renew their liquor licenses.

**Irish Priest Asks for Back-Up as Demand For Exorcisms Rises Exponentially**

**January 24th (Catholic News Service)**

An Irish priest and exorcist is asking the country’s bishops for more support after noticing a dramatic increase in demonic activity in the country.

In a recent interview with The Irish Catholic, Fr. (see News Briefs, page 16)
Pat Collins said he has been overwhelmed with the number of requests for exorcisms from the faithful in Ireland. In an open letter, he has urged the Irish bishops to train more priests to deal with the demand.

“(It)’s only in recent years that the demand has risen exponentially,” Collins told The Irish Catholic.

Collins’ comments are on par with those of other exorcists throughout the world, including the International Association of Exorcists (IAE), a group of 400 Catholic leaders and priests, which has reported a dramatic increase in demonic activity in recent years.

In 2014, the IAE said the levels of demonic activity throughout the world had reached what they considered a “pastoral emergency.”

Collins said that he was “baffled” that the bishops haven’t trained more exorcists for Ireland, and added that anyone who doesn’t see the need for more exorcists is “out of touch with reality.”

“What I’m finding out desperately, is people who in their own minds believe – rightly or wrongly – that they’re afflicted by an evil spirit,” Collins said.

“I think in many cases they wrongly think it, but when they turn to the Church, the Church doesn’t know who to do with them and they refer them on either to a psychologist or to somebody that they’ve heard of that is interested in this form of ministry, and they do fall between the cracks and often are not helped,” he added.

A spokesperson for the bishops’ conference at Maynooth told The Irish Catholic that each diocese is required to have a trained exorcist, who is able to discern the difference between signs of true demonic possession and signs of mental or psychological illness.

“Exorcisms are very rare and this office has not been made aware of any cases of ‘exorcism’ in Ireland in recent years,” the spokesperson said.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between demonic activity and mental illness. From paragraph 1673: “Exorcism is directed at the expulsion of demons or the liberation from demonic possession through the spiritual authority which Jesus entrusted to his Church. Illness, especially psychological illness, is a very different matter; treating this is the concern of medical science. Therefore, before an exorcism is performed, it is important to ascertain that one is dealing with the presence of the Evil One, and not an illness.”

In April 2015, the Congregation for the Clergy and the Sacerdos Institute hosted a seminar at Rome’s Regina Apostolorum University, specifically aimed at training priests and lay people in spotting the differences between psychological problems and demonic possession.

The conference included interventions from a wide range of experts in the field of exorcism, including practicing exorcists, medical professionals, psychologists, lawyers, and theologians.

Recently updated rules of the Catholic rite of exorcism also state that a person who believes they are possessed must first rule out mental illness before seeking an exorcism. If the rite of exorcism is still needed, they may seek out a priest who has been trained and appointed as exorcist for his diocese by his bishop.

Collins noted that it often takes multiple meetings with a person seeking an exorcism to determine precisely what is afflicting them, but noted that whether it is true demonic activity or other problems, the requests have gone up dramatically in recent years.

Father Vincent Lampert, a Vatican-trained exorcist and a parish priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, has previously told CNA that the best defense against demonic possession is staying close to the sacraments.

“In his open letter to the Irish bishops, Collins wrote: “...there has been increasing evidence of the malicious activity of the evil one.”

“I can’t judge from my own subjective experience because people see on the internet that I’m supposed to be an exorcist so I get an inordinate number of calls from people, and emails, all I can say is I have that reputation, but it’s only in recent years that the demand has risen exponentially,” he wrote.

**Economic Models Should Be Centered On Human Dignity, Says Pope Francis**

Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, Jan 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - Pope Francis encouraged global delegates at the 2018 World Economic Forum to promote economic models that create the proper conditions for the human person to thrive.

“The recurring financial instabilities have brought new problems and serious challenges that governments must confront, such as the growth of unemployment, the increase in various forms of poverty, the widening of socio-economic gaps and new forms of slavery, often rooted in situations of conflict, migration and various social problems,” Pope Francis wrote on Jan. 12.

“In this context, it is vital to safeguard the dignity of the human person, in particular by offering to all people real opportunities for integral human development and by implementing economic policies that favor the family,” the Holy Father continued.

Pope Francis’ words were addressed to a Professor Klaus Schwab, executive chairman of the World Economic Forum, which is meeting in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland from Jan. 23-26. The theme of the 48th annual meeting is “Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World” – a topic that Pope Francis called “timely.”

According to the forum’s website, the goal of the event is to “re dedicate leaders from all walks of life to developing a shared narrative to improve the state of the world.”

At the center of the Pope’s speech was an overarching theme of placing human dignity at the center of global development, despite the barriers of suffering, poverty and injustice.

“Economic models, therefore, are also required to observe an ethic of sustainable and integral development, based on values that place the human person and his or her rights at the center,” he said.

“We cannot remain silent in the face of the suffering of millions of people whose dignity is wounded, nor can we continue to move forward as if the spread of poverty and injustice had no cause,” Pope Francis continued.

The Pope told the leaders gathered at the event that it is a “moral imperative” to create inclusive conditions that benefit the good of society, rather than furthering self-centered individualism.

By rejecting the “throwaway” culture, Pope Francis said, leaders can strive for a better future, by “increasing the quality of productivity, creating new jobs, respecting labor laws, fighting against public and private corruption and promoting social justice, together with the fair and equitable sharing of profits.”

The Holy Father also encouraged “wise discernment” for world leaders, asking them to support authentic values that will foster the prosperity of all.

“I hope, therefore, that this 2018 meeting of the World Economic Forum will allow an open, free, and respectful exchange, and be inspired above all else by the desire to advance the common good,” Pope Francis said.

“Now is the time to take courage and bold steps for our beloved planet. This is the right moment to put into action our responsibility to contribute to the development of humanity.”

**Scholars Decode One of the Last Fragments of The Dead Sea Scrolls**

Haifa, Israel, Jan 22 (CNA) - The Dead Sea Scrolls, which are among the oldest extant biblical manuscripts, have been a topic of interest since they were discovered in the Qumran Caves in the West Bank beginning in 1946.

More recently, Israeli scholars have pieced together some of the last fragments of the ancient documents, revealing new information about the scrolls.

Dr. Eshbal Ratson and Professor Jonathan Ben-Dov of Haifa University decoded 60 previously unread fragments over the course of a year to discover a festival marking each changing season which was celebrated by the Jews. The researchers also found the name for the festival: the Hebrew word “tekufah,” meaning “period.”

These fragments, some of which were smaller than a centimeter, identified the seasonal celebrations, which included the festivals of New Wheat, New Wine, and New Oil, which are linked to the Jewish festival of Shavuot. These celebrations were based on the 364-day Jewish calendar.

Additionally, the researchers found that a second scribe made additional notes on the scroll, correcting some mistakes and omissions made by the original author. According to Ratzon, these notes made it easier for them to decode the ancient scrolls.

“What’s nice is that these comments were hints that helped me figure out the puzzle—they showed me how to assemble the scroll,” said Ratzon, according to the BBC.

While it is not known who penned the ancient texts, some have attributed them to the Essenes—a Jewish sect who lived in the desert. The scrolls, around 900 in number, contain Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic writing, and are thought to date to between 300 BC and

(see News Briefs, page 17)
**Don’t ‘Photoshop’ Your Heart – Be Who You Are, Pope Tells Young Peruvians**

By Elise Harris, Lima, Peru, January 21

(CNA/EWTN News) - On Sunday Pope Francis told Peruvian youth that Jesus doesn’t want disciples who have been “photoshopped” to perfection, but like the great saints of the past, God calls people to follow him with trust and enthusiasm, despite their weaknesses.

“Jesus does not want you to have a cosmetic heart,” he said. “He loves you as you are, and he has a dream for every one of you. Do not forget, he does not get discouraged with you.”

Moses, he was not articulate; Abraham, an old man; Jeremiah, very young; Zacchaeus, small of stature; the disciples, who fell asleep when Jesus told them they should pray; Paul, a persecutor of Christians; Peter, who denied him,” and the list could go on, he said. “So what excuse can we offer?”

Jesus, Francis explained, wants youth who are “on the move. He wants to see you achieve your ideals and to be enthusiastic in following his instructions.”

This is a difficult path that can’t be walked alone, but must be one “as a team, where each member offers the best of his or her self,” he said, adding that “Jesus is counting on you” just as he counted on the many Peruvian saints who influenced society, including St. Rose of Lima, St. Turibius, St. Juan Macias and St. Francisco Solano, among others.

“Today (Jesus) asks if, like them, you are ready to follow him,” the Pope said, asking the youths “are you willing to follow him? To be guided by his Spirit in making present his Kingdom of justice and love?”

Pope Francis spoke to youth in Lima’s Plaza de Armas before reciting the Angelus on the last day of his Jan. 15-21 visit to Chile and Peru. Earlier in the day he prayed Terce, also called the prayer of the “Third Hour” in the Church’s Liturgy of the Hours, with contemplative sisters.

He also met with the country’s bishops, and after lunch will celebrate Mass at Lima’s “Las Palmas” air-base before returning to Rome.

In his speech to youth, Francis directed them to the example of one of his favorite Peruvian saints, Martin de Porres, who was a the son of a Spanish nobleman and a black slave woman. The saint had wanted to enter the Dominican order, but was initially prevented from becoming a brother due to a law at the time that prevented people of mixed race from joining religious orders.

“Nothing prevented that young man from achieving his dreams, nothing prevented him from spending his life for others, nothing prevented him from loving, and he did so because he had realized that the Lord loved him first,” the Pope said.

Because he was a “mulato,” meaning a person of mixed race, St. Martin had to endure many hardships, but he knew how to do one thing that was the secret to his ultimate happiness: “he knew how to trust.”

“He trusted in the Lord who loved him. Do you know why? Because the Lord had trusted him first; just as he trusts each of you and will never tire of trusting you,” the Pope said.

When we face similar difficulties in our lives, and are tempted to become negative or discouraged, “remember that Jesus is by your side,” Francis said. “Do not give up! Do not lose hope!”

The Pope told the young people to look to the saints for encouragement, but he also urged them ask for help from people they know can give them good advice, and to let these people accompany and guide them as they go forward in life.

“The Lord looks on you with hope,” he said, explaining that God is never discouraged with us, but it is we who get discouraged with ourselves.

Pope Francis closed his speech telling youth to turn to Mary, who will encourage and support them “lest you grow discouraged. And if you get discouraged by anything, do not worry, for she will tell Jesus. Just don’t stop praying, don’t stop asking, don’t stop trusting in her maternal protection.”

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**ITALIAN CATHOLIC FEDERATION DONATES TO WILDFIRE FUND**

At the October 2017 meeting of the Central Council of the Italian Catholic Federation, the members voted to set up a wildfire fund for the victims of the Santa Rosa fire. It was determined that the amount collected would be presented to Catholic Charities-Santa Rosa Diocese. At the annual Installation of officers of the Italian Catholic Federation for the Santa Rosa District on January 21st, the Grand President of the Federation, Andrew Pappani, presented a check in the amount of $21,400 to Len Marabella, Director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese. This donation was the combined efforts of Federation members throughout California, Nevada, Arizona and Chicago.

In the Santa Rosa diocese, the Italian Catholic Federation is located in Petaluma, Sonoma, Santa Rosa (2), Healdsburg, Cloverdale, Sebastopol, Arcata and Eureka. For more information, please visit www.icf.org.

The picture shows Grand President Andrew Pappani presenting the check to Director Len Marabella.

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**False Misfire cont. from page 11**

On the drive home, my ten-year-old son asked me this question: “Dad, why don’t we just nuke North Korea off the face of the earth, so we don’t have to worry about this anymore.”

I breathed deep and posed him another question. “Are there children in North Korea?”

“Yes.”

“Are they as precious as you?”

“I don’t know.”

“Of course they are. Are there fathers in North Korea?”

“Yes.”

“Are their lives as precious as your father’s?” He didn’t answer. So I concluded, “It is better to suffer injustice than to inflict it.”

Caves

It will be hard for people outside of Hawaii to understand the profound impact of this false alarm. A neighbor child told us how her family hid in the closest and her mother cried for an hour. Another family prayed the rosary and “waited to meet Jesus.”

Another friend told me, “I watched TV and hoped it was a mistake.”

As a filmmaker, writer, and activist I have reflected on democide and total war for almost three decades. I’ve travelled the world from Sudan to Iraq. A year ago this week, I was in eyeshot of ISIS, as I traveled with Yazidi and Kurdish soldiers who fought to defend their families. Those families often fled for safety to… caves.

And today, I had walked in their shoes.

Jason Jones is the President & Founder of Whole Life America, is a Pro-life Film Maker (“Bella” and “Cre -scendo”), a film producer, author, activist, and human rights worker. Jones was an Executive Producer on the 2006 film, Bella, which won several film industry awards, most notably the People’s Choice Award at the 2006 Toronto International Film Festival. Jason was the Associate Producer of the 2008 film, The Stoning of Soraya M., which won the NAACP Image Award in 2010 as well as the Los Angeles Film Festival Audience Award in 2009.
Nuestra Peregrinación Anual: Un Camino de Fe

Cada año, la Iglesia nos presenta las palabras y obras salvíficas de nuestro Señor, Jesús. Esto lo hace, en su mayor parte, de manera cronológica.

Así, por ejemplo, comenzamos el presente Año Litúrgico con una preparación de Adviento para el Nacimiento de Cristo, la celebración de aquel nacimiento en Navidad y hasta la visita de los Reyes Magos (Epifanía) y luego el comienzo del Ministerio de Jesús con el Bautismo de Juan en el Río Jordán.

Una gran mayoría del año se basa en los pasajes del Evangelio que relatan las diferentes enseñanzas y milagros de Jesús. Otra sección importante del año, sin embargo, se ocupa con los misterios centrales de Cristo, es decir, Su Pasión, Muerte y Resurrección.

Esa sección del Año Litúrgico comienza con el Miércoles, 14 de Febrero, Miércoles de Ceniza. Es importante observar que esta estación penitencial comienza el Miércoles de Ceniza, sigue durante siete semanas y luego culmina en Semana Santa y Pascua.

La Cuaresma no es un asunto del Miércoles de Pascua. Es una oportunidad privilegiada para entrar en la Liturgia a lo largo de “cuarenta días” y, como señalamos el mes pasado, a que más comprometidos (participación auténtica) en la Liturgia misma.

Como señala un autor, el Año Litúrgico puede (y debe ser) un estilo de peregrinaje anual durante el cual caminamos con el Señor el camino de Su vida desde el principio (25 de Marzo, Anunciación) hasta el final (Solemnidad de Cristo Rey). Incluso antes de estas grandes intervenciones de Dios en la historia de Dios, la Iglesia presta atención a la Inmaculada Concepción (8 de Diciembre) de la Santísima Virgen y su nacimiento (8 de Septiembre), en previsión de su futura maternidad.

 Esto nos conlleva a estar presente durante su estadía por cuarenta días al principio de Su ministerio público (Cuaresma).

 Requiere que le acompañemos y nos sezcional e instruya a Sus Apóstoles. El Año Litúrgico nos pide estar atentos como Jesús predice su futuro de rechazo y muerte. Nos invita a acompañar a los Apóstoles mientras se preparan para la Pascua y la Ultima Cena (Jueves Santo). Proporciona una oportunidad para participar en Su agonía en el jardín, Su flagelación, Su corona, Su condena, Su crucifixión y Su muerte (Viernes Santo). La Soleme Liturgia del Sábado Santo nos invita a vigilar junto con María nuestra Madre y los discípulos del Señor y sorprendernos con ellos cuando la tumba vacía se descubre otra vez, y cada Año, como si fuera por primera vez, y darnos cuenta con ellos que verdaderamente El ha resucitado.

 Esta es una parte de la peregrinación Litúrgica, el viaje Litúrgico que la Iglesia nos llama a vivir cada año.

 No es posible cosechar los beneficios de esta peregrinación si no estamos prestando atención o si perdemos partes importantes del viaje.

 El peregrinaje no terminó para los Apóstoles en la Resurrección. Tuvieron cuarenta días con el Señor, después de su resurrección y luego fueron también testigos de Su Ascensión al cielo.

 Recordamos también la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen (15 de Agosto) que nos recuerda que la Ascensión del Señor es un anticipo de nuestro propio futuro.

 Después de la Ascensión, tenían la promesa del Paráclito, el Espíritu Santo. Revivimos el acontecimiento de la Ascensión del Señor y la esperanza de esa promesa cada año con la Liturgia de Pentecostés y de manera especial con la celebración del Sacramento de la Confirmación.

 Por último, anticipamos el regreso en gloria del Señor al acercarnos al final del año con nuestro último Domingo del Año Litúrgico, la Solemnidad de Cristo Rey en el cual esperamos Su venida otra vez “para juzgar a vivos y muertos.”

 Se trata de una enorme peregrinación y no tenemos la capacidad de absorber todo lo que tiene que ofrecer. Después de décadas de vivir con la Iglesia, de viajar con ella en este peregrinar con Jesús, Su Madre y Sus Apóstoles, y sin embargo nos encontramos, en cada Año, con la necesidad de recordar una vez más, de nuevo volver a trazar el camino de la Pasión, Muerte y Resurrección de Nuestro Señor.

 Cada año es un nuevo peregrinar, cada año es una oportunidad de escuchar al Señor cuando El viene a nuestro encuentro en el curso de la Liturgia de la Iglesia.

 Cada año tenemos la oportunidad de encontrarnos con el Señor una vez más si nos comprometemos a vivir toda la peregrinación.

Este es El Antídoto Del Papa Francisco Contra Las Fake News

VATICANO (ACI) - En el mensaje para la 52ª Jornada Mundial de las Comunicaciones Sociales, que se celebrará el próximo 13 de mayo, con el lema “La alteración de la verdad es el síntoma típico de la eficacia de medios de comunicación tradicionales”.

1) ¿Qué hay de falso en las ‘noticias falsas’?

El término fake news, explicó el Papa, “generalmente alude a la desinformación difundida online o en los medios de comunicación tradicionales”. “La eficacia de las fake news se debe, en primer lugar, a su naturaleza mimética, es decir, a su capacidad de aparecer como plausibles”.

En segundo lugar, “estas noticias, falsas pero verosímiles, son capciosas, porque de que los hombres para capturar la atención de los destinatarios ponen do el acento en estereotipos y prejuicios extendidos (vea Las Fake News, pagina 20)
Noticias

Curso de Planificacion Natural de la Familia

Pastores, favor de invitar personalmente a parejas de su parroquia y anunciar en masa. Hemos invitado a unos instructores de Alameda a venir para darnos la oportunidad de tener clases in español. Es un gran oportunidad para crecimiento espiritual en el sacramento matrimonial.

Mejorar tu matrimonio!

Curso de Planificacion Natural de la Familia

Para Parejas Casadas o Comprometidas

Para registrar, llama a Maria Sanchez, 542-6984 x0

Papa Francisco Invita a Los Periodistas a Rezar Esta Oración Para Transmitir La Verdad

VATICANO (ACI) - Coincidiendo con la festividad de San Francisco de Sales, patrón de los periodistas, el Papa Francisco propuso una oración dirigida especialmente a los profesionales del periodismo para pedir a Dios que les ayude a encontrar y transmitir la verdad.

“Señor, haznos instrumentos de tu paz. Haznos reconocer el mal que se insinúa en una comunicación que no crea comunión. Haznos capaces de quitar el veneno de nuestros juicios. Ayúdanos a hablar de los otros como de hermanos y hermanas. Tú eres fiel y digno de confianza; haz que nuestras palabras sean semillas de bien para el mundo”, comienza la oración.

El Santo Padre propuso esta oración en el mensaje por la Jornada Mundial de las Comunicaciones Sociales, que tendrá lugar el próximo 13 de mayo. En ese mensaje, el Pontífice reflexiona sobre el origen y los efectos de las fake news, o noticias falsas, y propone fortalecer la educación en la verdad como instrumento para prevenir la desinformación.

A continuación, la oración completa propuesta por el Papa Francisco:

Señor, haznos instrumentos de tu paz.

Haznos reconocer el mal que se insinúa en una comunicación que no crea comunión.

Haznos capaces de quitar el veneno de nuestros juicios.

Ayúdanos a hablar de los otros como de hermanos y hermanas.

Tú eres fiel y digno de confianza; haz que nuestras palabras sean semillas de bien para el mundo:

- donde hay ruido, haz que practiquemos la escucha;
- donde hay confusión, haz que inspiremos armonía;
- donde hay amenazas, haz que vivamos el compartir;
- donde hay apatía, haz que nuestro espíritu se mueva.

Amén.

Papa Francisco: Sin Reinscripción Social, La Cárcel Se Convierte En Una Tortura Infinita

VATICANO (ACI) - Durante la Audiencia General celebrada este miércoles 24 de enero en la Plaza de San Pedro del Vaticano, el Papa Francisco hizo un llamado a que las cárceles se conviertan en lugares de reinsertión social, porque si se pierde esa dimensión, la cárcel se convierte en “una tortura infinita”.

Durante su catequesis destacó como uno de los momentos más trascendentales en los que se ha Leído la importancia de la reinserción social y la importancia de que, antes de ser enviados a la cárcel, los jóvenes se preparan para la reinserción, así como para una orientación que dé sentido a su vida cotidiana.

En la catequesis, Francisco insistió en que “no podemos pensar en una cárcel, cualquiera que sea, sin esta dimensión de reinserción. Porque si no hay esa esperanza de reinserción social, se convierte en una tortura infinita. Por el contrario, cuando se trabaja para reintegrar mediante el trabajo de la cárcel a la sociedad, se abre un diálogo. Siempre en una cárcel debe haber esta dimensión de reinserción, siempre”.

Demanda De Exorcistas “Ha Aumentado Exponencialmente” En Irlanda, Advierte Sacerdote

DUBLÍN (ACI) - Un sacerdote pidió a la Iglesia Católica en Irlanda que incremente el número de exorcistas ya que en los últimos años “ha aumentado exponencialmente” la demanda de estos, debido al crecimiento de la actividad del maligno.

En declaraciones al periódico The Irish Catholic, el P. Pat Collins, exorcista de la región, indicó que “la gente en sus propias mentes cree, correcta o equivocadamente, que están afligidos por un espíritu maligno”.

“Creo que en muchos casos ellos piensan erróneamente, pero cuando se dirigen a la Iglesia, esta no sabe qué hacer con ellos y les recomienda acudir a un psicólogo o donde alguna persona de la que han oído hablar que está interesada en ese tipo de ministerio. Y así sus casos pasan inadvertidos y a menudo no reciben ayuda”, expresó.

Ante esta realidad, el P. Collins escribió una carta abierta, de la cual una parte fue recogida por The Irish Catholic. En el texto advierte que ha observado el aumento de la aparición de la Iglesia y que “como esto ha sucedido, hubo una creciente evidencia de la actividad maligna en Irlanda”.

El sacerdote dijo que recibe un alto número de llamadas y correos electrónicos debido a que la gente se entera por internet de que es exorcista. “En los últimos años la demanda ha aumentado exponencialmente”, explicó.

El P. Collins indicó que está “desconcertado” por el hecho de que los Obispos de Irlanda no estén tomando medidas para designar sacerdotes con la experiencia necesaria para que lidien con esta situación.

“En la mayoría de los casos, después de varias reuniones, surgirá la posibilidad de que se trate de un problema médico, psiquiátrico o psicológico, y luego la persona será derivada a los especialistas pertinentes”, señaló el sacerdote vaticanino.

Afirmó que si los obispos creen que no hay demanda de exorcistas, están “fuera de contacto con la realidad”. Recordó que la Biblia revela que el exorcismo es algo central en el ministerio de Jesús.

Agregó que se ha cuestionado si actualmente el clero cree en la existencia de espíritus malignos y opinó que “sospecho que no lo hacen”. The Irish Catholic contactó con una vocera de la Oficina de Comunicación de la Conferencia Episcopal Irlandesa, cuyo nombre no es mencionado, quien explicó que cada diócesis debería tener un exorcista experimentado que sepa distinguir los signos de la posseión demoníaca de los que son propios de una enfermedad mental o física.

“Los exorcismos son muy raros y en esta oficina no ha tenido conocimiento de ningún caso de ‘exorcismo’ en Irlanda en los últimos años”, destacó.
La disciplina actual es como sigue:

- Miércoles de Ceniza y Viernes Santo son días de ayuno y abstinencia, esto es, limitarse a una sola comida al día pero es posible tomar algo ligero en la mañana o según se prefiera, al mediodía o la noche. Las personas en buen estado de salud entre 18 y 60 años de edad están obligadas a ayunar.
- Las leyes de ayuno permiten una sola comida al día pero es posible tomar algo ligero en la mañana o según se prefiera, al mediodía o la noche. Las personas en buen estado de salud entre 18 y 60 años de edad están obligadas a ayunar.
- Las leyes de abstinencia de comer carne obligan a los mayores de 14 años. Sin embargo es altamente recomendable que niños entre 7 a 14 años también cumplan con la práctica de la abstinencia.
- A todos los católicos se les recomienda recibir la Santa Comunión frecuentemente durante la cuaresma y recibir el sacramento de la Penitencia de manera que puedan estar preparados para celebrar más conscientemente el Misterio Pascual. Aquellos que han recibido su Primera Comunión, deben recibir la Santa Comunión durante el tiempo Pascual.
- La determinación de los días obligatorios de penitencia, como está arriba, no debe ser entendida como limitante de la práctica de la penitencia. La penitencia es para ayudarnos a aver y acortar la distancia entre nuestras vidas presente la vida que Dios quiere para cada uno de nosotros. “La penitencia del tiempo cuareasmal no debe ser sólo interna e individual, sino también externa y social.” (Sacrosanctum Concilium #110)
- Los matrimonios pueden celebrarse con la misa y siempre se debe dar la bendición nupcial. Sin embargo es contrario al espíritu de la cuaresma elaborar las bodas con muchas decoraciones o flores.
- Confirmación en la Vigilia Pascual: (1) El Derecho Canónico da los señores Cura y a los vicarios parroquiales la facultad de administrar el Sacramento de la Confirmación en sus parroquias a cualquier adulto o niño/a mayor de dieciocho años quienes hayan sido bautizados o hayan sido recibidos en completa comunión a la Iglesia. (2) Para cualquier adulto que haya sido bautizado católico, el sacerdote deberá pedir las facultades correspondientes del Obispo, para su validación, y así poder administrar el Sacramento de la Confirmación. Solo los adultos mayores de dieciocho años entran en esta categoría. Cuando el Señor solicite el permiso para Confirmar deberá presentar por escrito las razones porque lo solicita, y además deberá enviar al Obispo el nombre y la edad de ese/a candidato/a. Cualquier otro joven menor de dieciocho años deberá ser confirmado cuando el Obispo visite pastoralmente a las Parroquias. Por favor, note que el párrafo 27 de el National Statutes for the Catechumenate establece que “La celebración de el Sacramento de la penitencia con los candidatos de la Confirmación y Eucaristía se debe hacer en un momento adecuado anteriormente y distinto del momento de la celebración de la Confirmación y la Eucaristía.”

Además, “nunca se deja de buscar la verdad, porque siempre está al acecho la falsedad, también cuando se dicen cosas verdaderas. Una argumentación impocode puede apoyarse sobre hechos innegables, pero si se utiliza para herir a otro y desacreditarlo a los ojos de los demás, por más que parezca justa, no contiene en sí verdad”. “Por sus frutos podemos distinguir la verdad de los enunciados”, aseguró Francisco. Podemos distinguir si esos enunciados “suscitan polémica, fomentan divisiones, infunden resignación; o si, por el contrario, llevan a la reflexión consciente y madura, al diálogo constructivo, a una laboriosidad provechosa”.

4) La paz es la verdadera noticia
El Papa insistió: “El mejor antidoto contra la falsedades no son las estrategias, sino las personas, personas que, libres de la codicia, están dispuestas a escuchar, y permiten que la verdad emerja a través de la fatiga de un diálogo sincero; personas que, atraídas por el bien, se responsabilizan en el uso del lenguaje”. Por ese motivo, “si el camino para evitar la expansión de la desinformación es la responsabilidad, quien tiene un compromiso especial es el que por su oficio tiene la responsabilidad de informar, es decir: el periodista, custodio de las noticias”. El periodista, “en el mundo contemporáneo, no realiza solo un trabajo, sino una verdadera y propia misión. Tiene la tarea, en el frenesí de las noticias y en el torbellino de las primicias, de recordar que en el centro de la noticia no está la velocidad en darla y el impacto sobre las cifras de audiencia, sino las personas”. “Informar es formar, es involucrarse en la vida de las personas. Por eso la verificación de las fuentes y la custodia de la comunicación son verdaderos y propios procesos de desarrollo del bien que generan confianza y abren caminos de comunicación y de paz”, concluyó.
Youth Delegates Named for Pre-Synod Gathering in Rome; Synod will Focus on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment

January 25, 2018 WASHINGTON—Three young adult delegates were discerned by the USCCB to represent the United States of America at the March 2018 Pre-Synod Gathering in Rome. The United States will participate in a special Pre-Synod Gathering in March 2018 in Rome, a milestone on the way to the Synod on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment. The young adults are:

Br. Javier Hansen, FSC, originally from northern California, is a Brother of the Christian Schools in the LaSallian District of San Francisco-New Orleans, currently serving as a religion teacher at Cathedral High School-El Paso, Texas.

Nick Lopez, originally from San Antonio, currently serves as the director of campus ministry for the University of Dallas. He is also a guest columnist for the Catholic News Service column, In Light of Faith, focused on millennials.

Katie Prejean McGrady, of the Diocese of Lake Charles in Louisiana, is a wife, new mother, youth minister, and a popular speaker who has been working with many youth and young adult communities across the country.

This spring gathering, from March 19 to 25, 2018, has been convened by the Holy Father Pope Francis, along with the Office for the Synod of Bishops, as a way to listen directly to the voices of young adults around the world in advance of the 2018 Ordinary Synod (which will take place in October 2018 at the Vatican). The Holy See has also received input on the Synod topic through a questionnaire sent through epis-

copal conferences and movements, which was sent to Rome in October 2017, and an online survey for young people that was open from June to December 2017.

These individuals were chosen by the USCCB because they have both local and national connections to the life of the Church. Not only are they young adults, but they work with other young people, representing the cultural and vocational diversity of the Church in the U.S.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Chairman of the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, and Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., Chairman of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, commented on the upcoming Pre-Synod Gathering in Rome, saying, “We are delighted that Br. Javier, Nick, and Katie have accepted the invitation to represent the youth and young adults of the United States at this important gathering in Rome. We hope that all Catholics will join us in praying for them and for all the young delegates from around the world, participating in the Pre-Synod Conference. Their coming together is a wonderful opportunity for the Church, to hear the perspective of young people pertaining to the key themes which will be discussed in the 2018 Synod of Bishops: Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment.”

This will be the first time that Br. Javier Hansen will be traveling to Rome. “I believe I offer the perspective of many young religious in this country and those who are currently discerning religious life,” says Br. Javier. “I not only will represent the people of my generation but also the young people I interact with every day in the classroom.”

Katie Prejean McGrady says it is a great privilege to attend the gathering. “It is easily one of the greatest honors of my life,” says Katie. “While there, I am greatly looking forward to the chance to learn through dialogue and discussion, how other countries uniquely lead young people into an authentic and personal encounter with Jesus Christ, and to bring this information home to share with our bishops, priests, and lay men and women working in ministry.”

Nick Lopez says the gathering for him will also be an opportunity to present the needs of his American and Latino brothers and sisters, “In particular, I hope to be able to offer some successes and viewpoints from my life as a minister, including interfaith relations, integrating popular culture effectively in ministry, and the Latino/Hispanic American experience.”

In addition to the in-person meeting of delegates, the Holy See will be inviting young people from around the world to participate in the Pre-Synod Gathering digitally via social media. With this opportunity, more youth and young adult voices can contribute to the dialogue. Details on how young people can engage the process in this manner will be available in the coming months.

The official Vatican website for the Synod, which is inclusive of this Pre-Synod Gathering, is http://www. synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en.html (this links to the English language version). The official USCCB page for the Synod is www.usccb.org/synod-2018.

Vodka and Holy Water

By Daniel J. Demers

At 99 Kay Castle, is for the most part, confined to her San Francisco home. But for nearly sixty-five years she was a regular at Camp Meeker’s Saint Rita’s Catholic Church, until it’s closing and then Occidental’s St. Philips.

Kay is one of the most devout Catholics I know. We all know the type—rosaries every day (sometimes in the car), Mass ever day (via television nowadays), frequent Signs of the Cross and the liberal sprinkling of holy water on herself, her children, relatives and friends. Until her eyesight went, she was an avid reader of every Catholic novel and magazine published in the English language. She’s also the mother of Cathy Anderson, the hostess at Occidental’s Negril Bar and Restaurant, and of Buddy Castle retired now after a distinguished San Francisco law enforcement career. Up until a few years ago she spent the entire summer at her Camp Meeker cabin purchased in the 1950s. Kay married Arthur Castle in 1939. After Art returned from World War II they bought a house in San Francisco’s Mission district and then in 1951, the cabin in Camp Meeker. Art was a Presbyterian when he and Kay became engaged. He agreed to convert to Roman Catholicism—as part of the marriage deal. Kay insisted—no conversion, no marriage. Art went along but really never took to Catholicism—more a go-along and get-along approach for marital harmony’s sake. Both Cathy and Buddy were educated in the Church—grammar school at Epiphany with Buddy going to Sacred Heart High School and Cathy attending St. Paul’s.

The family prospered with Art eventually becoming foreman of the printing plant for the San Francisco Progress newspaper and that’s where this particular story begins.

In the mid-1970s Kay went on an apparitions tour of Europe—Fatima, Guadalupe, Zaragoza and Lourdes. She returned from Lourdes with a large jug of Lourdes holy water. It was her prize possession. She placed it in her refrigerator along with another jug of holy water blessed by Father O’Keefe. Buddy remembers as a small boy frequently taking the jug of water to the Epiphany rectory to get it blessed and lugging it back home. Alongside the two bottles was another jug of ice water—for daily household use.

With Kay there developed a kind of holy water pecking order. In saloon terms—Father O’Keefe’s water was the well (the cheap stuff like Taaka vodka) and the Lourdes water that was the top shelf stuff (the expensive stuff like Grey Goose). Every night when Cathy and Buddy were asleep, Kay would quietly sprinkle O’Keefe’s holy water on them as she said a prayer for them. Kind of a nice reassuring touch by a devout mother that the kids took for granted. The Lourdes water was used for special occasions. When Cathy got a sore throat or Buddy a bruise she’d rub the (see Vodka and Holy Water, page 24)
Catholic Charities Job Announcements

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, a non-profit and the largest human services provider in the North Bay, serves the most vulnerable regardless of their religious, social, or economic background. We challenge poverty, counsel immigrants, and care for our seniors by supporting the dignity and independence of all we serve. We support, educate, create opportunities, ensure the well-being of our staff, and engage community leaders in the betterment of those most in need.

Job Announcement: Receptionist, Bilingual
Position Summary: The non-exempt, full-time, $15 to $17 per hour, Front Desk Receptionist provides bilingual support to all programs at 987 Airway Court, including the resource center, immigration services, senior services and administration, to reduce social vulnerability and increase resilience through community recovery and rebuilding. This position is responsible for supervising 2-5 community volunteers.

Job Announcement: Resource Connector, Bilingual
Position Summary: The non-exempt, full-time, $15 to $17 per hour, Bilingual Resource Connector provides support to the Resource Center within the Community and Parish Connections Department, across all programs, to reduce social vulnerability and assist the community in recovery and rebuilding. This position is responsible for supervising 2-5 community volunteers.

Visit our website at www.srcharities.org/about/careers for additional information about this position and other exciting opportunities at Catholic Charities. An application can be found at www.srcharities.org/about/careers.

We look forward to receiving your completed application resume and cover letter.

To have your calendar event listed please email us!
Srdiocese1@gmail.com

CALENDAR

Lenten Dates 2018
- Clean Monday (Monday, February 12, 2018)
- Ash Wednesday (Wednesday, February 14, 2018)
- First Sunday of Lent (Sunday, February 18, 2018)
- Second Sunday of Lent (Sunday, February 25, 2018)
- Third Sunday of Lent (Sunday, March 4, 2018)
- Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) (Sunday, March 11, 2018)
- Feast of Saint Patrick (Saturday, March 17, 2018)
- Fifth Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday) (Sunday, March 18, 2018)
- Feast of Saint Joseph (Monday, March 19, 2018)
- Palm Sunday (Sunday, March 25, 2018)
- Holy Thursday (Thursday, March 29, 2018)
- Good Friday (Friday, March 30, 2018)
- Holy Saturday (Saturday, March 31, 2018)
- Easter (Sunday, April 1, 2018)
- The Annunciation of the Lord (Transferred to Monday, April 9, 2018, because March 25 is Palm Sunday)

February 22nd
Fathers of Faith Series
An Introduction to the Lives & Teachings of the Church Fathers by Fr. Gary Sumpter. From September 1, 2017 to June 28, 2018 7:30pm. Join us for an inspiring series one evening a month on Thursday.
Who were the early Christians? What did they believe, teach, and died for? Is our faith today the same as the faith they professed? These are some of the basic themes to be covered in this 10-part series. Among the Church Fathers to be discussed will be Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Cyril of Jerusalem, Justin Martyr, Leo the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Ireneaus, Cyprian, Basil, and more. Talks will be on the following Thursday nights at 7:30pm: Feb. 22, March 22, April 26, May 31, June 28 Kolbe Academy & Trinity Prep 2055 Redwood Rd, Napa. No Charge. Donations gratefully accepted.

February 24th
Crab Dinner Arcata
The Knights of Columbus Arcata Council #2947 The latest news is hopeful for the availability of Crab! We will begin selling tickets after the masses at St. Mary’s Arcata for the annual Robert S. Murphy Memorial Crab Dinner on Saturday, February 24 at 6:00pm at Leavey Hall. A choice of Dungeness crab or barbequed tri-tip sirloin will be on the menu. Tickets are $30 per plate and will be sold on a pre-sale basis. If by chance crab is unavailable, the Knights will refund your ticket purchase. Please join us for this fun-filled event and come visit with your “old and new” fellow parishioners and friends.

February 24th
The Secular Discalced Carmelites invite you to join them for a Day of Recollection
On Saturday, Feb 24 at Assumption Parish in Ferndale. Fr. David Guzman, OCD, will be the retreat master. The topic for the retreat will be Listen to Him – finding Jesus in the scriptures. Bring a brown bag lunch. Drinks and dessert will be provided. In the Carmelite tradition, we will spend the day in silence beginning at 9:30am with Morning Prayer followed by Mass. The retreat will end at 4:00pm with Evening Prayer. Come spend some quiet time with God. Questions? Call Alan or Ginny Fox – 725-6930.

March 11th
Diocese Youth Day

Ongoing in South Diocese
First Saturdays: Oakville House of Prayer (Carmelite Monastery)
Morning of Recollection every first Saturday of the month. Spiritual Talk 9-10am; Confessions 10-11am; Mass 11:00am. Confessions (English/Spanish) Mondays and Fridays; 10-12pm, 3-5pm, 8-9pm. Church Hours: Chapel opens at 7:00 a.m. Closes at 9:00 p.m. only on Mondays and Fridays. All other days Church closes at 6:00 p.m. 20 Mount Carmel Drive, Oakville, CA 707-944-2454 oakvillecarmelites.org.Weekday Mass 8:00 am. Monday – Saturday (except for on First Saturdays when Mass is at 11:00 am.) Sunday Mass 9:00 am. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 5:00 pm - 5:45 pm. 5:45 pm. Benediction. All are invited please silence cell phones in the Chapel.

Ongoing in North Diocese
Christ the King Church Parish, McKinleyville: Weekdays: Monday Mass 9:00am Tuesday Communion Service 9:00am. Friday Adoration 3:00pm followed by Mass 4:00pm Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Mission, Hoopa: Sunday Mass 11:30 am. HSLU Newman Center, 700 Union St. Arcata: Sunday Mass 5:30pm followed by supper & learning about Catholicism. St. Mary’s Arcata Fr. Pacchoeo will be celebrating Latin Masses every Sunday. The first Sunday of the month will be at 6:30am, and all the following Sundays of the month will be at 1:30pm.

Prolife Rosary: Each Saturday at 7:30am at the corner of Walford Ave & Wilson St in Eureka.

To have your calendar event listed please email us! Srdiocese1@gmail.com

February 10 St. Scholastica
Catholic Schools Week 2018

Jan. 28 - Feb. 3, to Focus on “spiritual, academic and societal contributions” of Catholic Schools

January 23, 2018 WASHINGTON—National Catholic Schools Week 2018 (CSW) will be observed in dioceses around the country January 28–February 3. This year’s theme, “Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.” focuses on the important spiritual, academic and societal contributions provided by a Catholic education.

As Bishop George V. Murry, SJ, of Youngstown, Ohio, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Catholic Education said, “Catholic schools provide an invaluable service to young people, their families, and our nation by helping to form women and men with the sharp intellects, broad perspectives and big hearts who bring their best to communities near and far. Jesus Christ came to change hearts and to serve – one person at a time – and so Catholic schools invite students to encounter Christ, to be changed by Him, and to love God by serving others with all of their heart, mind, soul and strength.”

One way Catholic school students have been challenged to “learn, serve, lead and succeed” this academic year has been through the National Catholic Educational Association’s (NCEA) “Student to Student” campaign. In August, NCEA began a national campaign that invited Catholic school families to donate at least $1 toward the “Student to Student: A Catholic School Response to Hurricane Harvey” campaign to help those Catholic school communities hardest hit by the events in the United States, the Caribbean, and U.S. territories. The campaign was eventually renamed “Student to Student: A Catholic School Response to Hurricane Relief 2017” to include those that followed Harvey and the wildfires in the west. As of last month, 826 Catholic schools from across the country donated more than $600,000, to this solidarity effort. 300 students at Lumen Christi High School in the Archdiocese of Anchorage, for example, put on a taco lunch and raised more than $900. NCEA has begun the process of disbursing funds to Catholic arch/dioceses affected by recent natural disasters, beginning with the Archdiocese Galveston-Houston.

Nearly 1.9 million students are currently educated in 6,429 Catholic schools in cities, suburbs, small towns and rural communities around the country. Students receive an education that prepares them for higher education, a competitive work environment, and most importantly, living a Christian life of virtue in a challenging society. "Since their founding in our country, Catholic schools have provided a well-rounded education to disadvantaged families, new arrivals to America and to all who seek a seat in our schools. We have always sought to welcome families of all backgrounds while maintaining our principles (see Catholic Schools, page 24)

Fake News Gossip

By Stephen Morris, Youth and Young Adult Ministry Director

(This is a two-part article, the second part will be featured in the NCC March edition)

Call out fake news, gossip, and slander are sin. The 8th Commandment says we shall not bear false witness, but the catechism helps us understand expansiveness of that commandment. We often misrepresent and share information ALL THE TIME and this is a slippery slope to sin… Welcome to Lent.

Before we get personal, let’s look at our “fake news” issue. First the term is overused and lame so let’s call it “selective sharing.” According to MRC NewsBusters, ABC, CBS, and NBC coverage of the Pro-Life March on January 20th in Washington DC, totaled only 3 minutes and 46 seconds.

What’s fantastically alarming about this is that those three stations covered the Women’s March for a total of 25 minutes and 24 seconds. And the cherry on top—this was the first time a sitting President made a live address to the Pro-Life March. Why the discrepancy?

So how about us: Do we share information with 100% accuracy? Do we have to be the first to know something? Do we use the words, “so did you hear about” more than we should?

We’ll conclude with a little direction from the Catechism: #2489 Charity and respect for the truth should dictate the response to every request for information or communication. The good and safety of others, respect for privacy, and the common good are sufficient reasons for being silent about what ought not be known or for making use of a discreet language. The duty to avoid scandal often commands strict discretion. No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have the right to know it.

Stephen M. Morris is Director of the Office of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Santa Rosa. Stephen has spent a lifetime working with youth as a mentor, coach, teacher, and program director. His leadership and vision have contributed to success as an academic and executive. After his first child was born, he left the corporate world and converted his volunteering into a career serving the church, starting as a high school theology teacher. In 2014 Bishop Robert F. Vasa named Stephen as director of Youth & Young Adult Ministry office.
Pope In Peru: ‘Be The Saints Of The 21st Century’

By Elise Harris

Lima, Peru, Jan 21, 2018 / 04:15 pm (CNA/EWTN News) - On his last day in Peru, Pope Francis encouraged Catholics to imitate Jesus, who embraces the poor and suffering, and brings hope.

The Pope urged Peru’s youth to look to their grandparents and elders in order to discover “the DNA that guided their great saints,” telling them “do not lose your roots! And you, grandparents and elders, keep passing on to the new generations the traditions of your people and the wisdom that charts the path to heaven.”

“I urge all of you not to be afraid to be the saints of the 21st century,” he said, telling Peruans that there is no better way to protect their hope “than to remain united, so that these reasons for hope may grow day by day in your hearts.”

Pope Francis offered Mass at Lima’s Las Palmas Airbase on Jan. 21, his last day in Peru, bringing an end to his Jan. 15-21 tour of South America, which also included a three-day visit to Chile.

In his homily, he acknowledged the difficulties Catholics in Peru face. “Sometimes what happened to Jonah can happen to us. Our cities, with their daily situations of pain and injustice, can leave us tempted to flee, to hide, to run away,” the Pope said.

Jonah is an Old Testament prophet depicted in a scriptural book of the same name, who attempted to “flee the presence of the Lord” rather than follow a call from God.

Looking around, “Jonah, and we, have plenty of excuses to [flee],” Pope Francis said, noting that while Lima has many people who are well-off, it is also populated by the homeless: “non-citizens, the half-citizens’ or ‘urban remnants’ found on the streets, many of whom are children.

Faced with the desperation of people in extreme poverty, Francis said some Catholics can contract “Jonah syndrome” – which causes them to be indifferent, “deaf” and “cold of heart” to others.

Quoting his predecessor, Benedict XVI, Francis said “the true measure of humanity is essentially determined in relationship to suffering and to the sufferer.”

A society that is unable to accept the suffering of others and which is “incapable of helping to share their suffering and to bear it inwardly through compassion,” he said, “is a cruel and inhuman society.”

The Pope noted that in the day’s Gospel reading, Jesus did the opposite of Jonah: rather than fleeing, he entered a city. For those who were desperate and suffering, and to bring them hope.

Francis encouraged Peruvians to respond with the attitude of Jesus, who entered Galilee “to sow the seeds of a great hope.”

A seed of hope, he said, had been passed down to his Jan. 21 homily, he noted that during his visit to Peru, Francis had killed the hope of his people and to awaken a new hope, “and calls new disciples, inviting them to become part of that great whisper that wants to keep God will never tire of going out to meet his children.

The Pope said Jesus also wants to awaken in Catholics a hope which “frees us from empty associations and impersonal analyses, and encourages faith to enter “like leaven” into every aspect of our daily lives.

God will never tire of going out to meet his children, he said, asking “how will we enkindle hope if prophets are lacking? How will we face the future if unity is lacking? How will Jesus reach all those corners if daring and courageous witnesses are lacking?”

“The Lord calls each of you to walk with him in the city, in your city,” he said. “He invites you to become his missionary disciple, so that you can become part of that great whisper that wants to keep echoing in the different corners of our lives: Rejoice, the Lord is with you!”

After Mass, Pope Francis thanked all those who helped organize his visit, including Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, the country’s civil authorities and the many volunteers who dedicated their time.

Francis noted that he began his trip by speaking of Peru as a land of hope, which he said comes from the country’s rich biodiversity, its various cultures and traditions, and because of its youth, “who are not the future but the present of Peru.”

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(Afflicted spot with the Lourdes water, cont. from page 21) 

afflicted spot with the Lourdes water. When her sister Jewell developed eye problems from her diabetes she rubbed her eyelids with the Lourdes water. As far as Kay was concerned the Lourdes holy water trumped O’Keefe’s holy water.

Art never paid any attention to Kay’s ritual. Like I said—go along and get along—he just loved her and that was enough. When he got home from work every day, he and Kay would enjoy a cocktail which was enough. When he got home from work every day, he and Kay would enjoy a cocktail which was enough. When he got home from work every day, he and Kay would enjoy a cocktail which was enough.

One unfortunate day, Art slipped and sprained his ankle climbing over the printing presses. The doctor x-rayed his ankle, wrapped it, gave him a cane and told him to take a couple of days off. Arriving home early he found the house empty. Kay was out and the kids were at school. He made himself a vodka-ice water cocktail, sat down on the couch, turned on the TV and relaxed. Unknowingly he drained the Lourdes holy water bottle and left it on the kitchen countertop.

An hour or so later Kay came home with groceries. As she put her bags down, she spotted the empty Lourdes bottle next to the open vodka bottle on the counter. There was a verbal explosion as she ran into the living room. “What have you done,” she yelled at Art who, of course, didn’t have a clue what she was talking about. “My Lourdes water! I brought that back all the way from Lourdes, France…you moron! How could you!” She was in tears. Of course, Art apologized “I didn’t know. I’m sorry.” Nothing he said would assuage her. “How could you?” It went on the rest of the afternoon. He tried to her hug her but pushed him away with the well-known womanly: “Don’t touch me!”

As she cooked dinner she ranted: “It’s sacrilegious what you’ve done.” While the family ate dinner, she was still infuriated at poor Art: “I can replace it you know. I hand collected that holy water myself.” When they went to bed, she turned her back on Art, sobbing and muttering: “I collected it with my own hands, dipping the bottle into the holy water in the pond up to my wrists….How could you?”

When Art awakened the next morning he dressed and walked downstairs. Kay was cooking breakfast for the family. Cathy and Buddy were in their rooms putting on their school uniforms. Kay looked at Art fully dressed. “What are you doing? You’re supposed to take a few days off?” Art grabbed a piece of toast as he picked up the cane. “It’s a miracle,” he said. Throwing the cane on the ground, he opened the front door. “The Lourdes water,” he said. “I’m cured,” as he limped out the door.

Kay stood in shock as he left. Then she started laughing. To this day nobody knows if Art really went to work that day or the corner bar for a peaceful vodka-ice water cocktail or two.

Art passed away in 1981. By the way, Kay still enjoys her daily vodka straight over ice. 

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(Afflicted spot with the Lourdes water, cont. from page 23) 

and teaching in a spirit of charity,” Bishop Murry said.

The observance of CSW began in 1974. Schools and parishes around the country will hold activities such as Masses, open houses, and pot luck gatherings to celebrate the communities they represent. The week also highlights the educational and community successes of Catholic schools nationwide. Ninety nine percent of students graduate from high school and 86 percent of Catholic school graduates attend college. This percentage has been consistent over the past 20 years.

More information on the Committee on Catholic Education and other resources are available online: www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catholic-education/ and www.NCEA.org/csw. Catholic Schools Week can also be followed on Twitter @USCCBCatholicEd, @NCEATalk, and throughout social media via #CSW18. 

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