Cardinal William Levada, former CDF prefect, dies aged 83

Vatican City, Sep 26 (CNA) - Cardinal William Levada, the former prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, died Wednesday, Sept. 25 at the age of 83. He was the first American to lead the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), one of the most senior positions in the Curia.

Levada was appointed to the position by Pope Benedict XVI, who, as Cardinal Ratzinger, had led the congregation until his election as pope. He served in the role from May 13, 2005, until July, 2012.

As prefect of the CDF, Levada served as president of the Pontifical Biblical Commission and International Theological Commission. He was also charged with overseeing the Vatican’s handling of cases of child sexual abuse, and with implementing the 2010 legal reforms to Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela, which govern the Church’s handling of the most serious canonical offences.

Following the promulgation of Anglicanorum coetibus by Benedict XVI in 2009, under Levada’s leadership, the CDF was charged with overseeing the Vatican’s handling of cases of child sexual abuse, and with implementing the 2010 legal reforms to Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela, which govern the Church’s handling of the most serious canonical offences.

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The 2019 Diocese of Santa Rosa Religious Education Congress on September 28th entitled “Encountering Jesus in the Liturgy” brought together Religious Education leaders and teachers from around the entire Diocese. Always a big success, this year was especially a powerful time of fellowship and encouragement for the faithful teachers of the faith from our parishes as they gathered at the Cardinal Newman High School campus. Bishop Vasa Celebrated Holy Mass to begin the day, and offered words of encouragement in his homily for all the catechists gathered. “Do not be afraid, this doesn't end badly, Jesus triumphs in the end” said Bishop Vasa, as he offered words of strength to those gathered to reflect on how to reach out to our ‘disaffiliated’ fellow Catholics who have turned away from the church for various reasons. Over salvation history, the people of God have “rebelled, and returned, rebelled and returned, but God is faithful and merciful” the Bishop proclaimed.

Dr. James Pauley delivered the keynote address entitled: “Encountering God in the Sacraments: How (see Religious Education, page 4)

How Will You Celebrate Our Lady of the Rosary?

By Charles Kaupke, Mystical Humanity of Christ Publishing

For centuries, the Rosary has been one of the most popular devotions in the Catholic faith. Even prior to the Rosary itself, there was in the Church a history of using beads and cords to count one's prayers. In the earliest centuries of the Church, some zealous men would retreat to the desert to devote themselves to a life of prayer, writing, and sacrifice for their own salvation and the salvation of the world. These early men, known as the “Desert Fathers”, used to pray all one hundred and fifty Psalms every single day. For those of the monks who were illiterate and could not read the Psalms, it was altered so that they would pray one hundred and fifty Our Fathers or Hail Marys. Some would use a cord with knots, or would gather a pile of rocks to use to keep track of these prayers as they prayed them. This may be a historical precursor to our modern Rosary, a string with beads on it.
Knowing and Understanding the Faith

One of the activities or programs which the Diocese sponsors each fall revolves around Catechesis. Our young people have a great need to know and properly understand their faith. In fact, our old people too, have a need to know and properly understand their faith. A deepening of Catechetical knowledge, while intended for those who teach CCD at the parish or who teach in our Catholic Schools, is essential for anyone who hopes to continue to abide in faith in the midst of our present culture.

In the coming months the North Coast Catholic, the Official Newspaper of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, will undergo another transformation. Both its form and its content will change. The goal is to help assure that every Catholic in the Diocese has ready access to informational and instructional material to help achieve a deeper understanding of and commitment to our faith. There is a tremendous volume of educational and formational material available, especially through very well established websites, but the challenge rests in finding a way to access this vast abundance of material in a systematic and useful way. It is my hope, and the hope of the Diocesan Communications and Evangelization Committee, to provide a more thorough presentation of our faith through our monthly Diocesan Publication. Saint Pope John Paul II called for a New Evangelization and for the past twenty-five years the Church has continuously called for just such a renewal of Evangelization. When I first came to the Diocese I called attention to this primary and essential mission of the Church. I continue to believe that this is a path which we must more eagerly and ardently pursue if the Church in the modern world is to fulfill its true mission.

One of the most significant changes to the policy regarding the North Coast Catholic is that it will be mailed to every registered family in the Diocese. At the present time, this publication is sent to approximately 5,000 households with multiple copies sent to the parish for general distribution. The Committee recognizes that people may be a little inclined to pick up a copy of the North Coast Catholic in the back of Church. Perhaps someone picks up a copy, reads one headline and then returns it to the pile. When the publication comes to a home there is an increased possibility that over the course of several days some portion of it might come to the attention of someone in the family. It is our hope to have sections for families and for children, as well as sections related to scripture, liturgy, doctrine, apologetics, spirituality and so forth. The possibilities are limitless. The goal is evangelization.

While the Diocese is not extraordinarily large it does cover six Counties which are very diverse. Since only a small number of the total families in the Diocese receive the North Coast Catholic, a vast majority of the Catholics who are a part of the Diocese have no regular connection with the Diocese. The distance is a challenge but this disconnectedness is an even greater challenge. The direct contact, by way of the North Coast Catholic, between the Diocese and every registered family in our diverse Counties is one way to try to make a connection. We are well aware of email and websites but these all require the person at home to access those sites. Perhaps the existence of the North Coast Catholic can stimulate the fruitful use of these other means of communication. The Diocese has had a website, as do most parishes, for years and yet there seems to be little knowledge of the existence of such sites, much less regular use of them. I have no illusions about the amount of additional work this new format will require. I have every hope that the effort will be fruitful for the Diocese. I believe that, as this publication reaches an expanded audience with its new format, many will be very pleasantly surprised to find that there is a much greater abundance of spiritual programs and faith enriching opportunities in the parish and in the Diocese than they had previously realized. Pray for the success of the Committee’s work!
At US-Mexico Border, Bishops Emphasize Bonds of Faith and Family

By Jonah McKeown

El Paso, Texas, Sep 26 (CNA) - At a Mass and press conference held at the US-Mexico border in El Paso, Texas on Wednesday, bishops from the border region emphasized the importance of providing care for migrant families, especially those who share a common faith and baptism with American Catholics.

“These are baptized Christians. From the faith perspective, that’s what we forget sometimes because we’re so focused on the charity part of it,” Bishop Brendan Cahill of the Diocese of Victoria, Texas told CNA Sept. 25.

“But these are baptized Catholics, so these are our brothers and sisters. So respecting national borders, respecting everything else, there’s still a bond there through sacramentality.”

“We know that they’re coming not to take advantage of this wonderful, generous country, but rather to have an opportunity to work and to raise their families in safety and dignity,” Bishop Oscar Cantu said Sept. 25 as bishops prayed at the US border.

The delegation of bishops, led by Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, is visiting the border this week to meet migrants at aid centers and in the fields where many of them work. The visit was designed as a pastoral encounter with migrants and Catholic leaders of the Dioceses of Las Cruces, New Mexico, El Paso, Texas, and Juarez, Mexico. Five bishops were present at the Mass and press conference.

Fr. Robert Stark, Regional Coordinator of the Vatican’s Section on Migrant and Refugees, was also in attendance. Pope Francis has declared Sunday, Sept. 29 as World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

Cahill celebrated the Mass in Spanish on Wednesday evening at the Centro de los Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizos, located in South El Paso just a stone’s throw from the border fence. The 8,000 square foot adobe-bronze facility has for over 25 years provided aid for the thousands of migrant farmers who cross from Mexico to work in the United States every day.

The bishop related the story of a family he knows: A husband and father drives each day from Mexico across the border to New Mexico to farm, leaving at 3 am and arriving back home around 7 pm. He sleeps, and then does it again the next day.

Most chili farm workers are paid around 79 cents per large bucket of chilis or onions picked.

“Over these past few days we’ve heard dozens of stories, but to me there’s a similar theme to all of them...it’s really all about family. It’s about parents caring for their children, and I think for any of us that’s our number one concern.”

In Ciudad Juarez, Central American migrants are being treated “very well,” Cahill said, but the threat to the families, and particularly mothers, still has impacted him.

“As I listen to the migrant farm workers’ stories, I hear challenges to keep the family together, opportunities for families because it is work and provides, so I think that has to be admitted that’s a good, but then to see what we can do even better.”

Though the situation on both sides of the border is “overwhelming,” Cahill emphasized Pope St. John Paul II’s exhortation to pray for the family—not just one’s own family, but for the holiness and wellbeing of all families.

“The experience of being on the border and listening to people’s stories—and these are regular people—is that the family is always the forefront,” he said.

“I want to pray for the family unit, that we protect mothers and fathers and children, and that they can be together. And that’s what I noticed here on the border, a lot of economic forces, a lot of things challenging keeping the family together.”

Seitz said at the press conference that it is unusual to have so many bishops gathered together around one particular theme outside of the regular bishops’ meeting. The special focus of the visit, he said, is on farm workers.

“They’re a quiet reality that have been passing through El Paso, staying in El Paso, moving out from El Paso for many decades here,” Seitz said.

Seitz said the visit was designed to allow those who had not visited the border area before a chance to get a feel for the area, and a border situation that is “changing every day.”

The Mass coincided with a vote taken in Congress Wednesday to block President Donald Trump’s emergency declaration at the southern border, which is designed to divert funds from other projects to build a wall on the border with Mexico. The president is expected to veto Congress’ action.

On Tuesday the bishops visited Ciudad Juarez to visit a large aid facility, as well as a visit to Corpus Christi parish, which is largely serving farm workers and their families. On Thursday, the bishops plan to take a visit to Hatch, New Mexico to meet farmers there who grow and pick the valley’s world famous chilis.

The bishops also met with groups of Central American migrants in Ciudad Juarez who had been waiting in Mexico for a chance to cross the border.

“It’s devastating to see that these dreams that they have, dreams that my own parents had as immigrants to the United States from Mexico some 60 years ago, and people continue with those dreams,” said Bishop Oscar Cantu of San Jose, formerly bishop of Las Cruces.

“We know that they’re coming not to take advantage of this wonderful, generous country, but rather to have an opportunity to work and to raise their families in safety and dignity.”

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, apprehensions of “unaccompanied alien children” has risen by nearly 75% from May 2018 to May 2019. The rise in apprehensions is led by El Paso, which has seen a 323% rise in that period.

The rise in apprehensions of families is higher—463% across the board. El Paso’s rate of apprehension of families rose 2,100%.

Bishop John Stowe of the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky, formerly a priest of the diocese of El Paso, praised the work of Catholics in the diocese working to welcome migrants.

“The Diocese of El Paso has given an example for the whole country of how to welcome immigrants, how to love immigrants, how to clothe immigrants, how to provide shelter to immigrants, how to treat them as brothers and sisters and receive them here.”

The Department of Homeland Security announced new Migrant Protection Protocols in January, providing that migrants arriving illegally or without proper documentation “may be returned to Mexico and wait outside of the U.S. for the duration of their immigration proceedings, where Mexico will provide them with all appropriate humanitarian protections for the..."
do we help others’, and throughout the day 16 break-
out sessions were given to unpack the theme of the
day. The workshops were led by Rev. John Boetcher,
Mother Terese Christie MSSR, Rev. David Jenuwine,
Rev. Jeffrey Keys, Rev. Mr. John Plass, Rev. Gary
Sumpter, Michael O’Hara, Rev. Robert Torsczenzy,
and Dominic Figueroa.

There was a very highly attended offering of
breakout sessions in Spanish by presenters: Osval-
do Guzman, Dominic Figueroa, Alfredo Melgoza,
Rafael Mendoza-Chavez, and Ramon and Esther
Padilla.

The afternoon Plenary Session featured an excellent
talk by Mr. Mark Brumley on “Living a Liturgical Life
of Worship, Witness, and Communion” detailing
practical ways we can foster worship, witness, and
community both in the Church, and in the World.
The day was organized and facilitated by Deacon
Denis Purificacion, Director of Religious Educa-
tion for the Diocese of Santa Rosa, and the steering
committee; Carmen Aanenson, and Stella Agudelo.
The St. Rose YLI #132, led by Elizabeth Black pro-
vided wonderful hospitality, and the beautiful Music
Ministry at the Mass was led by Pam Ziemsinski and
Choir.

The Devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary

The apparition of Mary that was granted to Saint
Dominic became known as Our Lady of the Rosary,
or Our Lady of Victory. Devotion to the Rosary
increased tremendously in the 1500s after the Battle
of Lepanto. On October 7, 1571, the naval fleet of
the Holy League, led principally by the empires
of Venice and Spain, confronted the fleet of the Otto-
man Empire at the Gulf of Patras in the Ionian Sea.
Although outnumbered, the soldiers of the Holy
League prayed the Rosary earnestly, at the request
of Pope Pius V. The Christian Holy League won a
surprising, even miraculous victory at Lepanto, which
the Holy Father attributed to the intercession of the
Blessed Virgin Mary, whom he titled “Our Lady of
Victory.” Pope Pius then instituted a feast of Our
Lady of Victory on October 7, to thank the Virgin for
her intercession in the battle. As a result of the Holy
League’s winning the Battle of Lepanto, Christianity
was saved in the west, and would continue to thrive.
After this miraculous event, devotion to the Rosary
increased, and began to take greater pride of place
among the Church’s devotions.

While initially referred to as “Our Lady of Vic-
tory,” the feast that occurs in the Church’s calendar
on October 7 had its name changed to “Feast of the
Holy Rosary” just two years later (in 1573) by
Pope Gregory XIII. After the Holy Roman Empire
defeated the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Petro-
varadin in August 1716, Pope Clement XI extended
the feast to the entire Catholic Church, and placed
it on the first Sunday in October. In 1913 Pope Pius
X fixed it at October 7, and in 1960 Pope John XXIII
changed the name of the feast to “Feast of Our Lady
of the Rosary.”

Spiritual Benefits of Praying the Rosary

Why should we pray the Rosary? The Rosary unites
our hearts to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who is,
aside from Jesus Himself, God’s greatest gift to
the human race. In Mary, we have the most perfect

(Lady of the Rosary, cont. from page 1)

Origins of the Rosary

Although there is not complete consensus as to the
historical origins of the Rosary as we know it today,
a very commonly accepted account is that the Rosary
was given by the Blessed Virgin Mary herself to Saint
Dominic around the year 1214. Dominic was in the
Monastery of Notre-Dame-de-Prouille in Langued-
oc, France, when the Virgin Mary appeared to him
and gave him the Rosary. Dominic was assiduous in
spreading devotion to the Rosary, and its adherents
continued throughout the centuries.

How to Pray the Rosary

Praying the Rosary consists of five decades, known
as mysteries, each of which focuses on one event in
the life of Jesus. The Rosary begins with the Creed,
followed by an Our Father, three Hail Marys and
one Glory Be. Each individual mystery begins with
an Our Father, followed by ten Hail Marys, and a
Glory Be. At the end of each decade, we say the
Fatima Prayer (“O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save
us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to Heaven,
especially those most in need of Thy mercy”). After
the five decades are finished, we end with “Hail Holy
Queen.” Other prayers may be included at the end
of the Rosary as a means that we too can use in order to draw
closer to Jesus and Mary by meditating on the great mysteries
of the Rosary as a means that we too can use in order to draw
closer to Jesus and Mary by meditating on the great mysteries
of our salvation.

the seven sorrows of Mary listed below.

The Seven Sorrows of Mary

The Prophecy of Simeon (Luke 2:34–35)
The Flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13)
The Loss of the Child Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem
(Luke 2:43–45)
The Meeting of Jesus and Mary on the Way of the Cross
The Crucifixion of Jesus (John 19:25)
The Piercing of the Side of Jesus, and His Descent from the Cross (Matthew 27:57–59)
The Burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea
(John 19:40–42)

In this month of October, let us consider this beautiful prayer of the Rosary as a means that we too can use in order to draw
closer to Jesus and Mary by meditating on the great mysteries of our salvation.

(Lord of the Rosary, cont. from page 1)

Before his appointment to Rome, Levada served
as Archbishop of San Francisco for 10 years, from
1995. While in that archdiocese, Levada was known
as a vocal defender of the Church’s teaching on mar-
rriage as the city of San Francisco expanded domes-
tic partnership benefits to same-sex and unmarried
cohabitating couples.

In order to avoid the archdiocese being forced to
recognize illicit relationships, Levada instituted a
policy that allowed any unmarried employee in the
archdiocese to select any person they lived with as
their “domestic partner,” regardless of the nature of
their relationship.

In April 2005, Levada led a march of about 1,000
people to protest same-sex marriage, which he said
“represents a misguided understanding of marriage.”
In 2006, the by then prefect of the CDF was
denounced by the city’s Board of Supervisors for
insisting that Catholic adoption agencies not place
children with same-sex couples.

Ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese of Los
Angeles in 1961, Levada studied at the North Ameri-
can College in Rome from the mid-60s until 1971,
receiving a doctorate in sacred theology.

From 1976 until 1982, Fr. Levada returned to Rome
and served as an official of the congregation which he
would one day lead. In 1982, he was called back to the
United States by Cardinal Timothy Manning of Los
Angeles, and was named as the executive director for
the California Conference of Bishops.

In 1983, Levada was consecrated as an auxiliary
bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He became
the Archbishop of Portland (Oregon) three years later,
in 1986. The then-Cardinal Ratzinger appointed him
as one of six bishops to an editorial board tasked with
editing an updated edition of the Catechism of the
Catholic Church. In 1993, when the catechism was
published, Levada argued that the language was too
“gender inclusive” and requested that the English
translation be updated. This revised translation was

In the wake of the sexual abuse crisis of the mid-
2000s, Levada faced criticism in the United States over
his handling of allegations of sexual abuse during his
time in Portland. In 2004, Portland became the first
archdiocese in the United States to declare bank-
ruptcy in order to compensate victims of sexual abuse
by members of the clergy.

Following his appointment as prefect of the CDF,
Levada was created a cardinal by Pope Benedict in
2006.
Bishops in US Make The Real Presence a Focus of Their Catechesis

Washington D.C., Sep 18 (CNA) - Six weeks after a Pew Research study found that only one-third of Catholics in the US believe that the bread and wine become at Mass the body and blood of Christ, bishops across the country are writing to the faithful in the hopes of educating them about this central tenet of the Catholic faith.

The study, released in early August, found that 31% of U.S. Catholics they surveyed believe that the bread and wine used in the Eucharist, through a process called transubstantiation, become the body and blood of Christ—a fundamental teaching of the Catholic faith, known as the Real Presence.

Bishop Daniel Jenky of Peoria has released his 2020 annual teaching document, “The Real Presence,” a year early in the hopes of a renewed witness to the Real Presence.

“I...ask that this year and in coming years, at parish councils, religious houses, faculty meetings, chaplain meetings, RCIA and catechetical meetings, that our entire Local Church look for ways to reinforce our teaching and witness regarding the Blessed Sacrament,” Jenky wrote Sept. 16.

“...It is a defined dogma of the Catholic Church, revealed by the Holy Spirit and preserved from any possibility of error, that the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ are truly and substantially present in the Most Holy Eucharist. This is not an opinion to be measured against any opinion poll but rather Divine Revelation as expressed by the absolute authority of Scripture and Tradition.”

In his letter, Jenky encouraged Eucharistic devotions such as Benediction, processions, visits, holy hours, and quiet times of personal prayer before the tabernacle.

“These Eucharistic devotions are obviously also intended to deepen our conscious recognition of the centrality of the Real Presence of Jesus within the liturgy of the Mass,” he wrote.

“Quiet Masses, sung Masses, solemn Masses, and especially the ordinary ritual Masses for weddings and funerals are certainly great opportunities to witness to our faith in the Eucharist as a pastoral gift to those who may have been poorly catechized or even have fallen away.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church in paragraph 1374 states: “In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist ‘the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained...it is a substantial presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present.”

In the Pew Research study, 69 percent of Catholics surveyed reported their belief that the bread and wine used during the Eucharist “are symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.” This mindset made up a majority in every age group surveyed.

“Most Catholics who believe that the bread and wine are symbolic do not know that the church holds that transubstantiation occurs,” Pew reported.

“Overall, 43% of Catholics believe that the bread and wine are symbolic and also that this reflects the position of the church. Still, one-in-five Catholics (22%) reject the idea of transubstantiation, even though they know about the church’s teaching.”

Interestingly, a small percentage of those surveyed—3%—claimed to believe in the Real Presence despite not knowing that this is what the Church teaches.

Bishop Jenky pointed to what he sees as a “noticeable decline in our ritual reverence and recognition” in recent decades.

“Sometimes our churches may seem more like hotel lobbies than an awesome House of God,” Jenky said.

Archbishop Alexander Sample of Portland in Oregon addressed his flock in August regarding the results of the survey.

“These results have to be a real wake up call for all of us,” he wrote Aug. 30.

“To simply shrug our shoulders at such disturbing news and move on with business as usual is simply not an option. We must do everything in our power to reverse this trend. People will more easily grow lax in the practice of their faith, or drop out altogether, if they don’t understand and believe the mystery we celebrate in the Holy Eucharist and how that drives everything else we do in the ministry of the Church.”

Sample challenged those in the archdiocese’ Catholic schools, parish religious education programs, and adult faith formation programs to put a greater emphasis on the Church’s teaching about the Eucharist.

He also paralleled Jenky’s assessment of an overall decline in reverence for the Eucharist over the years.

“...To put it bluntly, we have lost much of the reverence, awe and respect for the Holy Eucharist that we once had in the Church. How we celebrate the Holy Mass and treat the Blessed Sacrament are at the heart of this.”

For more information about the author, and Mystical Humanity of Christ Publishing go to: www.coraevans.com †
Prayer is a meeting with our Lord. If you want to meet with someone, you have to take time for them. You have to sit down, have a cup of coffee or lunch together and talk. The important thing is, you have to take time! Our big sin today is that we have no time for God. The sin of the world consists in the fact that people are not interested in God.

We have time for everything else: but when you say you have no time for prayer, you are really saying, I have no time for God.

Our Lady begs us to take time for prayer. She would say: “Pray when you can. Pray how you can, but always pray more and more.” Each of us could pray even for three hours a day. But I know many people don’t understand this, because they think they can live by their works alone.

We think what counts most in life is our own efforts, our own endeavors, our works. Man does not live by work alone but also by prayer.

Your work will not go well without prayer. You can work continuously and come up with nothing. Or you can pray as you should and come up with everything.

The prophet Haggai spoke about his. When Israel neglected God, their works were in vain - “He who earned wages earned them for a bag with holes in it” (Hg. 1:6).

Always start your work with prayer and end your work with prayer. On the days you have been praying too little and working too much, pray, and then you will find rest.

When two people are in love, time stands still for them. They love to spend time with the beloved. When we do not want to spend time in prayer, what is that saying? It’s saying, “We really do not love God.” It’s saying, “We are sick spiritually.”

If you don’t want to eat, you are physically sick. If you don’t want to pray you are spiritually sick. If you have to be forced to pray you are sick; you’ve lost your appetite for food. If you have to be forced to pray you are sick; you’ve lost your appetite for God.

We try to gloss over this atheism by pleading we are too busy. Yet we have time to eat, time to sleep, time to work, time for television (sometimes three or four hours a day). But no time for God? That means we are in reality, atheists.

Of the ten commandments, the top three focus on our relationship with God. The third asks us to “Honor the Sabbath.” Take one day out of seven, and spend the whole day thinking about the important things in life; take a good look at God, a good look at yourself, and a good look at the difference. Since God is Mercy personified. He is willing to meet you on your Sabbath journey with love and tenderness. He desires to dwell with us, but it’s up to us to invite Him in. In modern parlance, the phrase “do you want to hang out?” means that someone is thinking with positive regard about someone else and would like to spend an open-ended amount of time with the other.

The paradox is, if we give time to God, then God will give us all the time we need for everything else. If we have no time for God, we shall soon discover that we shall be pressed for time to do even the things we must do.

This October 13th it will be 101 years that Our Lady is telling us that what is needed is more than quick, off-the-cuff prayers; more than conscience-easing prayers at the beginning and the end of the day. She wants us to become prayerful persons, persons committed to prayer, persons who are dissatisfied with the meager crumbs of prayer that so often are thrown to God. Our Lady is asking us for a major, not a minor, commitment to prayer. In this October month of the Holy Rosary, let’s commit to praying at least one rosary a day. Ask our lady to pray with you for one very significant intention. Better yet, consecrate your whole life to her (or re-consecrate it) so that your intentions become hers, and her intentions become yours. Let us all then pray for each other and watch as something beautiful happens!  

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

How much time do you spend in prayer?

By Chris Lyford

Amazon Synod Slated to Discuss a Multitude of Issues

Vatican City, Sep 21 (CNA) - Andrea Tornielli, editorial director of the Dicastery for Communications in the Vatican, said that married priests will be a subject of discussion during the upcoming synod of bishops on the Amazon, which will take place October 6-27 in Rome, but noted that the synod does not have the power to make decisions on the matter.

“The synod will discuss the possibility, for territories like the Amazon, to propose the ordination of married men. That is, the ordination of catechists, older persons who already have a role of responsibility in several communities. But it’s not a decision already made, nor is it certain that they synod will arrive at that decision.” Tornielli said in an interview Sept. 19.

“In any case it would not be a decision of the synod but it would be a decision of the pope,” Tornielli said in the interview, which was published on the Facebook page of the Brazilian bishops’ conference.

Tornielli referred to the working document of the synod: “Affirming that celibacy is a gift for the Church, it is asked, that for the most remote areas of the region, the possibility be studied of priestly ordination for older people, preferably indigenous, respected, and accepted by their community even though they still have a constituted and stable family, for the purpose of ensuring the sacraments that accompany and sustain the Christian life,” the working document says.

In the interview, Tornielli explained that “the synod does not approve anything because it is a consultative body, the one who decides is the pope. We know, because we have read it, the synod’s Instrumentum laboris mentions the difficulties that communities in remote areas face in receiving the sacraments, and of having priests who can celebrate Mass.”

He also noted that “for many centuries in the Catholic Church there have been married priests. They are the priests of the Eastern Catholic Churches who have returned to full communion with Rome. But note, it’s not that priests can marry but that persons already married are ordained, this is for the Easterners.”

“The same thing exists, and perhaps this will be a surprise for our listeners, in the Latin Rite Church, as an exception, from the time of Pius XII. Pope Pacelli received former Anglican priests who wanted to enter into communion with Rome and as they were married they were ordained priests and they support their families,” he continued.

Moreover, Tornielli then said, “Pope Benedict himself with the constitution Anglicanorum coetibus has established that this exception can continue in the case of the Anglicans. So there already are exceptions.”

In effect, in 2009 Pope Benedict XVI approved the creation of personal ordinariates, jurisdictions created to receive the Anglicans who request by the thousands to return to full communion with the Catholic Church. In that framework, married Anglican priests can be ordained as Catholic priests.

A version of this story was originally published by ACI Prensa, CNS’s Spanish-language partner. It has been translated and adapted by CNA.  
Is Your Child Protected From What’s on the Internet?

By Julie Sparacio

I listened to a webinar today called Protecting Our Children. It was sponsored by a company called Covenant Eyes and featured Pastor Jay Dennis who is on the board for the National Center on Sexual Exploitation. Pastor Dennis travels the United States and speaks on the dangers of pornography addiction and works with men and women to break that cycle of addiction.

This particular presentation spoke about parenting our children through this internet age. He had a lot of terrific tips that parents can use to protect their children from the garbage that they may be exposed to when they are online. His acronym—PROTECT—refers to the following:

P - Pray for your children—every day.

R - Rules - establish rules about internet usage and enforce them.

O - Overview - know what God expects and has called each of us to. He quoted 1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality. He references 7 traps that range from pornography, sexual activity outside of marriage, sexual predators and even the media.

T - Teach your children to stay out of chat rooms, to never give out personal information.

E - Educate - educate yourself. Know what is out there! A couple of websites to check out - www.endsexualexploitation.org - lots of links to research/facts, and www.commonsensemedia.org - reviews for parents to help make smart media choices.

C - Contract - write a contract with your child, with the dos and don'ts on using digital devices clearly listed, as well as consequences for breaking the contract. This should be signed by both the parent and the child.

T - Teach your child a biblical worldview vs. a secular one. They will get the secular view at school, in the media, from their friends. Teach them what God expects of each of us.

That was some of the highlights. He also talked about Apple products—the Ipad, the Iphone, etc. He said as parents we also need to be the I—Intentional. We must be deliberate and intentional about what we teach our children when it comes to their safety. We can't be blind to the very real dangers that exist and at the same time, we can't be paranoid. We must prepare our children, while we do what we can to guard their hearts and minds.

He also listed the dangers with some of the most popular apps with children and teens. Here is a list of the apps and the dangers:

- Ask.com - anonymity, vulgarity, bullying
- Whisper - tracks your child's location
- Kik Messenger - cyber stalkers and pedophiles
- Tinder - tracks your child's location, people can create fake profiles to lure children into a conversation
- Instagram - target for hackers
- Omegle - sexual predators
- Blendr - tracks your child's location and gains access to personal information
- Houseparty - video chatting, no screening tools in place, exposure to inappropriate content
- Voxer - video chatting with multiple people, cyber-bullying and obscene messages
- Tumblr - violence and pornographic content are easily accessible and content is public
- Bigo Live - nudity, foul language and violence
- WhatsApp - live location sharing
- Tik Tok - easy to access porn through the hashtag,

foul language and strangers can make connections with your child
- Roblox - sexual propositions, graphic violence, chat features, gateway to porn
- Facebook - unfiltered internet access, inappropriate photos and videos
- YouTube - inappropriate videos, porn, nudity, language, violence. In February 2019, it was reported that a mom was watching YouTube Kids with her child and found a man telling children how to slit their wrists embedded into the middle of a cartoon!

This statistic that was quoted was staggering: the average age of a child's first exposure to pornography is age 9! The most common place for that first exposure is the school bus. A child will access something and then share it with all the other kids on the bus. The second most common place is Grandparents house! As a new Grandma, that statistic was disturbing until it was explained that most grandparents don't have any controls on their internet usage. That makes sense. But does that mean that most parents have controls on their internet? Do you? If you don't —maybe you should look into that! One company—Covenant Eyes has an excellent reputation in helping Christian parents protect their children. I am not promoting them, but want to encourage you to find some way to put controls on your child's internet usage. It's not enough to say you trust your child. They aren't the ones that can't be trusted. Predators are compulsive in their need and search for vulnerable children. They don't stop and only get increasingly more clever in their ability to circumvent the guards parents have put in place. Please educate yourself and find the best possible ways to protect your child.

Free Dental Clinic In Maryland Brings Care To Over 1,000 Patients

By Michelle La Rosa

College Park, Maryland, Sep 24 (CNA) - A free dental clinic hosted recently by Catholic Charities of Washington, D.C., offered preventive and emergency dental care to more than 1,000 patients in need.

"The majority were uninsured, and probably had not seen a dentist in years," said Deacon Jim Nalls, director of Family, Parish and Community Outreach for Catholic Charities, the University of Maryland's Xfinity Center in College Park.

One woman, 69-year-old Linda Frazier, stood in line for the clinic beginning at 6:40 p.m. the night before.

Frazier told the Catholic Standard that she was suffering from a painful tooth and had not received dental care in two years, since the last Mission of Mercy in Mid-Maryland. She said she cannot afford to get help. "Today, he said, 42 other states have adopted the Mission of Mercy model, creating free dental clinics with volunteer dentists and support personnel to provide services. Catholic Charities of Washington, D.C., heard about the clinics and wanted to start one of their own. They began in 2013.

This year, the clinic treated 1089 people, an increase of about 20% from the last time the event was held. (see Dental Clinic, page 8)
Pope Francis: You Cannot Over-Invest in Spreading God’s Word Through Media

By Hannah Brockhaus

Vatican City, Sep 23 (CNA) - When it comes to spreading the Word of God through media, no investment is too big, Pope Francis told officials and consultants of the Dicastery for Communication Monday.

In a prepared text given to participants in the Vatican’s Sala Regia Sept. 23, the pope spoke about communication as a mission of the Church, “No investment is too high for the diffusion of the Word of God,” he said. “At the same time, every ‘talent’ should be well spent, taken advantage of.”

Pope Francis went on to say that “in reality, our strength alone is not enough,” and referenced an address of St. Paul VI in 1964, in which he told the Vatican’s then-social communications department that “a thought of faith must therefore support the smallness of our humble efforts.”

“The more we make ourselves instruments in the hands of God, that is, small and generous, and the more the probability of our efficiency will grow,” Paul VI said.

“We know,” Pope Francis said, “that since then [1964] the challenges in this area have grown exponentially and our forces are never enough. The challenge to which you are called, as Christians and communicators, is really high. And that is why it is beautiful.”

The pope addressed the group of bishops and media professionals at the start of the plenary assembly of the Dicastery for Communications, being held at the Vatican Sept. 23-25.

This is the first plenary assembly of the dicastery since its institution in 2015. In attendance are the bishops, as well as the consultant’s team from the international media realm, among whom is EWTN Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Michael P. Warsaw. Catholic News Agency is a service of EWTN.

The pope commented, “I therefore rejoice that the theme chosen for this Assembly is ‘We are members of one another’. Your, our strength lies in unity, in being members of one another. Only so we can better respond to the needs of the Church’s mission.”

In addition to his prepared speech, which was dispersed in written form, Pope Francis gave lengthy impromptu remarks to the assembly, counseling them to have the “signature of testimony” in everything they do.

“If you want to communicate only the truth without goodness and beauty, stop yourselves, do not do it. If you want to communicate a kind of truth, but without involving yourselves, without giving witness to that truth with your very lives, with your very flesh, stop yourselves, do not do it,” the pope said.

He also warned them against falling into an attitude of resignation when confronted by the worldliness of society.

“Worldliness is not new to this century, he said, “it was always a danger, it was always a temptation, it was always the enemy.”

In this vein, the pope said he has heard people think the Church should close itself off a little, “be a tiny, but authentic Church.”

“That word that gives me an allergy,” he stated. “If something is, it is not necessary to say ‘authentic’. The Church should be small ‘like a bean, small like salt,'” he urged. “This is the Christian vocation!”

To think the Church of the future will be a “Church of the elect” is to risk falling into “the heresy of the Essenes,” he said, which is how “Christian authenticity is lost.”

Francis added that “the resignation to cultural defeat... comes from the bad spirit, it does not come from God.”

“Do not be afraid,” he encouraged. “We are few. Yes, but with the desire to ‘missionize,’ to show others who we are. With witness.”

He said he also is a “little allergic” to when people say something is “truly Christian.” “We have fallen into the culture of adjectives and adverbs, and we have forgotten the strength of nouns,” he argued.

“This is the mission of communication: to communicate the reality, without sweetening it with adjectives or adverbs.”

Just say something is “a Christian thing,” he said. It is unnecessary to say something is “authentically Christian.”

The communicator must show the “true, the right, the good, and the beautiful,” he said, and he does this with “the soul and with the body; he communicates with the mind, with the heart, with the hands; you communicate with everything.”

“And it is true that the greatest communication is love: in love there is the fullness of communication: love for God and among us.”

Something those working in Catholic communications should not do is proselytism, the pope said, adding that as “Benedict XVI said with great clarity: ‘The Church does not grow because of proselytism, but because of attraction,’ that is, testimony.”

“And our communication should be testimony.”

Pope Francis concluded by thanking the members of the dicastery for their work, telling them “to communicate the joy of the Gospel: This is what the Lord asks of you today.”

(Dental Clinic, cont. from page 8)

The Mission of Mercy event required hundreds of volunteers to run, including professional volunteers - dentists, hygienists, dental assistants, and x-ray technicians - as well as general volunteers, who greeted patients, registered them, and directed them to the correct location.

Patients received both medical and dental screenings, as well as panoramic dental x-rays, Nalls said. Volunteer dentists offered fillings, tooth extractions, cleanings, partial dentures, and crowns, among other services.

Dr. Mel Weissburg, who volunteered to do endodontic and root canal work, said the clinic's dental care can change the lives of the patients being served.

“They are embarrassed because they have missing or cavities in their front teeth,” Weissburg told the Catholic Standard. “They get cleaned up, they get filled, and now they can smile. They can smile when they’re working, they can get a job. The socioeconomic impact on that patient and their family, and their children and our society...goes a long way.”

Nalls said patients are extremely appreciative to be receiving care they otherwise could not afford.

“With tears in their eyes, they were grateful,” he said. “It’s a wonderful event. That’s why the volunteers keep coming back, it’s so rewarding to see the immediate response of the people that you’re taking care of, and that the need is so great...Why else would you sleep on a sidewalk overnight?”

One volunteer, Teresa Villanueva, said this is her third time volunteering at the event. She told the Catholic Standard that she is touched to see the suffering of those who do not have insurance.

“Every time they do these events, my heart is joyful,” she said.

Nalls said dental care is sometimes undervalued, both by individuals and the health care system in general.

“There’s no money in the Affordable Care Act for dental services,” he noted. “Dentistry is the red-headed stepchild of the health care industry. It’s treated as if it’s optional or something.”

In reality, he said, dental care is a “very important part of our holistic health” and can cause severe pain and difficulty functioning if problems are left untreated.

With the high turnout showing a continuing need for affordable dental care, Nalls said Catholic Charities will continue to hold Mission of Mercy events in the future.

“Hopefully, we won’t have to sometime soon - if the support system changes and Medicaid covers adult dental, we won’t need to do these,” he said. “But until they do, there’ll be a huge need, and we’ll continue to try to address it as best we can.”

❖

October 1: St. Theresa of the Child Jesus
Family Life Office:
Doing nothing is good!

Greetings Diocese of Santa Rosa Family;

In living a rural life, especially from a farming point of view, October is the month where the last of the harvest is picked and things are readied for the oncoming winter season. Much of the hard work of the summer season has been accomplished and so hopefully by month’s end the pace has slowed down a bit and you get to have some time to relax.

But most of us aren’t farmers and don’t live in a rural area! We have our work and school schedules and everything in this fast-paced culture do we do that? It seems like the only thing in the universe, He rested on the 7th day. How in this fast-paced culture do we do that? It seems that we all have a full plate of work, school, activities, family life, caring for a spouse or family member, and on-and-on. It seems that many people you talk with have a calendar full of daily life activities.

For us, being involved in the Church keeps us busy as deacon and deacon-wives, volunteers for various apostolates within our parish, and of course, a member of the Chancery staff. Add on our occasional community service work as volunteers for various groups and pretty soon 24-hours are not enough in a day to get everything done.

One strategy we have devised is to find one day in our schedule to have a “day off”. For us, that turns out to be Thursday. We hold that day as “sacred” to us. We try hard to not schedule any meetings or appointments. We don’t set the alarm. We try to treat the day as ours to do with what we wish. What we wish most of the time is to get some home projects done. In our reality we find that it is a good day to clean the house and get the wash done, but it is a relaxing day as it is on our own time. We have time to share a relaxing lunch and then make a nice dinner that we can dally over and have a conversation without one of us rushing off to one thing or another.

For those of you that have a family with children it is vitally important that as a family you find time to do “nothing” together. You may even need to schedule time to do nothing! You read that right, schedule time on your calendars to do nothing! Well, nothing in the sense of letting the time be free-flowing. Parents need some down time and children need to unplug and use their imaginations.

Fall is a wonderful time to be outside: you can feel the changes in the weather, the air is crisp, and the sun still warm. We are all so blessed to live on the north coast where it seems that we can explore in any direction and bask in the glory of God’s creation: redwood forests, scenic coastlines, rivers, reservoirs, and lakes, oak woodlands, mountain-top views. We all can use some time to be alone with our thoughts, to sit still and go for a walk, to regroup and regenerate. The very root of the word “recreation” means to create again, to renew. So find some time to “recreate” yourself this fall by getting outdoors.

But perhaps your “do nothing day” lends itself to spending the day at home. What would you like to do, as a family in your own home, that would give you some quality “nothing” time? Perhaps pull out some board games or play cards, bake cookies (Deacon Dave is always up for that!), read a chapter book out loud to your children, sing songs, make up a musical band with creative instruments. And above all, unplug and do your activities without batteries or electricity! It is really important for all of us, young and old alike, to find down-time to just relax, do nothing together, or as we like to do, putter around in the garden.

By the time you read this, we will most likely be done with our plan to really unplug and regenerate in the glory of God’s wonderful creation—the Grand Canyon. For almost two years we have been planning a trip down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon in a small, wooden dory (boat). Leaving in the end of September, our river trip is 15 days and 220 miles floating down the Colorado, busting through the rapids and marveling at the beauty of one of God’s magnificent natural cathedrals. And we will be “off the grid”—no cell phones or emails, no electricity, no running water (except the river), and sleeping under the stars each night along the river’s edge. We hope to become closer to God on this pilgrimage, learn more about ourselves, and we are looking forward to the opportunity to pray together in this natural setting. And we are hoping for some time along the river to just sit and do nothing!

We all need to take time to do “nothing” in our lives, to not fill every day with the busyness of life. Find your “7th day” to rest and just enjoy the moment of life, of family, of the glory of God’s beautiful creations in nature and in us.

May you have a blessed fall season! ❖

—Carlin & Deacon Dave, Co-Directors, Family Life Office

March For Life and Family in Mexico Opposes Abortion, Organized Crime

Mexico City, Mexico, Sep 26 (CNA) – Pro-life advocates took to the streets throughout Mexico on Sept. 21 to march for life, family, and conscience protections.

Marches were held in some 100 cities across the country, including Guadalajara, Querétaro, Xalapa, Monterrey, Pachuca, Huejutla, Taxcala, Chilpancingo, Puebla, Naucalpan, Celaya, Guanajuato, Hidalgo. Additionally, marches took place in the United States at the Mexican consulates in Chicago and San Diego.

Organizers estimated that some 500,000 people participated throughout the country.

A statement read at events in different cities stressed the need to reject a culture of death and “build an authentic culture of life.”

“For this to happen, we have to start with the family, the basic cell of society,” the statement said. “We reiterate that the function of the government is to ensure everyone’s rights...If we can’t guarantee life, we will hardly be able to guarantee other fundamental rights.”

The marches also condemned organized crime, extortions, kidnappings, and other acts of violence, calling on government officials to “make Mexico a safe place to live, where the lives of all Mexicans are guaranteed, the first human right. Today not one less Mexican!”

Mexican actor and producer Eduardo Verástegui greeted participants at the marches on the National Front for the Family’s Facebook page.

“I want to thank the National Front for the Family for all this effort, for all this support that they give women,” he said.

(see March for Life, page 11)
Padre Pio Carried Christ Crucified in his Flesh, Capuchin Minister General Says

By Hannah Brockhaus

Foggia, Italy, Sep 23 (CNA) - Padre Pio, who had the physical marks of Christ's passion on his body, showed Christ crucified to the world, Minister General Fr. Roberto Guerin, OFM Cap., said during a Mass for the saint's feast on Monday.

"It is not difficult to understand that [Padre Pio's] whole life as a priest was marked by a constant incorporation into the crucified Lord," Guerin said September 23.

"Not only did Padre Pio find the face of God in the face of Christ, but he also immersed himself in the wounds of the hands and feet and, like his Father Saint Francis, in the deep wound of the Lord's heart.

"His body itself was pierced like that of the Savior to become a constant sign of the offering of his own body and blood that Jesus continues to work through the Church, in the gift of the sacraments and the Word of life of the Gospel."

St. Pio of Pietrelcina died Sept. 23, 1968. In the Italian town of San Giovanni Rotondo, where he spent most of his life and where he is buried, there were a number of events for the Capuchin saint's feast day, including nine days of prayer in the days before.

For the vigil there was an opening liturgy, vespers, Eucharistic adoration, prayer beneath Padre Pio's cross, the Holy Rosary, and Mass at midnight. The feast day itself included Masses at the shrine throughout the day.

Padre Pio's feast day falls a few days after the date he first received the stigmata 101 years ago.

"The cross, ultimately, is for Padre Pio, as for the great theologian Paul, the only reality to boast about, and also the only path to salvation," Fr. Guerin said.

"This profound knowledge, which Padre Pio carried in his mind, in his heart, in the flesh itself, moved him to take care of all the fatigued and oppressed: not only the needy in spirit, but all the suffering. Whoever knows the weight of the cross becomes close to those who need help, those who like Jesus fall several times on the path of pain."

This year, an estimated 35,000 people visited the shrine of St. Padre Pio in the days surrounding the feast day. Fr. Guerin said in his homily, "the journey of the pilgrim who comes here to seek Christ in the testimony of the crucified priest Padre Pio must continue in a new descent towards the roads of the world, to imitate the same Padre Pio in the service of the suffering."

"In his silence," Guerin continued, "Padre Pio thus became an uninterrupted praise to God who revealed himself in his Son raised on the cross."

"This mystical incorporation into Christ naturally led to a simple and strong pedagogy. 'The Christian soul,' he said, 'never lets the day pass without meditating on the passion of Jesus Christ.'"

During first vespers Sept. 22, Fr. Carlo M. Laborde, OFM Cap., said Padre Pio "is still on the threshold of Paradise."

He is "interceding for us, supporting us in the struggles and travails of life, soothing the suffering of hands, giving strength to those who have fallen and find it hard to get up again, giving courage to the disheartened."

Padre Pio, Laborde continued, is "supporting with his tireless prayer the journey of his spiritual children who are still in the phase of fatigue and temptation so that they can reach that longed-for port of salvation, that heavenly Jerusalem, that eternal Easter where there will be no more tears or suffering, but only the bliss of contemplation of the face of Christ."
By Courtney Mares

Frosinone, Italy, Sep 24 (CNA) - Pope Francis and Andrea Bocelli made a surprise visit Tuesday to a rehabilitation center outside of Rome.

Arriving in a blue Ford Focus, the pope visited the headquarters of the “Nuovi Orizzonti,” or “New Horizons,” community, in Frosinone, Italy, Vatican News reported Sept. 24.

New Horizons is an Italian non-profit organization recognized by the Dicastery for the Laity, Family, and Life, that provides support through a faith-based “rehabilitative therapeutic program” for the poor and destitute on the streets.

For 25 years, the organization founded by Chiara Amirante has served the poor with a faith-centered approach to rehabilitation from substance abuse, while also providing shelter for homeless youth, aid to women in prostitution, and a ministry of street evangelization. With its headquarters in Frosinone, the organization has grown to have 200 training centers.

“I knew that Christ could bring life back where I saw death. They asked me to take them away with me, to know that Jesus I was talking about. What happened next went beyond my imagination,” Amirante said of her ministry in the streets before the founding of New Horizons, according to Italian media.

Pope Francis visited for several hours the New Horizons’ headquarters and site of the “Cittadella Cielo,” or Heavenly Citadel project, an initiative to construct a “small village” to house single mothers and their children, teach vocational skills to homeless, assist people with AIDS, and train evangelization teams to volunteer in prisons or with at-risk youth.

While there he planted an olive tree.

During his homily the pope commented that “God shows his power in creation but even more in redemption, that is, in the victory of Jesus, in Jesus’ victory over us, because there Jesus builds the temple, builds the Church, builds our lives. We cannot build our lives, we cannot keep the temple of our life standing, well, without Jesus, without trust in Jesus. It is He who will help us in this.”

Bocelli has been a supporter of New Horizons for a number of years. The celebrity singer attended the inauguration of the Heavenly Citadel project in 2018 and is called a “Knight of Light of New Horizons.”

Bocelli told Avvenire why he supports New Horizons: “Because I love the truth and I have decided to always be in the forefront of bringing it to others.”

“Holy Father, his first words after the white smoke were ‘Pray for me’. I don’t know why, but I cried a lot that night. And again this morning,” Bocelli said Sept. 24 during the visit to Frosinone with the pope.

He also encouraged participants to see the movie Unplanned, which will premier throughout Mexico in October. The movie, entitled Inesperado in Spanish, shows the real story of an abortion clinic worker, Abby Johnson, who underwent a powerful conversion upon seeing an abortion take place. Today, Johnson runs a ministry called And Then There Were None, which helps other abortion workers leave the industry.

Verástegui said the movie portrays “a very powerful story, with a pro-life, pro-woman and pro-family message. It’s very important for everyone in Mexico to see it.”

In a statement to ACI Prensa, CNA’s Spanish language partner, Rodrigo Iván Cortés, president of the National Front for the Family, said the marches were intended “to give a voice to those who have no voice. We want to embrace Mexico and say loudly and clearly: Not one less Mexican.”

“Mexico is suffering from a terrible culture of death that is tearing apart families, and from illegal organized crime that is taking away the lives of many Mexicans,” he lamented.

He said that politicians at both the state and federal level aggravate the problem rather than solving it, by “adding to illegal organized crime the legal organized crime of abortion.”

Cortés also warned against efforts by politicians to impose gender ideology in schools, rather than working to strengthen and reinforce the institution of marriage.

“There will only be peace if life is respected, there will only be development if the family is respected, and there will only be authentic democracy if fundamental freedoms are respected such as conscience or belief, and if the freedom of parents to educate their children is respected,” he said.

This article was originally published by our sister agency, ACI Prensa. It has been translated and adapted by CNA.
Catholic Mission Rescues and Restores “Cursed” Children Struggling With Severe Disabilities

In Zambia, it’s long been believed that children born with disabilities are a curse on the family. As a result, parents are shamed, and to avoid public persecution they hide their handicapped children at home.

“This isolation means most of Zambia’s disabled children never attend school, and they grow up believing they’re not worthy of living a normal life,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a U.S. ministry working to empower Catholic missions in developing countries. This effort includes special outreaches to support Catholic programs specifically created to help children with disabilities and end cultural superstitions that have fueled their persecution.

“Our partnership with the Dagama School for Physically Disabled Children in Luanshya is an example. There, the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi are providing educational opportunities for disabled Zambian children and ensuring they receive loving care. Their efforts restore hope and encourage self-confidence. It’s an incredible outreach, and it’s transforming the lives of these precious boys and girls.”

Cavnar added that the Dagama School’s mission would be necessary even if the superstitious fears that lead to the persecution of children with disabilities and their families could be overcome.

“Most Zambian families live in ramshackle homes and work as day laborers or subsistence farmers, barely eking out a living. They struggle to provide basics like food and shelter, so they could never afford the special therapies or medical treatments children with disabilities often require.

The Dagama School plays a critical role in meeting those needs. Our goal is to support their efforts — to ensure the children get the special care, educational opportunities and healthy meals they need.”

Cross Catholic Outreach provides a similar level of support to many other Catholic missions overseas, including several that also specialize in providing care for children with disabilities (see feature on the Torch of Life mission in Ecuador on the opposite page). In each of these cases, Cross Catholic Outreach relies on donations from U.S. Catholics to support the work.

“I mentioned how families struggle financially to meet even their most basic needs. Sadly, a lot of Catholic missions in developing countries face similar stresses. They lack sufficient funding and desperately need resources,” Cavnar said. “That’s where Cross Catholic Outreach comes in. We share the hardships of these missions with U.S. donors, secure financial support and ship in the resources they need. Over the years, thousands of compassionate U.S. Catholics have rallied to provide help and the impact has been incredible. We can do the same for Catholic missions serving children with disabilities. Our support will empower them to rescue children from difficult circumstances, restore hope and help change the culture’s harmful superstitious beliefs.”

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach can use the brochure inserted in this issue or send tax-deductible gifts to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC01494, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis.

Check the box on the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write “Monthly Mission Partner” on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up those arrangements.

Cross Catholic Outreach Endorsed by More Than 100 Bishops, Archbishops

Cross Catholic Outreach’s range of relief work to help the poor overseas continues to be recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S. and abroad.

“We’ve received more than 100 endorsements from bishops and archbishops,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach (CCO). “They’re moved by the fact that we’ve launched outreaches in almost 40 countries and have undertaken a variety of projects — everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor. The bishops have also been impressed by Cross Catholic Outreach’s direct and meaningful response to emergency situations, most recently by providing food, medicines and other resources to partners in Haiti, El Salvador and areas of Belize impacted by natural disasters.”

Archbishop Thomas Rodi of Mobile, Alabama, supported this mission, writing: “It is a privilege for me to support Cross Catholic outreach. This organization funds ministries to our neighbors in need in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and the Pacific. Through the generosity of so many, the love of God is made visible to many who are coping with the most difficult of daily living conditions.”

In addition to praising CCO’s accomplishments, many of the bishops and archbishops are encouraged that Pontifical canonical status was conferred on the charity in September 2015, granting it approval as an official Catholic organization. This allows CCO to participate in the mission of the Church and to give a concrete witness to Gospel Charity, in collaboration with the Holy Father.

“You work with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is a strong endorsement of your partnership with the work of the Universal Church,” Archbishop Cordileone of San Francisco said. “By providing hope to the faithful overseas by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, delivering medical relief to the sick and shelter to the homeless, and through self-help projects, you are embodying the Papal Encyclical Deus Caritas Est.”

CCO’s Outreach Priests visit U.S. parishes to share inspiring stories about Catholic missions overseas and promote works of mercy worldwide.
Diana Arellano’s joyful smile communicates — as few words ever could — the deep gratitude she has for the Catholic mission in Ecuador that addresses her daily needs.

“God has taken care of me and all the people,” explains Diana, who has Down syndrome. She is just one of the thousands of poor children and young people around the globe who rely on Church-organized missions for support because their families are too poor to provide care and therapy.

For many children, this gift of compassion has transformed lives of fear and pain into a joyful journey with our living God.

“Disabilities like Diana’s can lead to terrible hardships for children living in developing countries. There are cultures and communities that reject children who aren’t perfect — who are different.

Some even consider them cursed,” shared Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, one of the leading relief and development ministries empowering Catholic missions overseas. “Fortunately — and thanks to the many American Catholics who support Cross Catholic Outreach — we are able to empower the priests, nuns and Catholic lay-leaders who have a heart for these children and are eager to help them. We can give those dedicated servants of God the resources they need to bless and change lives.”

Diana’s life has improved dramatically, she has cerebral palsy,” Cavnar explained. “Her mother works as a housekeeper. She came to the mission unable to walk, but we’re determined to help her overcome that hurdle. We want to help the staff to do more and to reach more children in need — not just here in Ecuador but in other parts of the world where extreme poverty puts those children and their families at a major disadvantage.”

Halfway across the globe, for example, children in Africa need help too. In Zambia, Cross Catholic Outreach is working to support a Catholic mission serving children suffering under the superstitious belief they or their family are cursed (see feature story on the opposite page). There, with the help of American donors, Cross wants to fund critical services and end the harmful cultural beliefs.

There are programs needing support in Haiti, Ethiopia and Malawi too.

Cavnar says he is confident that as more American Catholics become aware of the incredible work priests and nuns are pursuing to help the disabled, they will be eager to provide support.

“The Catholic Church has always taken the lead in showing mercy to those who are vulnerable, who struggle or who are treated unjustly, and I believe efforts to lift up the poor and disabled — sometimes even rescuing them from abusive or dangerous situations — will inspire many U.S. Catholics to join our cause,” he said. “Missions like these manifest a core Catholic value — that life is sacred. We believe that every person is worthy of love, and we want every child to feel safe, experience joy and have hope for the future.”

To have an even greater impact on Catholic ministries serving children and young adults with disabilities, Cavnar encourages people to become Mission Partners with Cross Catholic Outreach. Mission Partners contribute a set amount monthly, which is particularly helpful to priests and nuns operating overseas missions because it provides a reliable flow of resources needed to ensure important outreaches will continue.

“Of course, we are grateful to everyone who supports these Catholic missions. Every gift, large or small, makes a difference,” Cavnar said. “These children and young people face incredible challenges, but working together, we can improve their lives and offer them hope for the glory of God.”

How to Help
To fund Cross Catholic Outreach’s effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC01494, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions for becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify a specific aid project with your gift, 100% of the donation will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.
How These Virginia Catholics are Helping the Homeless Find Work

By Perry West

Arlington, Va., Sep 26 (CNA) - A Catholic group in Arlington, Virginia, is committed to helping homeless people, along with others down on their luck, by equipping them with the tools to find work and build careers.

In 2009, “Christians are Networking” (CAN) was launched by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Arlington. The ministry began during the financial crisis, when unemployment was high, and those who had held steady careers were struggling to find work.

When the economy improved five years ago, CAN partnered with Christ House, a men’s homeless shelter in Alexandria, Virginia, to offer their services to people who have been living on the streets.

While the organization trains for resume-building, networking, interviewing, and computer skills, volunteer coordinator William Schuyler told CNA that the most important service has been helping participants believe in their own worth.

“The thing that we actually brought to the world was not so much that we could tell you how to write the perfect resume; it was that we reminded people of their value as a human being,” he said.

Christ House has enough space for 14 men at a time, and residents may stay in the house for up to one year. Men have their food, rent, and other necessities provided for them. They can also receive support to obtain identification papers.

The residents can also meet weekly with CAN to discuss career strategies like budgeting and networking. During the Wednesday night meeting, participants discuss progress and setbacks on the job hunt.

Then, the job-seekers meet individually with volunteers.

Yvonne Horner, a volunteer coordinator for CAN, has been with the organization since it started at Christ House. With a background in human resources, she instructs clients on tax information and company benefits.

“When a man first enters Christ’s House, he will meet with the volunteers of CAN so they can find out a little bit of information, like education and work history. The volunteers also look to determine the clients’ interests and other areas of skills,” Horner told CNA.

“Then [we] talk a little bit about employment opportunities they might be interested in pursuing. We have a couple of volunteers who specialize in government work so they can help them navigate the government employment website.”

A major part of the program is helping men find a social support group.

Schuyler said that ideally the program will reconnect its clients to family members, like parents, children, and siblings.

The house will also encourage men to seek a community among themselves, he said.

“If [families ties are impossible], what we really tried to do is build ongoing relationships between the men at Christ House itself,” he said.

“They bonding within the context of Christ … then what that seems to do is enable them to reconnect with other people.”

Through interactions with professionals and other job-seekers, the men are built up with encouragement, he explained.

“It’s important to remind people that they have value” in their dignity and in their work, Schuyler added.

“The organization needs you and it depends on you. Your colleagues are dependent upon you … if you do your job well, you are a part of a thing that’s making an organization succeed.”

“If you think of only the [task] you’re doing, [like] the washing of the dishes, it’s pretty easy to think of yourself as not having value in this.” But, he said, “if you think of yourself as part of a team of people that are enabling people to have a delicious dinner, I think you can feel that you will have human value that’s worth it.”

Catholic News Agency spoke with Dorian Spring and Leon Brown, both of whom participated in the program recently. The men had been homeless, and either not working or underemployed. Now, they have promising careers.

Spring entered the program about six months ago, after his landlord sold his home, leaving him homeless. He had been working at a hotel for 15 years, he said, but there was no room to move upwards in the company.

“I was very stressed out and then basically abused,” he said, noting that he had been passed over for promotions despite his lengthy employment and good attendance.

“I had to find something else and I talked to the (see Homeless Find Work, page 22)
Credit Check: Buffalo Diocese Says Cancelled Cards Not Connected to Malone Controversy

Buffalo, N.Y., Sep 27 (CNA) - The Diocese of Buf- falo is shutting down its credit cards, effective Friday afternoon. Although some have interpreted the move as a step towards bankruptcy, officials said the deci- sion was unrelated to recent scandals and lawsuits affecting the diocese.

According to reports from local news station WGRZ, diocesan credit cards will reportedly be shut down as of 2 p.m. on Sept. 27. A senior source con- nected to the diocese said that two priests confirmed the diocese is switching from its current credit cards to another bank.

“The diocese has not made any determination regarding filing for Chapter 11 reorganization,” diocesan communications director Kathy Spanger said in a Thursday statement provided to CNA.

“The memo that was sent out today, while stating our current credit card account is being closed, told cardholders that they will be updated shortly regarding our replacement card program,” the statement noted on Thursday.

The news comes as the diocese is reportedly facing more than 160 lawsuits regarding accusations of child sexual abuse.

The enactment of the Child Victims Act in New York earlier this year expanded the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse survivors to file lawsuits, creating a one-year filing window for suits related to historical cases. On Wednesday, local news reported that the Diocese of Buffalo is the defendant in 168 lawsuits filed under the Child Victims Act since the filing window began in August.

Earlier in September, the New York Attorney Gen- eral’s office launched an investigation into all dioceses in the state, including Buffalo. The diocese is also the subject of a lawsuit based on the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act which is typi- cally invoked against organized crime.

With the high number of lawsuits against the dio- cese, Bishop Malone has admitted that he has consid- ered filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy; the neighboring Diocese of Rochester has already filed for Chapter 11 reorganization.

The diocese has been in the national spotlight over the last year, following whistleblower reports of alleged covering up of clerical sexual abuse in the diocese.

Bishop Malone’s former executive assistant Siobahn O’Connor released documents last year that appear to show Bishop Malone consulting diocesan law- yers before announcing 42 accusations of “criminal, abusive or inappropriate behavior” by clergy—out of over one hundred accusations—in the interests of transparency, while keeping the majority of the accusations from the public eye.

Bishop Malone has also faced criticism over his handling of the case of diocesan priest Fr. Art Smith, who in 2011 was placed on leave by the previous Bishop Edward M. Kmiec following allega- tions of sending inappropriate Facebook messages to a minor.

Fr. Smith was reinstated to ministry by Bishop Malone in 2012 after the priest spent time at a treat- ment center, and was assigned to a nursing home. Fr. Smith was later accused of inappropriate touching of two young adult men while he was at the home, and Smith also heard confessions at a diocesan youth conference during that time. Malone also approved of Fr. Smith serving as a chaplain on a cruise ship in 2015.

In a 2015 letter to Vatican officials, Malone cited Smith’s grooming of a young boy, refusal to stay in a treatment center, allegations of inappropriate touch- ing of at least four young men, and repeated bound- ary issues; in the same letter, Bishop Malone said that he had granted Fr. Smith “faculties to function as a priest” in the diocese due to his “cooperation in regard to regular counseling.”

The priest was eventually suspended in 2018 after the diocese said it had received a “substantiated” allega- tion of sexual abuse of a minor, made against Fr. Smith.

In September, local news station WKWB released audio of conversations between Bishop Malone and his then-priest secretary Fr. Risahrd Biernat, and others in the diocese, that were taped by Fr. Biernat. The recordings showed Bishop Malone in March of 2019 apparently believing accusations of sexual harassment and abuse of the seal of the confessional made against diocesan priest Fr. Jeffrey Nowak by then-seminarian Matthew Bojanowski.

Months after those conversations, however, Fr. Nowak still had not been removed from ministry and another conversation recorded on August 2 showed Malone saying that the situation of Fr. Nowak, if made public, “could be the end for me as bishop.”

“We are in a true crisis situation. True crisis. And everyone in the office is convinced this could be the end for me as bishop.” Malone said in an August 2 conversation as he expressed his fear that the accu- sations against Fr. Nowak would be made public. Malone also suspected that Fr. Nowak was jealous that Bojanowski had supposedly developed a new relationship with Fr. Biernat, that could be construed to be a “love triangle,” and that Fr. Nowak could go public with it. Biernat has said his relationship with Bojanowski is platonic.

On Monday, it was reported that the local Erie County district attorney had begun a criminal inves- tigation into Bojanowski’s allegations of grooming and sexual harassment made against Fr. Nowak, who is currently on administrative leave.

Malone announced on Tuesday a new code of con- duct for clergy, and a new process for handling claims of sexual abuse allegedly committed by clergy and staff against adults.

The bishop has said repeatedly that he will not resign. In a Sept. 4 press conference, he said that “I fully understand the rage and the dismay and perhaps the incredulity, a lack of trust, that so many people in the community, not only Catholics, feel.”

“And I may be a part of that, because I’m the bishop currently,” he said, “but a lot of it is the weight of decades of bad, bad things that some priests did. And so I accept that. And I think if I can accept that and try to move on and try to work with the folks who are so committed to restoring trust and all of that, that we can turn this around.”

Malone’s metropolitan archbishop, Cardinal Timo- thy Dolan of New York, was reportedly “consulting extensively” with individuals on the ground in the diocese over whether or not to investigate Malone, according to a Sept. 10 CNA interview with an arch- diocesan spokesman.

Pope Francis’ new norms—Vos estis lux mundi— for investigating bishops accused of sexual abuse, coercion, or of interfering in an investigation of such misconduct—gives metropolitan archbishops charge of investigating bishops, with the prior approval of the Vatican.

Cardinal Sarah Reflects on the Meaning of the Priesthood

By Courtney Grogan

Vatican City, Sep 29 (CNA) - Cardinal Robert Sarah reflected on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucha- rist and the meaning of the priesthood in a Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica Saturday marking his 50th ordination anniversary.

“The priest lives joy in its fullness at Holy Mass, which is the raison d’être of his existence, what gives meaning to his life,” Sarah said in his homily at the Altar of the Chair Sept. 29.

“During the daily Mass the priest comes face to face with Jesus Christ and at that precise moment, he is identified, he identified himself with Christ, becoming not only an Alter Christus, another Christ, but he is really Ipsa Christus, the same Christ,” he said.

The Prefect for the Congregation for Divine Wor- ship and the Discipline of the Sacraments said the inner life of a priest should center around three things: the cross, the Eucharist, and the Virgin Mary.

“According to St. Josemaría Escrivà, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is the vital spring of the priest, the pillar on which his priestly existence is built,” he said. Sarah explained that the cross makes possible “the birth of a life within us” and that the Virgin Mary watches over one’s spiritual development as a mother, “who educates us to grow in faith.”

“Without the Eucharist we cannot live,” he said. “Jesus reveals to us the secret of this heavenly food, that it is His very flesh that becomes nourishment to enable us to live from His own life, in the unheard-of intimacy of friendship with him.”

Sarah said that the priesthood is going through “a deep crisis” today, and asked for prayers for all priests.

“The priest—here is the most magnificent work, the most generous gift that God has given to humanity, the most precious and unprecedented treasure that exists on earth; the Curé of Ars, St. John Mary Vian- ney was deeply convinced of this,” he said.

“In this Eucharist we entrust the Church and all priests to the maternal goodness of the Virgin Mary, our Mother and Mother of the Church,” he prayed.

Born in French Guinea in 1945, Sarah was ordained a priest on July 20, 1969 and made a bishop at the age of 34. The Mass at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter’s Basilica was celebrated in honor of two anniversaries for the cardinal this year—50 years as a priest and 40 years as a bishop.”
“The heart of this celebration is Jesus Christ, the High Heavenly Priest: ‘holy, innocent, without blemish, separated from sinners and raised above the heavens,’” Sarah said.

“The lord was for me: I was born in a humble and poor environment like that of Nazareth and in an anoint and pagan culture, and He made me a Christian, a priest and a bishop,” the cardinal said. “Through baptism and priestly ordination He transformed me from nothing into his humble servant, into his beloved son.”

At Mass for Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis Says World is Increasingly Elitist

By Courtney Grogan

Vatican City, Sep 29 (CNA) - Pope Francis celebrated Mass for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees Sunday with a message that the world is becoming more elitist to the detriment of the poor and the most vulnerable.

“Today’s world is increasingly becoming more elitist and cruel. Developing countries continue to be drained of their best natural and human resources for the benefit of a few privileged markets. Wars only affect some regions of the world, yet weapons of war are produced and sold in other regions which are then unwilling to take in the refugees generated by these conflicts,” Pope Francis said in his homily in St. Peter’s Square Sept. 29.

The pope said that those who pay the price are always "the little ones, the poor, the most vulnerable, who are prevented from sitting at the table and are left with the ‘crumbs’ of the banquet.”

“As Christians, we cannot be indifferent to the tragedy of old and new forms of poverty, to the bleak isolation, contempt and discrimination experienced by those who do not belong to ‘our’ group,” Pope Francis said.

The Lord calls us to practice charity toward all those in existential peripheries, who together with migrants and refugees, are the victims of “the throwaway culture,” he said.

“Loving our neighbor means feeling compassion for the sufferings of our brothers and sisters, drawing close to them, touching their sores and sharing their stories, and thus manifesting concretely God’s tender love for them. This means being a neighbor to all those who are mistreated and abandoned on the streets of our world, soothing their wounds and bringing them to the nearest shelter, where their needs can be met,” Pope Francis explained.

“Along with the exercise of charity, the Lord also invites us to think about the injustices that cause exclusion – and in particular the privileges of the few, who seek to preserve their status, act to the detriment of the many,” he said.

In his Angelus address immediately following the Mass, Pope Francis unveiled a new bronze sculpture in St. Peter’s Square called “Angels Unawares.” The sculpture by Canadian artist Timothy Schmaltz depicts migrants and refugees throughout history huddled together on a raft.

“I wanted this artistic work here in St. Peter’s Square to remind everyone of the evangelical challenge of hospitality,” Pope Francis said.

“The Lord has a particular concern for foreigners, widows and orphans, for they are without rights, excluded and marginalized,” he said in his homily.

“We must pay special attention to the strangers in our midst as well as to widows, orphans and all the outcasts of our time.”

German Synod Plans to be Vetted by Controversial Lay Group, Not Vatican

By Ed Condon

Berlin, Germany, Sep 27 (CNA) - The plan for a “binding synodal process” recently approved by the German bishops will be sent to a controversial lay group for amendment and approval, CNA has learned.

On Sept. 25, the German bishops’ conference concluded a three-day plenary session at which bishops debated and voted to adopt statutes for the creation of a Synodal Assembly in partnership with the Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK).

According to sources in the German bishops’ conference, those statutes, the text of which has not yet been released, will now be passed to the ZdK for review and approval. The group’s consideration of the plans includes the opportunity for the committee’s membership to amend the text before voting to adopt the statutes.

Earlier this year, ZdK leaders assured their members that the groups’ participation in the synodal process was predicated on a guarantee from the German bishops’ conference that the groups’ participation in the synodal process would be “binding.”

The role of the ZdK as co-equal participants with the German bishops was identified as a point of special concern in a Vatican assessment of the German synodal plans. A review of a draft of the synodal statutes was produced by the Pontifical Commission for Legislative Texts in August and sent to the German bishops by Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops.

“The PCLT concluded that the German plans would essentially form a particular council—a canonical body which can, though only with explicit Roman approval, legislate and teach authoritatively—instead of a synod, which is a purely consultative body.” The commission also concluded that the German synodal plans created a “parliamentary” forum for treating universal Church teaching which was “ecclesiologically invalid” and sought to address topics which “cannot be the object of the deliberations or decisions of a particular Church without contravening what is expressed by the Holy Father.”

After meeting with Pope Francis and Cardinal Ouellet last week, Cardinal Reinhard Marx insisted that the German “binding synodal process” could not be properly classified as either a council or a synod, but should be understood as something unique. Matthias Kopp, spokesman for the German bishops’ conference, later insisted that while the synodal process is said to be “binding,” this is not meant to imply any Church figure would be bound by the synodal conclusion. “Binding means it is a vote,” not simply a discussion, said Kopp.

After approving their own version of the statutes, the ZdK president and vice president will meet with the head of the German bishops’ conference, Cardinal Marx, and Bishop Franz-Joseph Bode, vice chair of the conference. This group of four will consider and reconcile any changes between the statutes for the Synodal Assembly as approved by the two groups, and agree upon a final version before the Assembly is due to convene on at the beginning of Advent.

Senior Churchmen in Germany also confirmed to CNA that, regardless of any changes proposed by the Central Committee and agreed by Marx and Bode, there is no intention to seek Vatican approval for the final version.

A senior source in the German bishops’ conference confirmed to CNA that the ZdK is expected to make changes “only on a very minor scale,” but confirmed that it will be up to Cardinal Marx to determine whether the rest of the German bishops will be involved in approving the final version agreed upon with the ZdK leadership.

Although passed by the bishops by a margin of 51-12 in Wednesday’s vote, the German synodal plans have attracted open expressions of concern that have become more frequent in recent days. Both Cardinal Rainer Woelki of Cologne and Bishop Rudolph Vorderholzer of Regensburg issued statements explaining that they had voted against the statutes.

Vorderholzer said there is a “dishonesty at the beginning of the Synodal Process” and “a lack of a theological hermeneutics and an affirmation of the principles of the Catholic foundation of faith recognized by all those involved.”

The German bishops have already announced that the synodal process will consider proposals from four working groups on the issues of power sharing in the Church, the role of women in offices and ministry, sexual morality, and clerical discipline.

ZdK leaders have taken consistent positions in opposition to settled universal Church teaching and discipline including calling for the ordination of women, the blessing of same-sex unions in churches, the abdication of Church teaching on homosexuality, and the ending of clerical celibacy.

The working groups, constituted in partnership with the ZdK have already begun their deliberations.

On Saturday, Marianne Schlosser, a theologian appointed by Pope Francis to the International Theological Commission and the committee assigned to study the historical role of female deacons, said she was ending her participation in the synodal forum on the role of women in Church ministries and offices, calling the process “fixed” on the ordination of women to the priesthood.
Holy See and Trump Administration Oppose Abortion at UN General Assembly

New York City, N.Y., Sep 24 (CNA) - President Donald Trump and Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Parolin have challenged world leaders to protect unborn human life. Both leaders spoke at the United Nations in New York, as the body met for the 74th session of its General Assembly.

On Tuesday, President Trump stated that “like many nations here today, we in America believe that every child, born and unborn, is a sacred gift from God.”

The President defended the right of countries to establish protections for unborn human life, noting that there are international efforts to promote taxpayer-funded abortion-on-demand.

Trump’s comments followed a high-level meeting on universal health coverage at the UN on Monday, at which both Cardinal Parolin and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar insisted on the protection of unborn life as part of a global commitment to health care.

Parolin and Azar made their remarks at the adoption of a political declaration on universal health coverage intended to set the tone for future investment in health care by UN member countries and donors in light of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Parolin, the Vatican’s chief diplomatic officer, warned against wording in the document that could be interpreted by member countries to promote abortion access. A joint statement by the U.S. and 18 other countries, read by Secretary Azar at the meeting, also opposed the same language.

The cardinal called the declaration’s formulation “most unfortunate” and “deeply concerning and divisive,” highlighting its inclusion of “sexual and reproductive health-care services” and “sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.”

Parolin said that the Holy See rejects any inclusion of abortion in the understanding of health care rights. “In particular, the Holy See rejects the interpretation that considers abortion or access to abortion, sex-selective abortion, abortion of fetuses diagnosed with health challenges, maternal surrogacy, and sterilization as dimensions of these terms, or of universal health coverage,” Cardinal Parolin said.

He reiterated the Holy See’s previous reservations over such language, as published at the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing and the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development, that it would be interpreted to advocate for abortion access. “The language of ‘reproductive health’ and related terms” is considered by the Holy See “as applying to a holistic concept of health, which embraces the person in the entirety of his or her personality, mind and body,” Parolin said, but it does not include abortion as part of this concept.

Monday’s meeting marked four years since the UN’s adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), a comprehensive global agenda for 15 years until 2030 that included targets such as fighting poverty and promoting universal education.

The SDGs included targets to “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services” and to “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights” by 2030, in accordance with the Beijing and Cairo documents.

At that time, some critics warned that the language would allow for a vast expansion of international abortion access, which would use development grants as leverage to pressure developing countries to liberalize their abortion laws.

“|The Holy See, the U.S., and other countries have consistently warned against such attempts to coerce countries on abortion. In the months before the 2019 UN meeting on universal health coverage, the Trump administration has been working to enlist support to defend the ability of states to protect life free from international interference.|

|That work included a letter from Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Azar to leaders of other memebrr states. So far 21 countries, including the U.S., have signed the letter in support, according to the HHS.|

|“As a key priority in global health promotion, we respectfully request that your government join the United States in ensuring that every sovereign state has the ability to determine the best way to protect the unborn and defend the family as the foundational unit of society vital to children thriving and leading healthy lives,” the letter states.|

|The letter warns that “multilateral global health policy documents” are using language like “comprehensive sexuality education” and ‘sexual and reproductive health’ and ‘sexual and reproductive health and rights’ to diminish the role of parents in the most sensitive and personal family-oriented issues.”|

|“The latter has been asserted to mean promotion of abortion, including pressuring countries to abandon religious principles and cultural norms enshrined in law that protect unborn life,” the letter states.|

|Azar also addressed Monday’s meeting on universal health coverage, delivering a joint statement on behalf of 19 countries: the U.S., Bahrain, Belarus, Brazil, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.|

|The joint statement says that “the family is the foundational institution of society and thus should be supported and strengthened.”|

|The statement goes on to oppose “references to ambiguous terms and expressions, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights in U.N. documents, because they can undermine the critical role of the family and promote practices, like abortion, in circumstances that do not enjoy international consensus and which can be misinterpreted by U.N. agencies.”|

|“There is no international right to an abortion and these terms should not be used to promote pro-abortion policies and measures.”|

|Parolin, in his remarks on Monday, also said that the universal right to health care is a part of the Church’s teachings on solidarity, social justice and the common good. Furthermore, he said, it “is understood as comprising the health of the person as a whole and of all persons during all stages of development of their life.”|

|This right, the cardinal said, “is thus inextricably linked with the right to life and it can never be manipulated as an excuse to end or dispose of a human life in whichever point in the entire continuum of his or her existence, from conception until natural death.”|

|“like many nations here today, we in America believe that every child, born and unborn, is a sacred gift from God.”|
This Secular Franciscan Lived Among Lepers. Could he Become Zimbabwe’s First Saint?

Harare, Zimbabwe, Sep 26 (CNA) - British-born John Bradburne, who died in Zimbabwe 40 years ago, could be on his way to becoming the country’s first canonized saint.

Bradburne is a revered figure among the Catholic community in the landlocked southern African country of Zimbabwe. According to reports, Bradburne was shot in the back after he was abducted from his hut in Mutemwa in the north-east of Zimbabwe.

Who was he?

Born in 1921 to Anglican parents in Cumbria, England, Bradburne converted to Catholicism in 1947 while living with Benedictine monks, after he had a religious experience during World War II. He lived after his conversion as a pilgrim, shuttling between England, the Middle East and Italy, living out religious experience during World War II.

In 1969, seven years after his arrival in the country, Bradburne's desire to care for leprosy-afflicted patients was fulfilled, when he was appointed the lead caretaker at Mutemwa Leprosy Settlement, a center that cared for leprosy patients.

Bradburne spent hours with patients. He rose at 3:00am each morning, and washed patients, banded them, ate with them, and talked with them. Some of them he carried to Mass. But he clashed with leaders at the center over the conditions in which patients lived, and eventually, he was fired.

He was allowed to live in a deserted single-roomed tin hut in the settlement compound. His house had no running water, but he was glad to be within the vicinity of the lepers, whom he continued helping in whatever way he could.

Bradburne protected the lepers from exploitation, something that raised suspicion, especially locals say, because he was a foreigner, and his motives were frequently suspect.

During Zimbabwe's civil war, which lasted from 1964 until 1979, Bradburne protected the lepers from the conflict, something that raised suspicion, especially locals say, because he was a foreigner, and his motives were frequently suspect.

Locals became hostile towards him, but he refused offers from other Christians to take him to safety. Bradburne died on Sept. 5, 1979 when he was shot dead at age 58. He was buried in the Franciscan habit, as he had hoped to be.

During his burial, three unexplained drops of blood (see Zimbabwe’s First Saint, page 24)
Noticias

El Papa inaugura en el Vaticano una gran escultura dedicada a migrantes y refugiados.

VATICANO (ACI Prensa) - El Papa Francisco presentó este domingo 29 de septiembre, en la Plaza de San Pedro del Vaticano, una gran escultura de bronce que representa una barca con migrantes y refugiados de todos los pueblos y épocas.

La escultura, situada junto a la columnata barroca de Bernini, se inauguró al finalizar el rezo del Ángelus con motivo de la Jornada Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado.

El Santo Padre señaló que esta escultura tiene como objetivo subrayar “la necesidad de que nadie sea excluido de la sociedad, ya sea un ciudadano residente desde hace mucho tiempo o uno recién llegado”.

La escultura, según explicó el Pontífice, se inspira en las palabras de la Carta a los Hebreos: “No olvidéis la hospitalidad; algunos, practicándola, han acogido a ángeles sin saberlo”.

“Esta escultura, en bronce y arcilla, representa a un grupo de migrantes de varias culturas y de diversos periodos históricos. He querido que esta obra artística esté aquí, en la Plaza de San Pedro, para que recuerde a todos el desafío evangélico de la acogida”, destacó Francisco.

La escultura, que se encontraba cubierta por una tela blanca que el Papa, ayudado por una familia de cameruneses, retiró para dejar al descubierto la obra. Después, el Obispo de Roma tocó el bronce y bendijo la escultura.

Courage Internacional Amplía Plazas para Capacitación en Pastoral con Homosexuales

(ACI Prensa) - Courage Internacional, el reconocido apostolado católico para personas con atracción hacia el mismo sexo, anunció que ha ampliado el número de plazas para que más sacerdotes y diáconos puedan participar en la conferencia online gratuita sobre pastoral con personas homosexuales.

La conferencia titulada “Acompañando a personas con inclinaciones homosexuales: pautas pastorales a la luz de la Verdad y la Misericordia”, se realizará los sábados 19 y 26 de octubre de 2019 de 10:30 a.m. a 1:30 p.m. (hora de la Costa Este de Estados Unidos).

Luego de lanzar la convocatoria el pasado 23 de septiembre, Courage Internacional cerró sus inscripciones en 48 horas debido al gran interés de sacerdotes por participar en este evento que ofrecerá pautas pastorales para acompañar a personas que experimentan atracciones hacia su mismo sexo.

Siendo ello, debido al gran interés, Courage anunció que con el fin de que los sacerdotes no pierdan esta oportunidad, ha ampliado el número de participantes al evento online.

Los organizadores señalan que se ofrecerán dos sesiones de formación teórica, teológica y pastoral sobre las enseñanzas de la Iglesia acerca de la homosexualidad y la pastoral hacia personas con inclinaciones homosexuales; además, se explicará el apostolado que realiza Courage y EnCourage (dirigido a familiares y amigos).

En otro momento, se escuchará el testimonio de una persona con atracción al mismo sexo, así como de una madre de familia y su hijo que viven una situación similar. También habrá rondas de preguntas a los expositores y a quienes darán su testimonio.

“Haciendo eco de la invitación de la Iglesia de acoger con ‘respeto, compasión y delicadeza’ a las personas que experimentan atracción hacia el mismo sexo, los expertos panelistas expondrán una serie de pautas y consejos para el adecuado acompañamiento de estos hermanos nuestros, a la luz de la verdad, la caridad y la misericordia”, precisa el sitio web de Courage.

Entre los expositores están el Dr. Philip Bochanski, director ejecutivo de Courage International; el P. Víctor de Luna, capellán de Courage en Roma (Italia); Andrés C., miembro de Courage en Chihuahua (México); Rossana Góñi, coordinadora de Courage Latino; y una madre de familia de EnCourage en México.

Para más información sobre el programa y para inscribirse ingrese AQUÍ o escriba a oficina@cour ager.org.

9 Contundentes Razones para Rechazar la Pornografía en Tu Vida

REDACCIÓN CENTRAL (ACI Prensa) - La pornografía no solo es considerada por varios expertos como una nueva droga que genera una dependencia similar a la ocasionada por drogas duras en personas de cualquier edad, sino que destruye el amor de Dios en el alma y distorsiona la verdadera sexualidad humana.

Sam Guzman, fundador y editor del blog The Catholic Gentleman (El caballero católico), compartió un artículo que apunta 9 contundentes razones para rechazar la pornografía de la vida del hombre.

1. Daña a las mujeres reales
Sam Guzman indicó que muchas veces se tiene la impresión de que la pornografía es inofensiva y que las mujeres que salen en esos videos se “están divirtiendo y realizando por elección”.

“Es mentira. Un sinnúmero de estrellas del porno narran historias de abuso físico, emocional, coerción, automutilación, depresión, violencia e intento de suicidio. Dicen con vehemencia que ser una estrella porno era miserable, no divertido. Esos hombres necesitan más y más cosas extremas para que te hagan perder la razón. Ni siquiera conocen lo que es un trato digno con alguien que les respete y protección no lujuria”, sostuvo Guzman.

5. Extingue la gracia de Dios en el alma
“Un pecado mortal es un pecado que destruye el amor de Dios en tu alma. Es un pecado tan grave, tan horrible que nos separa de Dios, dejando un alma fría, sin vida y enferma”, recordó Guzman.

Asimismo, dijo que “los hombres que prefieren la pornografía al sexo real, de alguna manera están actuando como si fueran sus propias posesiones. Son instrumentos de gratificación. Simplemente no van a ser aceptados como hombres reales. Básicamente, arruina tu vida sexual”, apunta Guzman.

10. Se agrava con el tiempo
“Los meses pasan y las mismas cosas aburren. Se siente como una tarea. Muchos hombres incluso creen que la pornografía se convierte “muy rápidamente en una necesidad”, apunta Guzman.

7. Se vuelve egoísta
Guzman indica que cuando se pasan horas generando satisfacción con imágenes obscenas, las personas empiezan a “obsesionarse consigo mismas”. “En lugar de abrazar el sacrificio requerido por el amor verdadero, comienzan a ver a las personas como objetos diseñados para servir a tus necesidades”. (vea Noticias en Español, página 20)
(Noticias en Español, cont. de página 19)

unos, al igual que las mujeres de fantasía en la pantalla. En lugar de dar y servir como Cristo, se obsesionan con tomar y consumir. Te vuelves egoísta, enojado, abusivo sin siquiera darte cuenta. Te conviertes en un narcisista que usa a otros en lugar de amarlos”, agregó.

8. Roba la alegría
El bloguero sostiene que la pornografía deja a la personas con sentido de culpabilidad y miserables. “No importa cuánto nos mintamos a nosotros mismos, sabemos en el fondo que el porno está mal. Y cada vez que lo miramos, nuestra conciencia naturalmente nos molesta”, señaló.

9. Te hace esclavo
Según Guzman el problema de la pornografía es que vuelve a las personas adictas al pecado y las vuelca voluntariamente a la esclavitud del demonio.

No obstante, el bloguero dijo que “Cristo nos redimió, y cuando fuimos bautizados, nos liberó de esta cruel esclavitud y nos trajo a la libertad de los hijos de Dios. Si eres bautizado, estás muerto al pecado y vivo a Dios. Ústedes comparten la libertad de Jesucristo, y ustedes ya no son ‘esclavos sino hijos’ (Gálatas 4:7)”. 

Iglesia En México Sobre Campañas de Aborto: Debemos Custodiar La Vida, el Don Más Valioso CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (ACI Prensa) - El Arzobispo de Monterrey y presidente de la Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano (CEM), Mons. Rogelio Cabrera López, alentó a “custodiar siempre la vida” ante las campañas que buscan legalizar el aborto en el país.

En un mensaje publicado este 29 de septiembre, Mons. Cabrera López indicó que “el don más valioso que todos los seres humanos debemos custodiar por siempre es la vida”.

“Bajo ninguna circunstancia debemos de permitir que este maravilloso regalo, otorgado amorosamente por nuestro Creador, sea mancillado. No es justo que los seres humanos dejes que nos envuelva el egoísmo y nos convirtamos en verdugos de los más desprotegidos”, expresó.

El Presidente de la CEM lamentó que “las constantes campañas antivida que se realizan en el mundo, son fruto de una serie de situaciones adversas que ocasionan un cambio en la mentalidad moral de los individuos”.

Para hacer frente a esto, dijo, “es necesario que reflexionemos en cómo revertir estos pensamientos, nunca con violencia, sino en un diálogo inteligente en el que, cimentados en la verdad, podamos incentivar más acciones de prevención que, lejos de mover a la libertad se muestran de los instrumentos que nos hagan responsables de las acciones realizadas y de sus consecuencias”.

Mons. Cabrera López dijo que “es muy fácil decirnos ‘dueños’ de nuestro cuerpo, pero no debemos olvidar que cada uno de nosotros, hemos sido gestados en el vientre de nuestra madre, y ahora podemos disfrutar de este mundo”.

“Conocemos muchos de los argumentos que buscan fundamentar las campañas antivida, pero ninguno de esos argumentos pueden ser realmente validados cuando existen acciones concretas que miles de hermanos realizan en el mundo para ayudar a revertir las situaciones de pobreza y abandono”, señaló.

“Me uno en la oración a todos, para pedir a nuestro Creador que nos conceda la luz de su Espíritu Santo para que seamos conscientes de la importancia de defender la vida en todas sus etapas, desde el momento de su concepción hasta la muerte natural”, expresó.

Arzobispo de México Tras Ataques de Abortistas a Catedral: Defendamos Diálogo y Tolerancia CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (ACI Prena) - Ante los ataques realizados por violentas feministas a la Catedral Metropolitana, el 28 de septiembre, el Arzobispo Primado de México, Cardenal Carlos Aguiar Retes, pidió defender “el diálogo, la tolerancia y el amor”.
En un mensaje publicado a través de su cuenta oficial en Twitter la noche del 28 de septiembre, el Cardenal Aguiar Retes señaló que “saludó y reconoció a todas las personas que hoy se unieron para orar, y para cuidar los templos en el centro de la Ciudad de México, así como para hacer valer el derecho a la manifestación en libertad y en paz”.

entre mexicanas y mexicanos, por diversas que sean sus ideas o formas de pensar. Defendamos el diálogo, la tolerancia y el amor al prójimo como herramientas para construir el país de todas y todos.

— Carlos Aguiar Retes (@ArzobispoAguiar) Sep- tember 29, 2019

“La Iglesia rechaza tajantemente toda forma de confrontación violenta entre mexicanas y mexicanos, por diversas que sean sus ideas o formas de pensar”, añadió.

“Defendamos el diálogo, la tolerancia y el amor al prójimo como herramientas para construir el país de todas y todos”, dijo.

La tarde del 28 de septiembre un colectivo feminista, en el marco de su marcha para promover la legalización del aborto en todo el país, atacó la Catedral Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México. Para defender los templos incluso armados”.

En diálogo con ACI Prensa, Javier Rodríguez, director de Comunicación de la Arquidiócesis de México, justificó el comunicado en que los sacerdotes locales se distanciaban de las campañas convocadas en redes sociales y servicios de mensajería para defender los templos ante las amenazas de los abortistas.

El día de hoy más de 20 mil yucatecos decidieron defender la #Vida, la #Familia y las #Libertades. Agra- decemos a cada uno de los asistentes por este gran esfuerzo sigamos #AbrazandoAMéxico #FNFyUcua- catan — Frente Nacional (@FNFamilia) September 29, 2019

Cortés alentó además a exigirle a las autoridades mexicanas, especialmente a Claudia Sheinbaum, gobernadora de Ciudad de México, que “haga lo que tiene que hacer: cumplir con la ley y proteger tanto los templos físicos, que están destinados para el culto, como el ejercicio fundamental de la creencia religiosa”.

“Exijamos de manera muy puntual a Claudia Shein- baum, gobernadora de CDMX, que ‘haga lo que tiene que hacer: cumplir con la ley y proteger tanto los templos físicos, que están destinados para el culto, como el ejercicio fundamental de la creencia religiosa’”, expresó.

El Papa Clama Contra Un Mundo Elitista y Cruel con Los Excluidos VATICANO (ACI Prensa) - El Papa Francisco renovó su llamado a la acogida de los refugiados y migrantes que huyen de las guerras y de la pobreza, y recordó que muchos de los países que se niegan a la acogida son precisamente los que fabrican las armas que luego se emplearán en los conflictos que empujan a poblaciones enteras al éxodo.

“Las guerras afectan sólo a algunas regiones del mundo; sin embargo, la fabricación de armas y su venta se lleva a cabo en otras regiones, que luego no quieren hacerse cargo de los refugiados que dichos conflictos generan”.

El Papa Francisco hizo esta denuncia en su homilía de la Misa que, con motivo de la Jornada Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado es, precisamente -los que fabrican las armas que luego se emplearán en los conflictos que empujan a poblaciones enteras al éxodo.

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El Pontificado señaló que “el Señor nos pide que reflexionemos sobre las injusticias que generan exclusión, en particular sobre los privilegios de unos pocos, que perjudican a muchos otros cuando perduren.”

“El mundo actual es cada día más elitista y cruel con los excluidos. Una verdad que provoca dolor. Este mundo, cada día es más elitista y más cruel con los excluidos”, lamentó.

El problema descrito por el Papa supone que “los países en vías de desarrollo siguen agotando sus mejo-res recursos naturales y humanos en beneficio de unos pocos mercados privilegiados”.

“Quienes padecen las consecuencias son siempre los pequeños, los pobres, los más vulnerables, a quienes se les impide sentarse a la mesa y se les deja sólo las migajas del banquete”.

En ese contexto de injusticias y de conflictos que afectan a los más pobres, el Santo Padre recordó que “como cristianos no podemos permanecer indiferentes ante el drama de las viejas y nuevas pobrezas, de las soledades más oscuras, del desprecio y de la discriminación de quienes no pertenecen a ‘nuestro’ grupo”.

“No podemos permanecer insensibles, con el corazón anestesiado, ante la miseria de tantas perso-nas inocentes. No podemos sino llorar. No podemos dejarse hacer, como hombres, como iglesia, como pobres, menos desvalidos ante el drama de las viejas y nuevas pobrezas, las soledades más oscuras, del desprecio y de la discriminación de quienes no pertenecen a ‘nuestro’ grupo”.

“El mundo actual es cada día más elitista y cruel con los excluidos. Una verdad que provoca dolor. Este mundo, cada día es más elitista y más cruel con los excluidos”.

South Bend, Ind., Sep 27 (CNA) - It has been more than a full year since the sex abuse allegations against the former cardinal Theodore McCarrick and the publication of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report set off a shockwave of further abuse accusations and investigations in the Church in the United States and beyond.

It has been 17 years since the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) implemented the Dallas Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which proposed a “zero-tolerance policy” for child abuse in the Catholic Church in the U.S.

It was just this week that a panel of four experts on the abuse crisis gathered at the University of Notre Dame to discuss the question: “Where are we now?” and to propose ways for the Church to continue moving forward.

Panelists at the Sept. 25 event included Juan Carlos Cruz, an abuse survivor and advocate from Chile whose complaints were initially dismissed by Pope Francis (though were later accepted with an apology from the pope); Archbishop William E. Lori of Balti-more; Kathleen McChesney, a former FBI executive assistant director who helped the USCCB imple-ment the 2002 Dallas Charter; and Peter Steinfels, a long-time journalist for Commonweal who wrote a lengthy review of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report on the sex abuse crisis. John Allen Jr., editor of Crux, moderated the panel.

While much has improved regarding the clerical sex abuse crisis in the U.S. since 2002, the panelists gave a resounding response that even one case of abuse occurring in the Church is too many, and that a change of hearts and attitudes, and not just of policies, is needed for the Church to progress and for victims to heal.

“The one thing that I am certain about is that most of us, myself very much included, know much less about this painful, stomach-churning scandal than we think we know,” Steinfels said.

Steinfels noted that since 2002, the Church in the U.S. made significant progress in the abuse crisis, reducing the number of cases of sexual abuse from about 600 per year in the 1950-1970s down to roughly 20 or fewer cases per year, post-Dallas Charter.

“Anyone who obscures this dramatic drop in Cath-olic clergy abuse, as I think the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report did, is not telling the truth,” he noted.

But that is still not enough, Steinfels added, because “one case is one too many,” and these statistics of suc-cess “can blind us to the excruciating, life-derailing devastation caused by a single case of abuse.”

He also predicted that news of Church sexual abuse was not going anywhere anytime soon, because “the abuse scandal has gone global. More than 120 million children sexually abused worldwide - it is woeful that even a small fraction has touched the Church.”

Even though the bulk of the abuse crisis in the U.S. occurred decades ago, Steinfels said, there are still victims coming forward who were afraid to share their stories until now, and whose experiences of pain and betrayal “are like landmines left buried in the ground after the war.”

In one suggestion for a way forward, Steinfels encouraged Catholic universities like Notre Dame to compile the history of the sex abuse crisis, from which others could learn.

“A genuine history will require archives, oral history interviews, and study of scandal’s religious, cultural, and economic context,” he said.

“It has been said that we walk backwards into the future looking at our past. A genuine history is needed for our future.”

In his remarks, Cruz said that he would leave the statistics to the experts and speak from the heart. While Cruz’ story of abuse at the hands of his parish priest in Chile was initially dismissed by Pope Francis, the Holy Father later apologized to Cruz and other victims for being “part of the problem” in May 2018.

Cruz told the panel audience that what sustained him through the pain of his experience of abuse was his Catholic faith.

“I decided early on that I wasn’t going to let them win. I wasn’t going to let the bad ones win,” he said.

“I believe that the relationship anyone has with God… it’s the most basic human right that one can have, is to believe in what you believe, and nobody can mess with that. And I wasn’t going to let them mess with that.”

In a word of encouragement to abuse survivors, Cruz said that while it is hard to come forward with a story of abuse, there are people who can help.

“There are so many people who want to lend you a hand, to help you through that horrible pain,” he said.

Cruz said that he was encouraged by Pope Francis’ apology and willingness to listen to his story and those of other abuse survivors, but that he was discouraged by the attitudes of some bishops who promise to improve but who continue to cover up and mishandle cases of abuse.

“Pope Francis wants to solve the problem, I’ve talked to him and know he’s sincere,” he said. “However, the bishops go, talk to him, say, ‘absolutely Pope Francis,’ they bow, they kiss his ring, go back to their countries and do the same thing they’ve been doing…nobody holds them accountable and that needs to stop.”

In her remarks, McChesney also called for a change of heart and attitude among the bishops.

“When I first worked for the USCCB, the Dallas Charter was new, we were excited about implement-ing it, and I talked with many survivors,” she noted.

“And one man said: ‘Look, you can have all the pro-grams in the world you want, you can have policies, you can have trainings, you can have background checks and investigations, you can do all of those things, but until the bishops realize that there has to
CAN also helped him discover skills in his current profession, which are reflected in other professions, like office work. “They keep you motivated,” he said, noting that the house is always open for people to return for additional help. “They were very good to me.”

Brown joined Christ House over nine months ago, with no housing and no job. Now, he is working as a dishwasher at Hen Quarters, a restaurant serving Southern comfort food in Alexandria. He cleans dishes, floors, and linens.

Spring explained that because of his background in hotel work, CAN worked with him to discover the goals of his career. He expressed hope that he might eventually be promoted to hotel management. He said CAN also helped him discover skills in his current profession, which are reflected in other professions, like office work.

“All the skills that you need to do this job are available,” he said.

“God is good all the time,” he said. “Best Christmas I ever had,” said Brown.

“My family, my workers and people who surround me, especially Christ house and CAN group, I appreciate each one of them.”

Both the men expressed gratitude for the job skills they’ve gained, but they also expressed appreciation for the community. One of their favorite aspects was the annual Christmas event. They said they had never experienced anything like it.

“Best Christmas I ever had,” said Brown.

“God is good all the time,” he said.

CALENDAR

October 5th & 6th Annual Tri-Tip BBQ
The Knights of Columbus chapter at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Windsor will be holding its annual Tri-Tip BBQ fundraiser during the weekend of October 5th and 6th. This event supports our “Feed the Hungry” program. You may purchase tickets for tri-tip which will be prepared on Saturday, October 5th or purchase tickets for tri-tip which will be prepared on Sunday, October 6th. Saturday tickets are only valid for tri-tip prepared on Saturday and Sunday tickets are only valid for tri-tip prepared on Sunday. The pick-up time for Saturday tickets is from 6:00pm to 7:00pm on Saturday, October 5th. The pick-up time for Sunday tickets is from 10:00am to 11:00am on Sunday, October 6th. The cost of a serving of tri-tip is $25. Servings weigh between 3 and 4 pounds. The tickets will go on sale after every weekend mass beginning Saturday, September 7th. For additional information, please contact the church office (707) 837-8662.

October 5th Harvest Ball
The Harvest Ball is a semi-formal young adult dance sponsored by the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Diocese of Santa Rosa. All young adults ages 18-39, whether single, engaged, or married are welcome to attend. Come with a date or go stag! Our DJ will keep you entertained with a variety of pop and swing songs. You’ll enjoy wine, beer, cheese, fruit, desserts, and coffee as you dance the night away! We’ll even have a swing dance lesson to get you started! D Buy your tickets for $20 online in advance, because the price goes up to $30 at the door! www.eventbrite.com/catholic-youth-harvest-ball-2019-tickets-69253784935

October 12th Theology of the Body Conference
(Oakland, CA) Rethinking Relationships, Integrity and Sex. For teens, parents, young adults, teachers. Hear dynamic presentations, learn practical tips and share the location of our conference in the Walnut Room. Sponsored by Ethos California, an affiliate of Heartbeat International and National Institute of Life Advocates (NIFLA). 9am-3:30pm. We will share the location of our conference in the Walnut Creek area with your reply. Seating is limited. Bagel breakfast and luncheon buffet provided. The event is FREE. Advance Registration is required. To register, call (925) 449-5887. Or visit www.ethosca.org.

November 9th Sacred Art Paint Party
You are invited to paint your own interpretation of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton with the beloved Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa. No experience is necessary. Artist, Monika Barrack will teach you, step by step, how to paint this devotional work of art. Time: 1:00 - 4:00pm. Place: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church 4595 Snyder Lane, Rohnert Park, CA. Donation: $50.00, includes all supplies. Proceeds benefit the Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa, and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Youth Faith Formation. To reserve your easel or for more information, RSVP: Jennifer Bedoka (707) 585-3708, or (707) 888-9672 bedokaparties@yahoo.com

Ongoing in Santa Rosa: Catholic Charities’ Senior Transportation Program
Ongoing in Santa Rosa: Catholic Charities’ Senior Transportation Program is a free service for seniors 60+ living in Santa Rosa. Our dedicated and trained volunteer drivers take seniors to medical appointments, grocery shopping and other similar errands. Medical appointments are given priority. Our program operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. To schedule a ride, call (707) 528-2063 and leave a message with your ride request the week before you need your scheduled ride.

Ongoing:
Thursdays 5:30pm “Pray for Priests” prayer group St. Sebastian Parish. Is God calling you to enrich your prayer life in the very meaningful way? If so, you are welcome to come to our parish “Pray for Priests” prayer group on Thursdays, 5:30-6:30pm in St. Sebastian’s church. Weekly attendance is not a requirement, join us when you can EVERY 2ND Saturday of the Month (October 2019 through July 2020, except Holy Saturday, April 11, 2020, 9:30am-11:30pm

Maris Stella Institute’s Adult Catechisms Classes
Want to deepen your relationship with God? Register with the Maris Stella Institute (MSI): Your Catechism Training Institute. MSI offers adult and young adult formation classes in the “Catechism of the Catholic Church.” Both English and Spanish programs are available. Classes are scheduled each 2nd Saturday of the month, both in person (at Kolbe Academy & Trinity Prep Catholic School in Napa) and live online. A Catechetical Diploma or Advanced Catechetical Diploma with a specialization in the “Catechism of the Catholic Church” is offered at the end of the year for each of our graduating students. Registrations are year-round, so come to one class, a few classes, or commit to the entire year, whatever fits your schedule and interest best. Change your life by experiencing our awesome formation grounded in Sacred Scripture, fidelity to the Magisterium, devotion to Our Lady, the Star of the Sea, and most importantly, centered on Jesus’ real presence in the Holy Eucharist. Don’t delay; register today at www.marisstellainstitute.org.

Youth and Young Adults
Catholic Young Adults (18-38ish) check out: www.catholic. org and join our regular meetings at the Chancrey (1st Monday of the Month) or at Sonoma State Catholic Newman Center hosted by the Young Adult community “The Father’s Glory” (event details at www.transformingfire.org). Meetings are a great place to ask questions, expand prayer life, and form friendships. Stay current on Youth & Young Adult ministry events in the diocese: www.sryouth.org & www.catholicya.org. Humboldt State Newman Center events: Regina - rfoinaugh1@hotmail.com http://www.hsunewmancenter.com

To have your calendar event listed please email us! Srdiocese1@gmail.com
We can help them. If we encounter someone in need, we need to do what those teachings should be clear when they say that if they're fleeing from...they're afraid to stay in Mexico, because that's where they're fleeing from...they're afraid to stay in Mexico, because most of them have faced violence there. Robberies and kidnappings among the migrants waiting in Mexico are common, he said.

The HOPE Border Institute, along with the Diocese of El Paso, in July initiated a Border Refugee Assistance Fund to send money to organizations working with migrants and refugees in Juárez. “Do we believe there is a usefulness to a border? Absolutely. The Church has not problem with that usefulness. But we also know that there are higher laws than the law that has to do with a nation’s border.”

“We are Catholic Christians, and we are citizens. If the two ever come into conflict, we need to be Catholic Christians first,” Seitz told CNA.

The majority of the migrants that the Church in El Paso helps have already been processed by ICE and are awaiting their court date for asylum.

“The fact is that most of these people that are crossing, seeking asylum, are not breaking the law. They’re following the law that was established for people like our ancestors who came here seeking refuge...And we need to try and see things through the eyes of Jesus Christ and through the teachings of our Church. And those teachings should be clear when they say that if we encounter someone in need, we need to do what we can to help them.”

Youth News

Sonoma County Pro-Life First Annual Essay Contest

WHO MAY ENTER? Any student in Sonoma County in grades 3 to 12. Entries will be judged separately by age group as follows: Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12

CASH PRIZES!!!
- Grades 3-5: First Prize, $50, Second Prize, $25
- Grades 6-8: First Prize, $75, Second Prize, $50
- Grades 9-12: First Prize, $100, Second Prize, $75

Essays may be submitted by mail or electronically. Mail submissions should be typed, double spaced, and written on one side of the paper only. On a SEPARATE PAGE, contestants must supply their name, grade in school, address, phone number, and email address. Please send to SCPL, P.O. Box 4035, Santa Rosa CA 95402.

Electronic submissions should be submitted by e-mail to SonomaProLife@zoho.com Please submit essay AND contestant’s name, grade in school, address, phone number and e-mail address in the body of the e-mail (not on an attachment).

To insure impartiality, before an essay is judged we will separate personal contact information from the essay itself.

Entries must be received by November 21, 2019. Winners will be notified on December 14, and announced on the Sonoma County Pro-Life Website on December 15, and publicly at the Sonoma County Pro-Life Annual Pro-Life Rally on January 26, 2020.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:
All entries will be judged on the basis of clarity of expression, factual accuracy, and originality. Minor deviations from the suggested length will not be penalized, but entrants are expected to work within the guidelines suggested. Essay topics and length for each age group are as follows:

Grades 3-5. Write an essay of 200-250 words on one of the following topics:
1. What can you and your parents do to show that you love babies, and to help their mothers take care of them.
2. Do you have grandparents, aunts or uncles, or older family friends? What can you and your family do to include older people in your life so that they won’t feel forgotten?

Grades 6-8. Write an essay of 300 to 400 words on either of the following topics:
1. Everyone on earth begins life in his or her mother’s womb. Being pro-life means supporting the right of each person to grow, thrive, and experience many good things. Why it important for people to be pro-life?
2. As people get old they may not be able to take care of themselves. They may feel their lives don’t matter, and may consider killing themselves. How can you help these people to feel their lives are still worth living?

Grades 9-12. Write an essay of 400-500 words on one of the following topics.
1. Why are you pro-life? If you wish, share a personal story relating either to the life of the unborn or to the life of someone who is old and/or ill.
2. Many people today are confused about what it means to be pro-life. How can you respectfully share your belief that the life of the unborn should be protected by law?
be a true accountability, I and my fellow survivors are not going to heal.”

“It is so critical for the men and women who have been abused to know that someone is taking responsibility for what has happened to them,” McChesney said.

There has also been a lot of talk about the rethinking of seminary formation in the wake of the abuse crisis, McChesney said, with suggestions to really emphasize the human formation aspect of seminary formation.

But this “puts the cart before the horse,” she argued.

“In my experience, I think that selection is more important than formation...you can have the best formation programs, the best seminaries in the entire world, but if you have selected the wrong person to go into seminary, someone who is so troubled, who doesn’t know what they want to do, has mental health issues...that person is never going to become a healthy cleric. So to have a healthy presbyterate, you need to start with healthy men,” McChesney said.

She also credited lay men and women, as well as some dedicated clergy, with working on the ground levels to bring the abuse numbers down since the Dallas Charter was established and who continue to work with and pressure bishops into doing more.

Because there have been so few cases since the 2002 Charter, McChesney added, it is all the more urgent to thoroughly investigate the cases of abuse that have occurred since then, and to ask how and why they happened.

“There are not as many cases—but there have been cases. Why? Who missed that lesson and why? And where was the oversight of those persons who abused?” she said.

Finally, she added, the Church must fight against issue fatigue and complacency when it comes to the sex abuse crisis.

“We can’t let our tiredness, our sadness, overtake our passion for continuing to work on these issues,” she said.

Archbishop Lori, once a member of the USCCB’s Committee on Sexual Abuse, noted that he was speaking only for himself and not all bishops. Lori said that for him, learning how to really listen to victims of the sex abuse crisis has been one of the “steepest learning curves” in the handling of the sex abuse crisis.

It may be the instinct of a bishop to offer a victim the help and support of the Church, Lori said, but survivors of abuse do not always want that. He had to learn how to really listen and realize that “I as the bishop listening to this cannot fully appreciate the nature of the experience that’s being described to me.”

He had to learn to not try to “be the person who has the answer, not try to be the person who pushes or who offers something that might not be wanted by the victim-survivor in that moment, the victim-survivor has to be in the driver’s seat. It’s not just a question of meeting them or of affirming, it’s a question of listening deeply, and believing them.

Adding to the chorus of previous comments that “one case is too many,” Lori also echoed the other panelists’ call for conversion among the bishops and other Church clergy and officials.

“The need remains and will always remain not to see the charter, these norms...simply as policies to be complied with,” Lori said. “In the grace of the Holy Spirit, there’s really got to be, on the part of people like me, my co-workers, lay co-workers, a conversion of mind and heart.”

Protecting children and listening to and helping victims of clerical abuse must be “as much as part of the life of the Church...as evangelization, Catholic education, or raising up vocations,” he added.

“We’ve got to continue being held accountable, because the Church’s mission depends on it.”

During the discussion, most panelists also noted that the abuse crisis has in some cases been “weaponized” by both conservative and liberal camps within the Church to push certain other agendas.

This is “a shameful use of what has happened to these men and women,” McChesney remarked.

During a question-and-answer session, Lori added that part of the ongoing solution to the abuse crisis is bringing more lay professional voices to the decision table.

“I need the help of qualified, committed laypersons who have expertise that I’ll never have,” Lori said. “Who’s sitting around the decision table?...that affects Church governance and how we look at this.”

Cruz also called for more young people and more laity, particularly women, to be involved in the decisions and solutions to the abuse crisis.

“We need more women in the Church that are trained, that are prepared, to break this men’s club, to bring all their talent and their training to help us heal,” he said. “We can’t have women in the sacristy, we have to have them front and center in the Church, and we can’t wait for bishops to finish their learning curve, survivors need us now!”

Cruz added that he gets frustrated when he hears bishops or other clergy say that prior to the Dallas Charter and other protocols, they did not know how to act or handle cases of abuse.

“I want to tell them: raping a child has always been wrong—before Christ, after Christ, in the Middle Ages...and it always will be wrong. So you better learn.”

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(Zimbabwe’s First Saint, cont. from page 18) were found below his coffin, reports say.

For his compassion toward the afflicted, Bradburne has been called the “Damien of the 20th century” in reference to St. Damian of Molokai who cared for lepers in Hawaii.

“He did a good thing, and that is what it is about. The love the lepers continue to have for him, because of his sacrifices, is truly astonishing,” Kate McPherson of the John Bradburne Memorial Trust told reporters in July.

In an interview with BBC, Fr Fidelis Mukonori who worked closely with the Bradburne recalled his friend’s account of living with lepers. “From the day I set my eyes on these people, I discovered I am also a leper among my own people.”

“Working for and with them I feel appreciated, that I am doing something good and they call me Baba [Father] John,” Mukonori remembered Bradburne telling him.

“He arrived with few possessions, only love,” Colleta Mafuta, 78, a leprosy survivor who knew Bradburne told BBC.

“The colony was filthy and the people were dirty. There was no medication, no clothes and people went hungry. He took care of everyone’s needs—feeding people, and washing and bandaging our sores,” she added.

According to Independent Catholic News, two people have claimed miraculous cures through Bradburne’s intercession: a woman in South African who regained the use of her legs, and a man in Scotland cured of a brain tumor.

On July 1, the Vatican’s Congregation for the Causes of Saints approved initial investigations into Bradburne’s sainthood cause. On Sept. 5, Archbishop Robert Ndlovu of Harare celebrated a Mass at Mutemwa where Bradburne served, to mark 40 years since his death and to officially launch his sainthood cause.

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