

Catholic institutions
faced disruption
during protest

3

Young adults living
their faith in the
workplace

20

Fleeing Ukraine

Responses to
war in Ukraine
– pgs 2,3,7,13,21



'PUBLICATION OF THE YEAR' - ARPA AWARDS 2020

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- p17** Papal medal
- p5** Passionists farewelled
- p4** Rural roadshow
- p4** New head for Sacred Heart College
- p5** Good statistics needed for service provision
- p10** Darkest chapter in NZ Church history
- p11** Pope Lenten message

St Mary of the Angels Parish postpones March centenary

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Following the move to the red setting in the Covid-19 protection framework, St Mary of the Angels Parish in Wellington has decided not to celebrate the centenary of the parish church on the weekend beginning March 25, 2022, as had been planned.

A statement from the parish noted that, given the restrictions in place, it would not be possible to truly celebrate the history of the church, especially its musical and liturgical traditions.

The centenary celebrations will be a weekend of liturgy and music which will include a concert, church tour, and Masses with the archbishops. A date for the celebrations will be decided once the move to the orange Covid-19 protection framework setting has been announced. Hopefully they will take place later this year, the statement added.



St Mary of the Angels church, Wellington (Wikimedia Commons)

Archbishop Balvo off to Australia

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Pope Francis has announced that American Archbishop Charles Balvo, a former Apostolic Nuncio to New Zealand, will serve as the next Apostolic Nuncio to Australia.

Archbishop Balvo, an American who is currently the Vatican's ambassador to the Czech Republic, has also previously served in apostolic nunciatures in South America, Africa, Europe and the Middle East, in a Vatican diplomatic career that has spanned more than 30 years.

He was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to New Zealand and several Pacific Island nations in 2005. He was also Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific Ocean.

According to a statement from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference website, in 2013 he was named Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya, and took on responsibility for South Sudan after the country was established. While posted in Kenya, Archbishop Balvo also served as Permanent Observer to the United Nations Environment Programme and Human Settlements Programme. He has been in the Czech Republic since 2018. He also served as head of the Holy See's delegation to the 28th Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Economic and Environmental Forum, held in Prague in 2020.



Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Charles Balvo (Photo: Wikipedia)

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge welcomed Archbishop Balvo's appointment on behalf of the Australian

bishops.

"Archbishop Balvo is no stranger to the Antipodes, having served as Nuncio in New Zealand and the Pacific — and I myself came to know him at that time," Archbishop Coleridge said.

"But he returns to this part of the world enriched by his service as Nuncio in Africa and Europe."

Archbishop Coleridge said that Archbishop Balvo "comes to us at a complex and challenging time in the Church and in Australia".

"But his combination of gifts and experience will equip him well for all that lies ahead," he said.

"The bishops look forward to working with him closely, as together we face decisions about the future of the Church in this country and beyond."

Archbishop Balvo succeeds Archbishop Adolfo Yllana, who last year completed six-and-a-half years in Australia, when Pope Francis appointed him Apostolic Nuncio to Israel and Cyprus, and Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine.

On the front cover: A child from Ukraine waits for a bus going to the Netherlands in Beregsurany, Hungary, on March 1, 2022, after fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine. (CNS photo/Bernadett Szabo, Reuters)

NZCatholic

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Donations for Caritas work in Ukraine

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand has agreed to send \$10,000 to support Caritas work in Ukraine, as Caritas in this country says it stands in solidarity with its sister organisations and with the people of Ukraine.

"We pray for all the people in Ukraine, especially the vulnerable and marginalised communities who will be most severely impacted by the recent invasion of the country. Eastern Ukraine has already suffered more than seven years of conflict which has dramatically impacted the lives of families, with more than 850,000 people forced to flee their homes, and nearly 3 million people relying on humanitarian assistance. The invasion will only increase the number of people displaced, and put those already driven from their homes in an even more vulnerable position" said Roger

Ellis, engagement manager for Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand.

Caritas Ukraine and Caritas-Spes are already helping thousands of internally-displaced persons (IDPs) who are now desperately searching for a safe shelter, both in western Ukraine and abroad. The two Caritas organisations are providing internally-displaced people on the move with essential information, food, drinking water and personal hygiene kits, as well as a safe and secure place to sleep, eat and wash themselves. Caritas staff and volunteers also provide safe transport for displaced families to reach their loved ones.

Caritas has been working in eastern Ukraine since April 2014, and has helped nearly 826,500 people affected by the crisis since then. Caritas Ukraine will continue to assist the most vulnerable people through providing essential emergency response, including

emergency shelters, food relief packages and cash distributions. In addition, Caritas Ukraine continues to support impacted communities affected by the long-term impacts of conflict, including emergency supplies, education and healthcare.

"The invasion will dramatically worsen humanitarian need, displacing people from their homes, disrupting essential public services including water, power, transport and banking, and damaging vital infrastructure and homes. Our thoughts and prayers are with our colleagues in Caritas Ukraine, Caritas-Spes, and with all the Ukrainian people during this crisis" said Mr Ellis.

Donations to the work of Caritas in Ukraine can be made through the Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand website at <https://caritas.org.nz/donate-online> click on "Emergency Fund" and reference "Ukraine".

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Lent journey ends at foot of cross, preaches Anglican bishop

by MICHAEL OTTO

"We should not sugar-coat Ash Wednesday," said the Anglican Bishop of Christchurch, Bishop Peter Carrell, at a joint Catholic-Anglican service at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral on March 2.

"This beginning of Lent, the start of a focused journey of prayer and fasting through 40 days, ends at the foot of the cross," Bishop Carrell said. "At the place where God in Christ dies for one reason — to solve the problem of sin."

At the start of his homily, Bishop Carrell noted that this was the first time as Anglican Bishop of Christchurch that he was preaching at one of these combined Ash Wednesday services. Typically, the Anglican bishop preaches at the Catholic venue in Christchurch and vice versa. Two years ago, the then-Archbishop of York preached at the service.

Bishop Carrell said that talk of sin is not comfortable in today's world.

"We tend to want to sugar coat sin, and the problem of wrongdoing, to find excuses for our own poor behaviour, or even the poor behaviour of others."

"One of the ironies of the tragedy

in Ukraine is that, for years, people have been making out Putin to be someone who he turns out not to have ever been," he added.

Sin is a problem and it is not easily dealt with, the bishop said.

"So significant is the problem of our sin for God, that God responded by taking upon God's own self, through God's very own Son, the provision of a solution."

"As we struggle with sin in our lives . . . let's keep focused on Christ and the cross. God wants us to be righteous, and God has paid all costs for that to happen. God's will is that we grow into the very likeness of Christ, and our challenge in this life is to cooperate with God's will, with God's plan for our lives."

Bishop Carrell cited Scriptural references that encourage people to persevere in the struggle to try to be righteous and not to fall into sin.

"What in 2022, might some aspects of living for Christ and struggling with sin mean?"

He suggested the following: "It is vital that we live as transparently as possible. That we harbour no secrets about our personal and collective behaviour. That we are accountable to others for our deeds and misdeeds. That may be with a small



A screenshot of the service (From left) Fr Simon Eccleton, Archbishop Paul Martin, SM, Bishop Peter Carrell, Dean Lawrence Kimberley

group or a supervisor, or through a spiritual director. Or simply with a friend with whom we will be honest. Finally, that we confess our sins to one another and are willing to address sin in each other."

He had also referenced a passage in the Book of Common Prayer that

confessed sin as a community — "We have offended . . ." — and which stated "there is no health in us".

He said the struggle against sin was not just about striving to be holy as an individual, but pertained to the collective life as God's people too.

Catholic institutions disrupted during Wgtn protest

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Catholic institutions near Parliament took measures aimed at ensuring the safety of their communities during the 23-day occupation of Parliament grounds by protestors against vaccine mandates.

The board of St Mary's College, Wellington, took the decision to move to online learning from February 24.

Principal Andrew Murray explained in a February 23 facebook post that this decision was taken for several reasons, including that it was "unsafe to walk around Thorndon's shops — there are numerous protestors at Thorndon New World who

are not wearing masks and are challenging those who do".

Other reasons were the fact that students were being dropped off by buses further into the city and made to walk past protestors, and many parents, students and staff had "expressed concern about the current level of safety in Thorndon".

"As you are aware, the safety and well-being of our students and staff is paramount," Mr Murray wrote.

"This is an unusual situation, which has caught many by surprise and we must respond appropriately."

The college still supervised children on site, and stated in a March 2 facebook post that the site would remain open for learning, and that supervision was available on site. But all learning would be set online.

Other safety measures during the protest involved students only taking certain routes to the college, with access to the college being through a safe entrance, and the deployment of security guards, police, Māori wardens and volunteers.

In a March 6 facebook post, it was stated that police confirmed that they would again have a police/Māori warden presence in the area on March 7, and the use of a police-supported route to access the college was recommended.

A similar safe route, supported by police, Māori Wardens, Wellington City Council staff and whānau volunteers, was recommended for pupils accessing Sacred Heart Cathedral School in Thorndon during the final days of the protest. Earlier in the protest, staff and volunteers supported the same route.

In consultation with the Sacred Heart Cathedral

School Board and the Ministry of Education, a decision was taken to learn from home on March 3 and 4, following the enforced end of the protest on March 2. There was supervision at the school for the students who required it. Face-to-face learning was available again from March 7, and advice was given about security and route use for students using bus or train services.

On February 18, it was reported that Sacred Heart principal Bernadette Murfitt was among Wellington community leaders who signed an open letter asking "that the current illegal protest activities in and around the Parliament precinct end immediately. There is a right to peaceful protest in New Zealand that it is important to uphold. However, this protest has gone well beyond that point".

"Those who live, work and go to school and university have been subjected to significant levels of abuse and harassment when attempting to move about in the area," the letter stated, before making points about the impact on traffic, business and university study.

"The people of Wellington have had enough of this illegal activity, harassment and disruption, we ask that it end immediately," the letter concluded.

The protests also saw the temporary closure of The Catholic Centre and the Connolly Hall chapel.

A March 6 Sacred Heart Cathedral notice stated that, "With the protestors having now departed, and [with] the concrete bollards due to be removed over the next few days, we look forward to getting back to normality. So long as there is no renewed activity around the area over this weekend, Connolly Hall chapel will reopen on Tuesday (March 8), beginning with 8.00am Mass".

NZ Christian leaders react to Russian invasion of Ukraine

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The leaders of New Zealand's four main Christian denominations released a statement on the Russian aggression in Ukraine.

The leaders are Right Rev. Hamish Galloway (moderator, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand), Andrew Doubleday (president, Methodist Church of New Zealand), Cardinal John Dew (Archbishop of Wellington) and Archbishop Don Tamihere/Archbishop Philip Richardson (Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia).

The statement is as follows:

Across the globe people are horrified by the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

In a region that learnt the devastating lessons of war last century, the pattern has the tragic possibility of repeating. It flies in the face of much of the progress in peaceful coexistence that Europe has made in recent decades.

Once again, on European soil, we see the rights and wellbeing of millions of ordinary people trampled on by an aggressive and entitled leader.

It also flies in the face of the Jesus-values of peace-making. In this instance, those values call us to stand against violence and stand with the oppressed.

Those values call for de-escalation and peace talks. They call for humility and kindness.

As Christians we stand in solidarity with the vast chorus of voices calling for the aggression to end and the peaceful solutions to begin.

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Dunedin rural roadshow gathers many views

by ROWENA OREJANA

The rural roadshow that Dunedin Bishop Michael Dooley and his diocesan pastoral council embarked on last year showed a Church saddened by the current realities of amalgamations and the pandemic, but also hopeful and willing to work to keep the faith alive.

The bishop, with members of the DPC, started in Riverton in July, and had the last consultation in Waikouaiti in November. In between, they also visited Mossburn, Gore, Cromwell and Kurow.

Those who accompanied Bishop Dooley on the trip included past chair of the DPC Tui Pasco, pastoral ministry coordinator Amy Armstrong, and DPC member Stephanie Swann.

A total of 113 people attended the six meetings. Most were in the 50-and-above age group and were Pakeha.

Ms Swann, who organised the meetings, said she was struck by the number of people who attended.

"When we first set up these meetings, we thought we might get 6-8 people. This has demonstrated there was a desire for something," she said.

She was also touched by "the depth and variety of emotions expressed, especially around church closures, even though they understand the practicality of the decisions made".

"The sense of loss, not just of the church, but also their community, was still very raw for some," she observed.

The team recently released the results of the roadshow, which was done ahead of Pope Francis' call for a synod, the process for which starts with a diocesan phase.

"While these meetings were held just before the synod process started, they have given us a great insight to our rural communities and their needs," Ms Swann said.

She said that, while each parish is unique, there were several general issues mentioned at all the meetings.

"These included ageing parish populations and dwindling numbers," she said.

She said that the rest of the discussions could be categorized into three topics: Pastoral/Liturgy, Youth, and Finance/Buildings.

For Pastoral/Liturgy, there was a realisation that the community or parish needs to take responsibility for formation and not be too reliant on priests. The report said that some people feel they are getting too old to lead "Service of the Word", and that a succession plan needs to be in place to ensure that people "do not get worn out".

The meetings also highlighted the need to at-

tract young people back to the Church by making the liturgy and music more relevant to the youth. Some suggested that there should be a plan from the diocese to assist parents and children who are not in Catholic schools.

Finances are also a worry, as it is getting more difficult to maintain older buildings due to lack of funds.

"Localised issues were expressed in several meetings where there is an older congregation, falling numbers, and less money on the plate each week," stated the report.

It was noted in the report that many of the communities were also reliant on tourists and visitors. "The impact of Covid-19 . . . on their towns has been significant," the report said.

The report said that many people expressed sadness (at the loss of their parish communities), weariness, impatience, and frustration, but there was also hopefulness and gratitude.

The recommendations from the different communities included formation of lay ministers, working with the youth, a more collaborative ministry in the pastoral areas, as well as financial assistance for parish councils, particularly in the maintenance of their buildings.

Ms Swann said this process will be continued this year.



Bishop Michael Dooley during his visit to Gore last year

"We were very well received, and it was appreciated that we had taken the time to come out to them, and we were just there to hear how we could assist them in any way. It was a listening time for us, and a time of insightful sharing for all those who attended," she said.

New headmaster for SHC

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

After 19 years as principal of John Paul College in Rotorua, Patrick Walsh has accepted the position of headmaster at Sacred Heart College in Auckland. Mr Walsh's new appointment will start from term two this year.

For the first term this year, Kieran Fouhy has been acting headmaster at Sacred Heart. The previous headmaster Stephen Dooley took up a position as principal at Liston College in Auckland.

In an announcement to the John Paul College community, Mr Walsh wrote that his decision "is tinged with considerable sadness" because of the many years he has spent as principal.

"John Paul College is a high achieving school with a wonderful supportive community. I know I leave the college in good heart and shape, confident that JPC will attract an excellent field



Patrick Walsh

of applicants," Mr Walsh wrote.

"I am very proud of what has been achieved over the last nineteen years by successive boards, teachers, parents and our outstanding students."

Mr Walsh wrote of taking on a new challenge, and added that "it is also time for JPC to have a new principal with a different vision".

"Your highly effective and engaged board will begin the recruiting process shortly. This will involve consultation with you on what you want in the next principal of John Paul College."

"On a personal note," Mr Walsh added, "I wish to express my and my wife Paulene's enormous gratitude for your support of us in this community. We always felt welcomed and accepted."

"I am looking forward to the new challenges ahead, and will leave JPC with fond memories and few regrets."

PN priests available despite shortage

by ROWENA OREJANA

Palmerston North diocese local administrator Fr Craig Butler has assured parishioners in the diocese that priests would always make themselves available to the people they serve.

"We are now in a situation where we don't have enough priests to service all the Masses we have currently. The parishes are being served — we just can't celebrate all the Masses we've been used to saying," he told *NZ Catholic*.

In an earlier pastoral letter, Cardinal John Dew said that there are "staffing challenges" as older priests retire and international priests go back to their home countries. This meant priests are having to look after two or more parishes.

Fr Butler said the situation had been compounded by the pandemic, as other international priests are not allowed to fly into the country yet with border restrictions in place.

"International priests will come and go, but we can't bring any in at the moment. In our diocese, there are two priests we are looking forward to

welcoming in the country once the immigration restrictions are lifted. It will certainly help in some parishes," he said.

Though priests admittedly have a lot on their plates at the moment, Fr Butler said parishioners should not think they cannot approach their priests if they (parishioners) need help.

"One of the things I have to say to people is, it's not about being busy. We're available to people and we'll do the very best we can to look after people we're called to serve. It's as simple as that," he said.

Fr Butler said he is grateful that a lot of people in the parishes are "generally very active and willing to serve, which is great for the Church".

He said it wasn't just a matter of helping out, but being "co-responsible".

"Our focus as a diocese has been . . . on our parish communities becoming communities of missionary disciples," Fr Butler said. This was their response to Pope Francis' call for us to be missionary disciples.

"It's not new, but I guess it's a change in emphasis for us . . . away from simply

looking after ourselves to reaching out to proclaim the Good News."

Fr Butler said that the lack of vocations — whether to priesthood or religious life — is something that should be addressed.

He believed that there had been no New Zealand-born priest ordained for Palmerston North diocese for the past 20 years. He also noted the absence of new vocations to religious life.

"The world is an increasingly complex environment," he said.

He said the Covid situation has made life that bit more challenging.

"I'm not aware of any priests with Covid, but we've had a few close contacts, so they had to isolate, just as a precautionary thing," he said. "So, if a priest is isolating, he can't celebrate Mass. And in those occasions, then parishes will have a Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion."

Fr Butler said not having a bishop is frustrating, but they are lucky to have Cardinal Dew as their administrator.

"He's a tremendous bishop," Fr Butler said.

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Parish farewells Passionist order after nine years

by CATHIE BELL

The Passionist Order has left New Zealand now, after finishing nine years of service in Marlborough, and its last priest Fr Jacob Kuman, CP, left last Monday.

Diocesan priest Fr Michael McCabe was installed as parish priest of Our Lady Star of the Sea by Cardinal John Dew at a Mass in Blenheim on Sunday February 27.

Cardinal John thanked the Passionist Order for its generous service in Marlborough.

He said the past nine years had been difficult for the order — earthquakes, COVID, the death of former parish priest Fr John Pearce, CP, and recently parish priest Fr Giltus Mathias, CP, being stuck in Sydney and unable to return to the parish.

“They have been generous to us with their service, and I’m grateful.”

Departing Passionist priest Fr Kuman, who has been assistant parish priest at Our Lady Star of the Sea, said the change was sad.

The Passionist priests have been popular in Marlborough, with their strong personalities making a good impact. Fr Kuman was noted for starting Mass with loud Hallelujahs and exclamations of how beautiful the day is, and the late Fr Pearce made great links with the wider communities and other religious groups. He brought together a public memorial service in the town square after the March 15 mosque killings to show Muslim members of the community that Marlborough welcomed them.

In a letter read out at the installation Mass, the order’s provincial Fr Tom McDonough, CP, said it “was with enormous sadness but great gratitude that the Passionist congregation said goodbye”.

“It has been a joy and a delight to share faith, light, and community together.”

Fr McDonough said that Marlborough was a “vibrant and multicultural parish that filled us with delight”.

Parish spokesman Blair McLean thanked the Passionists for the five priests who had guided the parish over the past nine years.

“There has been some tough and challenging times in our journey.” He made special tribute to Fr Pat McIndoe, CP, whom Fr McDonough said had come to Marlborough to retire, but had to step up from assistant to be parish priest twice, and ended up being parish priest longer than any other Passionist priest in Marlborough. He is now working in Papua New Guinea at the order’s seminary there.

Mr McLean thanked Fr McDonough for bringing the Passionists to Marlborough.

“They have been part of our tight-knit community. They are part of our history now and their influence will be continually felt.”

Cardinal Dew said that there would be changes



Above: Cardinal John Dew installs diocesan priest Fr Michael McCabe as parish priest of Our Lady Star of the Sea in Marlborough, while departing priest Fr Jacob Kuman, CP, watches.



Left: Departing Passionist priest Fr Jacob Kuman, CP, chats to parishioners at the morning tea after the Mass.

at Our Lady Star of the Sea now, with only one priest serving a big parish. The parish stretches from Picton to Kaikoura, with Masses held in Blenheim and Seddon as well.

“But it is where we are now in the archdiocese

with a shortage of priests.”

Fr McDonough reiterated past apologies for a Passionist who committed indecent assault while in the parish, leading to this priest being stood down.

Proper statistics needed for service provision

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The Social Hazards Committee of the Justice and Peace Commission of Auckland diocese has welcomed a new Data and Statistics Bill, in the wake of deficiencies in the 2018 Census that the committee stated contributed to increased inequality, deprivation and poverty.

In an oral submission made on February 16 to Parliament’s Governance and Administration Select Committee, JPC executive secretary Peter Garrick spoke on behalf of the social hazards committee in welcoming the introduction of the bill and, in particular, its emphasis on incorporating the partnership of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Mr Garrick noted that the first aim of the bill is to “recognise the Crown’s responsibility to consider and provide for Māori interests in data and statistics”, and that this has implications for there being sufficient funding made available for public gathering of statistics.

Mr Garrick pointed to a 2019 review, which found that the 2018

Census only attracted an 83 per cent response rate, the worst for 50 years. The response rate for Māori was 68 per cent and Pasifika 65 per cent. In the 2006 census, the overall response rate was 94 per cent, with that of Māori being 93 per cent and Pasifika 92 per cent.

“Over little more than a decade, structured inequality has been created so that up to a third of Māori and Pasifika communities are deemed not to be worth counting,” Mr Garrick said.

The reasons for the undercounting in 2018 is well-documented, and relates to “offsetting IT costs by drastically reducing funding for census field officers to follow-up on households who had not filled in their forms online or in paper form”.

Mr Garrick quoted a media article which stated that Statistics NZ employed 1800 enumerators, or field staff, to knock on doors in 2018, which was down from 7000 in the previous census. He said the underfunding in this area was a clear case of “structured social injustice”.

Statistics NZ had to use less accurate statistical estimates, so-called “administrative data”, rather than actual census data, to arrive at its final Census figures.

The undercounting of certain communities had impacts on their well-being. “Statistics are used to allocate Health, Social Welfare, Transport and other Government funding for each area for the following five years,” Mr Garrick stated.

“The deficiencies in the 2018 census meant that those community areas where there is a concentration of Māori or Pasifika were likely to receive substantially less funding than they would otherwise have received had the resources been put in to ensure they were actually counted.

“So instead of being a tool for reducing inequality, deprivation and poverty, the deficiencies of the 2018 Census became a weapon to actually increase it.

“This is a travesty in a society that values fairness and protection of the most vulnerable.”

Mr Garrick warned that the May

2020 Budget, by the Government of the day, showed that the funding provided for the 2023 Census is below equivalent levels for the 2013 and earlier censuses.

Citing a 2019 cabinet paper from the Department of Statistics, he added that the Government of the day was officially warned that the likely result of choosing this Census funding option — the fourth least preferred in the cabinet paper — would be that “relatively minor implementation issues could cause response rates for some hard to count groups (including Māori and Pasifika) to fall to unacceptably low levels”.

Mr Garrick said that it is commendable that the bill provides for Māori being consulted in terms of the type of questions asked and the general conduct of the Census.

“What we would like to see is a legal requirement for Government to provide the resources needed to ensure that Māori and others are not disadvantaged by being undercounted in the five-yearly census,” Mr Garrick added.

It is what it is – a phrase with potential

According to local Stuff News, Mahia was the place to be this holiday season. I wish it wasn't. Whilst I can do without holiday congestion, strangers are always interesting when they come into one's world. Overhearing snippets of conversation is inevitable when people are outdoors enjoying summer weather at the beach.

"I am going to baptise you" — this from a young Samoan boy who, whilst swimming, dunked his little brother in the waves.

A young mother making plans for the rest of the morning asking her three-year-old daughter what they might do next . . . "let's go shopping!"

Sue Jones

A serious young man talking to an older man about his problematic life says the ubiquitous, "it is what it is".

The first of these snippets reassures me. The second, though delightfully funny, says much about a Westernised way of living, which is perhaps not good for the planet. The manly words of the last offering reflect an attitude to life which prompts a person to face life's hardships and get through them. This is interesting to a Christian on the back foot.

Many men whose hearts are conditioned to living in a pro-choice, pro-pleasure world, seem to know instinctively that they have no choice but to face life stoically when adversity strikes. One hears and sees so much in the media about attitudes in people which prompt them to avoid the pain and inconvenience of life at any cost to society. To find a primitive pro-life attitude hidden



Mahia Beach in the morning, looking towards Mokotahi cliffs (Photo: Wikipedia)

amongst men is not surprising in a feminist world.

"It is what it is", in the mouth of the stranger expresses a joyless sort of goodness in a person. That so many are saying it tells me that this pro-life attitude is beginning to insert itself into society. Where secularity and the sacredness of life meet head on in a person, there is a situation ripe for those interested in evangelisation.

To bring men who suffer in life from joylessness to hopefulness is surely part of the lay vocation. Everyday Catholic life, especially married life, has much to say to strangers whose need is not practical but spiritual. But lay life has moved away from sacredness lost, to the extent it no longer speaks to the stranger without speaking.

How much sacredness in Catholic lay life is too much, or too little is a moot point. The quest for it can be seen in the arguments around the liturgy of the Mass. While we argue amongst ourselves the stranger is not evangelised.

That our disordered, divided lives are not able to bring men the hope and the joy of the Resur-

rection when they need it, is a situation which men accept as "complex". This word sums up the Christian version of "it is what it is". It seems that anything which continues the complexity of division is a preferable life to the universal Catholic way of life which is ordered towards God's sacredness.

Salvation history shows that God, in his frustration with his people, brings the stranger to us to tell us to move away from our overwhelmingly disordered lay lives, to rediscover the vertical direction of conversion life and God's willingness to speak through it to strangers. We work this life out as individuals, but seek it together in an orderly manner. Improbable as it seems, this conversion life latched onto looks a lot like a Catholic marriage in progress.

In a marriage, where each spouse knows the other's faults and failings and loves them into holiness, each man and woman comes closer to God's sacredness. This is a real, actual life that can be lived in harmony by most lay persons without spouses blaming the Church for not providing more ideal conditions when things go wrong. Self-knowledge of the disorder that sin brings to a person's life, which each spouse comes to realise through the other, brings both into a sacred world order which is much bigger than the sum of spousal life.

God can speak through this life which is ordered towards him. Such a life is worth its salt to the stranger who, somewhat orphaned from God, needs hope and joy in the midst of "it is what it is". Calvary food has a bitterness in the mouth. When swallowed willingly, it has a lingering Resurrection aftertaste which settles, strangely enough, in the soft palate of the soul of men.

Sue Jones is a writer from Mahia Beach

Ronald Rolheiser

The perfect ritual

Sometimes it takes an outsider to help you to see the beauty and depth of something you have never fully appreciated. I suspect this is true for many of us, myself no exception, regarding the celebration of the Eucharist in our churches.

David Gushee, an Evangelical, recently published a book entitled *After Evangelicalism*, within which he describes his decades-long struggle to make peace with some issues inside his own church. He has remained in his church, though now on Sundays he also goes (with his wife who is a Roman Catholic) to a Catholic Mass. Here's his description of what he sees there.

"I view design of the Catholic Mass as something like a polished gem, refined over time to a state of great beauty — if you know what you are looking at. . . . The movement of the Mass manages to accomplish so much in something like an hour — a processional, with the cross held high; greetings in the name of the triune God; early confession of sin, brief but compelling; an Old Testament reading read by a lay person; a sung psalm; an Epistle reading by a layperson; the Gospel reading by the priest, and the ceremony around it; a brief homily; the centring movement provided by the creed and the prayers of the people. An offertory and music. Then right to the Table — the people offer gifts that are then offered to God and come back to the people as Christ's Body and Blood; the kneeling in humility; the Lord's Prayer as an important part of the eucharistic rite; the precious chance to pass the peace with neighbours just before the supper; more kneeling; the chance to watch the people come up for Communion and pray for them, or instead be quiet with God; the final Trinitarian blessing and recessional."

What an insightful description of the ritual by which we celebrate the Eucharist! Sometimes when we're inside something, we don't see it as clearly as does someone from the outside.

Let me add two other descriptions that highlight

the eucharistic ritual in a way that we often don't think about or meet in our usual theology and catechesis on this.

The first, like Gushee's, also comes from a non-Catholic. A Methodist layman shares this: "I'm not a Roman Catholic, but sometimes I go to a Roman Catholic Mass just to take in the ritual. I'm not sure if they know exactly what they're doing, but they're doing something very powerful. Take their daily Mass, for example. Unlike their Sunday Mass, they do daily Mass more simply, with the ritual stripped down to its skeleton. What you see then, in essence, is something akin to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting." Why does he make that connection?

Here are his words. "People who go to daily Mass don't go there to experience anything novel or exciting. It's always the same, and that's the point. Like people going to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, they're going there to receive the support they need to stay steady in their lives, and the steadiness comes through the ritual. Underneath the surface, each person is saying, 'My name is . . . and my life is fragile. I know that if I don't come to this ritual regularly my life will begin to unravel. I need this ritual to stay alive.'" The ritual of the Eucharist functions too as a "12-Step" meeting.

Another perspective comes from Ronald Knox, a British theologian. He submits that we have never truly been faithful to Jesus. When we're honest, we have to admit that we don't love our enemies, don't turn the other cheek, don't bless those who curse us, don't forgive those who kill our loved ones,

don't reach out enough to the poor, and don't extend our compassion out equally to the bad as well as to the good. Rather, we cherry-pick the teachings of Jesus. But, said Knox, we have been faithful in one great way, through the ritual of the Eucharist. Jesus asked us to keep celebrating that ritual

until he returns and, 2000 years later, we are still celebrating it. The ritual of the Eucharist is our one great act of fidelity, and the good news is that this ritual will ultimately be enough.

Jesus left us two things: his Word and the Eucharist. Various churches have taken different approaches as to which of these to give priority. Some churches, like Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and Anglicans have prioritised the Eucharist as the foundation on which they build and maintain community. Other churches, most Protestant and Evangelical communities, have reversed this, and prioritised the Word as the foundation on which they build and maintain community. How do the Word and the Eucharist play out together?

On the Road to Emmaus, when the disciples of Jesus fail to recognise him even as they are walking with him, Jesus stirs their hearts with the Word, enough so that they beg him to stay with them. Then he sits down with them for Eucharist, and the ritual does the rest.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com Follow on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser/



Photo: Unsplash

Church acts in times of conflict

How many divisions has the Pope? That was a question attributed to Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin during World War II. In modern times, Church personnel have worked for good in various ways — none of them military — both before and during the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces last month.

As with any war, many are being displaced, hurt and killed. The Church has contributed to an international humanitarian response through agencies like Caritas. More than 1.5 million refugees are expected.

The Church has been using its “soft power” to plead for a ceasefire and for a longer term peace. The Pope visited the Russian embassy to the Vatican on February 25, and the Vatican has declared that it is ready to facilitate negotiations between Russia and Ukraine. Around the world, many Catholic leaders and laity, as well as leaders and people of other faiths, have protested against the invasion.

Before the invasion, Catholic academics weighed in on whether a military incursion — and a military response — would meet the traditional criteria for a just war. The consensus appeared to be negative to the former, and a qualified positive to the latter, noting that use of nuclear weapons can never be proportionate, discriminatory or, in the long run, just.

Some voices in Catholic journals argued that, rather than look at the looming conflict through the lens of Just War Theory, there should be a shift to a “just peace framework”.

Writing in *America* magazine on February 22, Eli McCarthy stated that “rather than reacting to perceived threats by trying to one-up an adversary for the sake of ‘deterrence’, or identifying

justifications for war, a just peace approach begins with identifying

Editorial

the root causes of a conflict, as well as the genuine needs of the adversaries”.

But all of that has been overtaken by a clearly unjust and illegal war by Russia against Ukraine. It is to be hoped that, when the war is over, efforts towards a just peace will be on the table.

The other action the Church has taken is to pray, in various ways. Pope Francis asked Catholics to fast and pray for peace on Ash Wednesday, in particular. On a more unusual note, a Byzantine priest from Lviv, Ukraine, announced the beginning of an exorcism ritual aimed at Putin. Prayer can take many forms.

Also of interest were the different reactions, in the early days of the invasion, from various Orthodox churches. Writing in *Commonweal* on February 27, George Demacopoulos of Fordham University in the US noted that the “monstrous invasion of Ukraine seems to be uniting the Orthodox Christian laity (including those inside Russia) in a sense of shared horror and concern”.

But the responses from Orthodox Church leaders were not so united. Demacopoulos noted that those close to the Russian state barely acknowledged there was a war at all — there was mention of a “fratricidal battle” involving people in the “one space of the Russian Orthodox Church” — while some autocephalous Church leaders made “tepid” statements that barely acknowledged there was an aggressor. Other Orthodox Church leaders were more explicit in their criticism of Putin and/or Russia, with the Church of Greece and Ecumenical Patriarch being among the most direct in their condemnation. (More than one writer has noted that Pope Francis has not specifically mentioned Russia in any of his statements calling for peace. This is in keeping with long-standing Vatican diplomatic practice).

The primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church defended Ukrainian sovereignty and issued “a stinging condemnation of Russian aggression”, Demacopoulos wrote.

The already complex situation of the various Orthodox churches in Ukraine will likely get more complex, and the ties of some to Moscow could well suffer irreparable damage.

So how many divisions does the Pope have? One papal biographer reportedly recounted a response by Pope Pius XII when Winston Churchill told him of Stalin’s question. Pius reportedly said, “When you see our son Joseph again, tell him that he will meet our divisions in heaven”.

The Habit



Letters

Abuse

“By my fault, by my most grievous fault” has been expressed by Pope Benedict regarding his omission to address sexual abuse in the Church.

Our own bishops have expressed their sorrow at the abuse, but the regret has no substance unless it comes with the resolve not to let it happen again. Archbishop Paul Martin, SM, in his answers to the royal commission, stated that we do not have institutions like those run by the St John of God brothers anymore.

In fact, though, we have the one institution that provided the environment that allowed the abuse to happen, and that preferred to protect its own reputation rather than protect vulnerable children and youth. The institutional Church. If the regret is real, then the unfounded belief that the clergy and religious are somehow beyond reproach must be dismantled. As must the exclusive male priesthood and the hierarchical structure of the Church that has bred clericalism rather than role models who exemplify the call to serve, that we all received at baptism.

We also need local Church authority to deal with sexual and power abuse, rather than deferring to Rome. Real contrition will be seen to be authentic when the Church, of its own volition, offers true compensation to vic-

tims, rather than hiding behind lawyers, and by asking how and why it was covered up and a resolve never to do it again, so help us God.

Teresa Homan, Upper Hutt.

Sanctity

I question your support by publication of a letter by Anne Cotton (*NZ Catholic*, January 30).

I do not question the passion shown by Anne regarding the sanctity of human life. Such thoughts have my absolute support.

However, there is a beautiful sanctity of life epistle for us Catholics to preach. The epistle states that the most beautiful and valuable human being is a newborn baby. Similarly, old age is a gift to cherish in terms of wisdom, family nurture, love and respect.

We do not need to confuse these issues with false logic and human bias. The sanctity of life epistle is beautifully summed up as “the nation that murders its young and old has no future”. Further substantiation is the plight of nations facing decades of abortion which, crudely put, is economic suicide.

New Zealand is not exempt from the consequences and embarkation on the road of euthanasia, a consequence of abortion.

However, the biggest lesson for us Catholics is to practise what we preach. Do we see the unborn and the elderly as gifts from God? Do

we buy into the “freedom of choice” epistle as well? Glass house dwellers should not cast stones.

John Farrell, Pukekohe.

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Birth

In ancient times, some of the Jewish people believed that the false gods of the pagans around them were actual living demons. To their west, a classical author wrote, “Whom the gods wish to destroy, they first drive mad”.

Putting these two notions together can give us a plausible explanation of why every member of the New Zealand Parliament on December 9, 2021, voted to allow everyone to change, and thus to falsify, the fact recorded on his or her birth certificate [pertaining to registration of nominated sex].

R.L. Kennedy, Takaka.

Euthanasia

Regarding the article about the talk on pastoral approaches to those seeking euthanasia or assisted suicide (*NZ Catholic*, December 12), the letter Samaritanus Bonus, written by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the

Faith in 2020, clearly and beautifully explained the teaching of the Catholic Church on the pastoral care of those who were committed to being killed by their doctor with a lethal injection or assisted in their suicide.

The document states: “Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation — the confessor must be assured of the presence of the true contrition necessary for the validity of absolution, which consists in ‘sorrow of mind and a detestation for sin committed, with the purpose of not sinning for the future’. In this situation, we find ourselves before a person who, whatever their subjective dispositions may be, has decided upon a gravely immoral act and willingly persists in this decision. Such a state involves a manifest absence of the proper disposition for the reception of the sacraments of penance, with absolution, and anointing, with viaticum. Such a penitent can receive these sacraments only when the minister discerns his or her readiness to take concrete steps that indicate he or she has modified their decision in this regard. Thus, a person who may be registered in an association to receive euthanasia or assisted suicide must manifest the intention of cancelling such a registration before receiving the sacraments. It must be recalled that the necessity to postpone absolution does not imply a judgement on the imputability of guilt, since personal responsibility could be diminished or non-existent.”

Ken Orr, Christchurch.

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Making more connections

People have told us often enough that “Church language” simply by-passes them. Of course, language is a two-way street: the Church’s language (in all its forms, not just its words) is meant to form us; we in turn shape it for different times and cultures. For both those reasons, we can ill-afford to ignore the disconnect people speak of. The issue here is not just translations: it involves the texts themselves — texts of the liturgy, texts of the catechisms, and texts of official communications.

How is this not a problem if par-

P.J. Cullinane

icipation in the liturgy is intended to enable the prayer of the Church to become the prayer of the people in this gathering, when the language or imagery used is alien to them?

How is the disconnect not a problem when language at odds with science is spoken into a scientifically-minded world? Or, if language borrowed from the days of empires and conquest continues in post-colonial times, especially when people know that Jesus’ “kingdom” is not of this world? Or, if language that belonged in feudal societies, and even in Christendom, does not resonate with people living in democracies? Or, if language that was characteristic of patriarchy now alienates? Language that doesn’t connect is not life-giving, and becomes a big turn-off.

How is it not a problem when

some Catholics ignore the role of the local churches in interpreting messages from the Holy See? In presenting the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1993), which St John Paul II issued for the universal Church, Cardinal Ratzinger said that catechism “cannot be considered the only possible way, or even the best way, of giving a catechetical re-expression of the Christian message”. He explained that it was to be absorbed, interpreted and then re-expressed in the idioms of the various local churches — in that sense “mediated” by the local churches. In our country we are blessed having people doing this for our religious education programmes.

Just as important is Cardinal Ratzinger’s assurance that the same process of “mediating” is required for “Instructions” issued for the universal Church. It cannot be presumed that such Instructions apply in exactly the same way in all the local churches. To simply take them from the web, by-passing the mediating role of the local church, is not true to Catholic ecclesiology. “Mediating” involves the teaching role of bishops and, of course, in a synodal church, the exercise of that role will be more sensitive, more complex, and multi-directional.

Language matters. Sharing the faith depends more on gifts like imagination, music, story-telling, and the witness of holy lives, than on the gift of reason. But reason, and how the faith is articulated, also matters. It matters that we use language that invites interest, and shun language

that alienates, or isn’t properly inclusive. It matters when Church communications regarding matters of concern to all, engage only those who can manage the semi code-language of surveys and digital-speak.

Of course, there is no language for speaking adequately of God. God is infinite, and our understanding is finite, which is why we need imagery, metaphor and hyperbole. St Thomas put it this way: we can know that God is good, but cannot know what goodness in God is like. And yet, it is because of the goodness we experience within creation and in people’s lives that we catch our first glimpses of God’s intentions for us. We know God more surely when we come more alive to God’s presence in nature and in history.

Through the experience of beauty, goodness and truth, we are being drawn to God. God’s presence comes to us disguised in sunsets and other experiences of beauty, music, works of art, poetry, and smiles on children’s faces. There we catch glimpses of what we have been made for. Our spontaneous responses are our personal God-language. It is homely language, yet deep, and foundational.

Nature cannot tell us the whole story of our relationship with God, but it can deepen our desire to know more. In the gift of human freedom, nature takes a leap, leaving itself behind by raising more questions than it can answer. Human choices are what make history. That’s where God speaks through lives of faithfulness and unselfish love, through acts of forgiveness and compassion — but also through catastrophes and heartbreaks when healing and hope are never far behind, transforming our Good Fridays into Easter joy. These experiences give more depth to our God-language. The psalms ring out with cries of despair and joy, usually over the more dramatic ups and downs of life; mystics have not shied away from the language of erotic love.

The central prayers of the liturgy tell us, in narrative form, the story of what God has done and is doing for our salvation. Through our participation in the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year, God’s story becomes our story; “salvation history” becomes our history. Our God-language takes on the character of an on-going

narrative.

The on-going narrative becomes an on-going dialogue when God speaks in the Person of the Word, known more intimately as Jesus of Nazareth. In their friendship with him, his first disciples found their surest way of knowing God. And because Jesus’ presence is as real among us as it was among them, it is in our relationship with him — in the experience of keeping his company — that we have our surest way of knowing what God is like, and our surest corrective to inherited fear-based images of God.

Our union with the risen Christ is not a private or “interior” affair. It is embodied in our relationships. It is as one body that we share his life, death and Resurrection. Consequently, the language of liturgy necessarily takes on a community dimension. This community includes those who lived, prayed and died before us; in the Creeds we use language that they used. What we say and pray together necessarily has a formal character to it.

But it does not need to be more formal than that. Reverent, yes. But reverence comes out of being alive to Christ’s real presence — in the congregation (“where two or three are gathered . . .”), in the Word (where “Christ is speaking to his people” — present tense), in the ministry of the one ordained to act in persona Christi; and in the Sacrament; (Second Vatican Council, SC. 7).

Awareness of being in God’s presence generates awe. When awe is obstructed — by triteness or routine, or just too many words — liturgy is less telling. Our relationship with God cannot be reduced to correctness, or having the right answers, or — much less — seeming to put God in our debt, as if God owes us our salvation in exchange for certain devotions. Walking away from that kind of “religion” won’t seem any big deal. Religious practices “hold” us when they resonate with the sheer mystery of God’s freedom, the gratuitousness of our own existence and our salvation, and give us cause for sheer wonder. Or, to adapt Rahner: Christians will either find themselves alive to God’s presence, or they just won’t be around at all.

Bishop Peter Cullinane is Bishop Emeritus of Palmerston North. This is the second part of a two-part reflection.



Tumuaki – Chief Executive

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E rapu ana mātou e āhei ana te whakakā i te tūranga
o te Tumuaki mo Te Kupenga*

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Applications, including cover letter, CV and applicant disclosure form should be submitted to the Board selection committee through Gerald Scanlan at gerald@careeringoptions.co.nz by **28 March 2022**. Role information and the disclosure form can be found at <https://www.tekupenga.ac.nz/>.

For a confidential discussion about the role, contact Gerald Scanlan (General Manager, Careering Options) on 027 232 2386.

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The importance of mercy

On February 11, the Church observed the World Day of the Sick. Pope Francis’ theme this year — “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful” (Luke 6:36) — highlights the importance of mercy in this ministry of presence and compassion.

The model for this outreach is Jesus himself, who encountered and cured people suffering from a variety of diseases. He wants others to show this same care and concern for the ill and vulnerable, telling his disciples “whatever you did for one of these least . . . of mine, you did for me.”

In his message, Pope Francis offers special thanks to health care workers who continue to face numerous challenges because of the pandemic. Such service, he writes, “carried out with love and competence, transcends the bounds of your profession and becomes a mission. Your hands, which touch the suffering flesh of Christ,

can be a sign of the merciful hands of the Father. Be mindful of the great dignity of your profession, as well as the responsibility that it entails”.

But when cures aren’t possible, being present to those who are ill — with a listening ear and compassionate heart — can provide a different kind of healing. This ministry is the responsibility of every follower of Christ.

The World Day of the Sick is an invitation to minister to the ill and homebound, perhaps by participating in already-established parish ministries, or reaching out in other ways to those in need in our communities. Making personal visits when it’s safe to do so, writing cards, making calls — all of these are acts of mercy that bring the healing presence of Christ to those very much in need of it.

Excerpts from an editorial in *The Central Minnesota Catholic* (US) (CNS)

Mission Monday makes a difference for children in Syria

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Bernadette Stockman left her role as principal at St Mary's College, Auckland, in late 2019, but she continues to have a special connection to the college.

When the Covid outbreak upended her plans to volunteer overseas, she opted to pursue a connection the school had made in 2017. Mrs Stockman decided to support the work of ReliefAid, an organisation founded in New Zealand, one of few worldwide providing humanitarian aid in Syria, and invited St Mary's to join her.

ReliefAid offered her the opportunity to create an education programme for children in Syria who have no access to schools, toys, or educational material.

"It was shocking to find out that over 2.4 million children in Syria are not in school," Mrs Stockman said. "This gave me even more motivation to create a programme that would be beneficial to the children right now, and that would help once they returned to schooling."

So, she created BounceBack4Syria, a project that would provide materials and engage education workers to put in place a resilience-building programme. BounceBack4Syria provides hula hoops, skipping ropes, soccer balls, and whiteboards, supported with ideas on how to use them to build resilience and their wellbeing.

St Mary's College was the first school to come on board to help, knowing that this project fitted perfectly into the Mercy value of care for the poor and vulnerable. Mission Monday, an established part of the special character outreach, would prove



A fundraiser at St Mary's College, Auckland

to be the perfect vehicle to teach children at St Mary's about a real-life international crisis, while supporting the work Mrs Stockman had started.

Mission Reps at the college showed great leadership skills, and organised school-wide fundraising that brought in close to \$2000. Year 7 students worked with Olympian Sam Charlton to make a promotional video and spoke about their favourite childhood toys. They tried to relate to 11-year-old children in Syria who have now faced 11 years of war. These are children who have left homes and toys to flee to safety. The St Mary's students heard about children continuing to show resilience by fashioning toy cars out of sardine cans, and footballs out of rock covered in foam. Connie Fraser, the Year 7 dean, described the involvement as "a whole journey for them, and they loved being a part of it".

This project has engaged with more than 160 families in displacement camps in Syria so far, and has reached more than 300 children. Children like 11-year-old Mohammed have told the project that "When I was facing difficulties that I could not solve, now I have learned and I can solve them, before I could not".

In 2022, BounceBack4Syria will reach 13 more camps, and will include art activities to encourage self-expression. St Mary's College is keen to keep supporting the work involved. As principal Sarah Dwan says, this project enables the children to

"support a cause that benefits young people of a similar age who are living in very difficult situations".

Bernadette is now reaching out to other schools to come on board. Social Justice is such a large part of the programme of our Catholic schools, and this project allows for a real-world experience of making change happen.

While help with fundraising will allow the continuation of the project, raising awareness is high on the list of Bernadette's priorities. As she sees it, "This project allows our students to engage with children facing a crisis of unimaginable proportions with no end in sight. They will see the benefits of their efforts and children in Syria . . . will know they are not forgotten."

For more details on how to get your school involved, please contact bernadette.stockman@reliefaid.org.nz



Bernadette Stockman



Girls in Syria play with a donated item

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Marylands: 'darkest chapter' in NZ Catholic Church's history

by MICHAEL OTTO

The deeply evil abuse of vulnerable children that happened at the Marylands School in Christchurch, and at St Joseph's Orphanage and the Hebron Trust, was "the darkest chapter of the Catholic Church's history in New Zealand".

That's what was stated in the closing submission filed by Te Rōpū Tautoko, on behalf of the Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Catholic Church of New Zealand, on the last day of the case study hearing into Marylands School by the Royal Commission on Abuse in Care.

Marylands School operated from 1955 to 1984, and was run by the Hospitaller Brothers of St John of God.

The royal commission hearing, which ran from February 9-17 this year, heard testimony from 22 abuse survivors, as well as from survivor advocates, a Police representative, a Government official, a lawyer, Brother Timothy Graham of the St John of God brothers, and Archbishop Paul Martin, SM, the apostolic administrator of Christchurch diocese.

The Te Rōpū Tautoko closing submission stated that "It is clear, from previous Police investigations, the redress process and the evidence at this hearing, that abuse at Marylands was widespread, and [was] caused by many offenders. It is the darkest chapter of the Catholic Church's history in New Zealand".

The abuse involving the Brothers of St John of God in New Zealand accounts for 16 per cent of all allegations of sexual abuse reported to the Catholic Church in New Zealand. One man, Bernard McGrath, accounts for approximately 5 per cent of all sexual abuse allegations, the Church has stated.

McGrath, now 74, is currently serving a 33-year jail term in Australia. He was sentenced to 61 years jail across five trials in two countries.

An ABC report noted that an Australian royal commission into child abuse heard that 40 per cent of St John of God Brothers in that country during the time covered by their investigation were sexual abusers, the highest percentage of any religious order.

The ABC report added that the New Zealand inquiry heard that the percentage of brothers who abused children in New Zealand was closer to 60 per cent, but could be more. Other reports stated that 21 of the 23 brothers who worked in New Zealand had had accusations of abuse made against them.

The Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests Aotearoa stated that, "in order to protect our children and society in the future, the onus is now on the New Zealand

Government and Catholic Church to ensure this religious order and its affiliates never operate again in New Zealand".

"Further, we believe this order continues to pose a serious risk to children and society in countries where it continues to operate. We believe the order should be suppressed by the Holy See and shut down in the countries where it still operates today."

■ Apologies

The Te Rōpū Tautoko closing submission noted that Archbishop Martin and Brother Timothy Graham made "profound apologies" at the hearing, "to all who were hurt and harmed while in care at Marylands and the Hebron Trust".

"As they and the wider Church acknowledges, these places should have been places of nurture and safety for vulnerable young people. They were not."

The survivors' testimonies told of shattered lives, broken relationships, mental health issues, poverty, imprisonment, retraumatisation in subsequent dealings with the Church, inadequacy of redress and more.

The Te Rōpū Tautoko closing submission noted that "most of the boys at Marylands were separated from family support, many with no families or dysfunctional homes; they had learning or developmental issues and were vulnerable to threats. The young people at Hebron were on the margins of society, which had led them to be on the streets".

These particular and distinct vulnerabilities of victims at Marylands and Hebron Trust were among the reasons that the abuse at these institutions went on for so long without detection or prevention, the submission stated. Shame and "fear that they would not be believed, or fear that they would be further harmed", were among the factors.

"To modern eyes, with the extent of the harm revealed, it seems unfathomable that lay teachers, staff, social workers, Government officials, parents and Church leaders were unable to detect and prevent this abuse from occurring. There is no one simple answer to this question," the closing submission stated.

"Evidence given throughout the hearing shows that factors include" . . . historical societal attitudes towards victims of abuse and belief of complainants, and attitudes towards those in positions of authority.

There was also evidence of boys not being believed by their families, and by Police when they sought to make complaints.

Other factors included the lengths perpetrators went to hide their abuse, and systemic failings by reg-



A screenshot of royal commission chair Coral Shaw speaking at the end of the hearing

ulators, social workers and Church authorities, including insufficient and incomplete investigation of complaints, or complaints not being followed up.

"It is clear from the evidence given by survivor witnesses," the closing submission stated, "that for many children and young people at Marylands and Hebron, [they] were one part of a dysfunctional system of care, which ultimately allowed abuse to foster and abusers to prosper. The Church takes responsibility for the failings of its part in that system."

"The safeguarding processes within the Church during the Marylands period were rudimentary and insufficient. The evidence of Br Tim is that, within the order during this period, complaints were brought to the prior of the community. What is now clear from the record is that, for periods in the history of Marylands, the prior himself was an abuser."

The closing submission also acknowledged that opportunities to prevent abuse were missed, that allegations were not believed, documents were destroyed, good records were not kept of allegations and responses to allegations of harm, and there was a lack of knowledge between generations of Church leaders.

"This has allowed abuse to go undetected for far longer than it should have, and for that, the Catholic Church deeply and sincerely apologises," the closing submission stated.

■ Change

The closing submission added that the modern culture and understanding of abuse has changed, as had Church protocols, responses and procedures in safeguarding and responding to complaints. The redress process continues to shift towards being survivor-focused, and modern record-keeping is comprehensive and detailed, the submission

added.

"For many it has not changed enough," the closing submission acknowledged, "and this royal commission will go some way to install further change. There is still work to do."

The closing submission also acknowledged that "It is clear from the evidence of survivors that the harm caused to them, both the abuse suffered, and the secondary injuries, has caused them to lose trust in institutions such as the Church".

"The destruction of trust then extends to other institutions, such as concerns that the Police are controlled by the Catholic Church, and impacts on efforts to improve. The Church acknowledges that the trust for these people has been fractured by the actions of Church members, and that rebuilding it may take generations of work. But this work must start now."

The closing submission discussed aspects of redress approaches, and added that "the Church encourages the Inquiry to recommend external measures for the Church and other institutions. These will assist the Church in demonstrating progress to survivors in a way which is independent and genuine. It is clear that a system of redress entirely internal to institutions is no longer a realistic way forward. Indeed, the Commission's redress report highlights that".

"The Church urges the Commission to continue investigating what effective redress would look like from a survivor perspective. There has not been enough time in this hearing to fully explore what survivors want and need from the redress process, and the Church will continue to engage collaboratively on this process."

Going forward, the closing submission stated that "the Church is focused on safeguarding for all, and participating in the creation of a system of redress for those seeking to heal from harm. The Church will continue to address and remove barriers for survivors reporting abuse".

"The Church, through Te Rōpū Tautoko, has steps already underway, and the Commission's redress report and this hearing are key moments to solidify these actions in concrete ways."

"The Catholic Church will continue to engage with, and work with, the Royal Commission, the Crown, and other faith-based groups, towards a just resolution for survivors of harm in New Zealand. Of critical importance is the desire to work with survivors and their advocates on this path."

"We now need to work collaboratively towards what best practice is today and in the future."

Spanish bishops commission investigation into Church sex abuse

ROME (CNS) — In an about-face, the Spanish bishops' conference announced that it has hired a law firm to conduct a yearlong investigation into clerical sexual abuse in the country.

At a news conference in Madrid on February 24, Cardinal Juan José Omella of Barcelona, president of the Spanish bishops' conference, said the conference hired the law offices of Cremades and Calvo-Sotelo "to carry out an independent investigation that will audit" the Church's handling of abuse cases.

"The Spanish bishops' conference

wants to take a step forward in its obligation of social transparency, of help and reparation to victims, and of collaboration with authorities regarding the cases of sexual abuse within the Spanish Church," Cardinal Omella told journalists.

In January, Cardinal Omella, who was in Rome with several bishops for their "ad limina" visits, told journalists that the bishops' conference had no plans to establish a single independent commission, as in Germany, France or neighbouring Portugal, to conduct a nationwide investigation

of the handling of cases past and present.

Instead, he said, individual dioceses would have their own independent commissions so that survivors can easily report to their local diocese. He also told journalists in Rome that the Vatican supported their plan. But there was growing public support for the government to step in and investigate. In mid-December, the Spanish newspaper *El País* said it conducted a three-year investigation into sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in Spain, and uncovered 251 unpub-

lished cases of abuse dating back 80 years. Furthermore, *El País* said that its investigation, which began in 2018, revealed an estimated 1246 victims of abuse in the Catholic Church.

The Spanish parliament agreed on February 1 to review a proposal by several political parties that called for the establishment of a commission to investigate sexual abuse cases in the Catholic Church.

The proposal could lead to a vote to form a government-led commission to investigate the Church's handling of abuse allegations.

Pope Francis' Lenten message, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Lent is a favourable time for personal and community renewal, as it leads us to the paschal mystery of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. For our Lenten journey in 2022, we will do well to reflect on Saint Paul's exhortation to the Galatians: "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity (kairós), let us do good to all" (Galatians 6:9-10).

1. Sowing and reaping

In these words, the Apostle evokes the image of sowing and reaping, so dear to Jesus (cf. Matthew 13). Saint Paul speaks to us of a *kairós*: an opportune time for sowing goodness in view of a future harvest. What is this "opportune time" for us? Lent is certainly such an opportune time, but so is our entire existence, of which Lent is in some way an image. All too often in our lives, greed, pride and the desire to possess, accumulate and consume have the upper hand, as we see from the story of the foolish man in the Gospel parable, who thought his life was safe and secure because of the abundant grain and goods he had stored in his barns (cf. Luke 12:16-21). Lent invites us to conversion, to a change in mindset, so that life's truth and beauty may be found not so much in possessing as in giving, not so much in accumulating as in sowing and sharing goodness.

The first to sow is God himself, who with great generosity "continues to sow abundant seeds of goodness in our human family" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 54). During Lent, we are called to respond to God's gift by accepting his Word, which is "living and active" (Hebrews 4:12). Regular listening to the Word of God makes us open and docile to his working (cf. James 1:21) and bears fruit in our lives. This brings us great joy, yet even more, it summons us to become God's co-workers (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:9). By making good use of the present time (cf. Ephesians 5:16), we too can sow seeds of goodness. This call to sow goodness should not be seen as a burden but a grace, whereby the Creator wishes us to be actively united with his own bountiful goodness.

What about the harvest? Do we not sow seeds in order to reap a harvest? Of course! Saint Paul points to the close relationship between sowing and reaping when he says: "Anyone who sows sparsely will reap sparsely as well, and anyone who sows generously will reap generously as well" (2 Corinthians 9:6). But what kind of harvest are we talking about? A first fruit of the goodness we sow appears in ourselves and our daily lives, even in our little acts of kindness. In God, no act of love, no matter how small, and no "generous effort" will ever be lost (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 279). Just as we recognise a tree by its fruits (cf. Matthew 7:16, 20), so a life full of good deeds radiates light (cf. Matthew 5:14-16) and carries the fragrance of Christ to the world (cf. 2 Corinthians 2:15). Serving God in freedom from sin brings forth fruits of sanctification for the salvation of all (cf. Romans 6:22).

In truth, we see only a small portion of the fruits of what we sow, since, according to the Gospel proverb, "one sows, while another reaps" (John 4:37). When we sow for the benefit of others, we share in God's own benevolent love: "it is truly noble to place our hope in the hidden power of the seeds of goodness we sow, and thus to initiate processes whose fruits will be reaped by others" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 196). Sowing goodness for the benefit of others frees us from narrow self-interest, infuses our actions with gratuitousness, and makes us part of the magnificent horizon of God's



Pope Francis greets the crowd as he leads the Angelus from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Feb. 27, 2022. (CNS photo)

benevolent plan.

The Word of God broadens and elevates our vision: it tells us that the real harvest is eschatological, the harvest of the last, undying day. The mature fruit of our lives and actions is "fruit for eternal life" (John 4:36), our "treasure in heaven" (Luke 12:33; 18:22). Jesus himself uses the image of the seed that dies in the ground in order to bear fruit as a symbol of the mystery of his death and Resurrection (cf. John 12:24); while Saint Paul uses the same image to speak of the resurrection of our bodies: "What is sown is perishable, but what is raised is imperishable; what is sown is contemptible but what is raised is glorious; what is sown is weak, but what is raised is powerful; what is sown is a natural body, and what is raised is a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:42-44). The hope of resurrection is the great light that the risen Christ brings to the world, for "if our hope in Christ has been for this life only, we are of all people the most pitiable. In fact, however, Christ has been raised from the dead, as the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:19-20). Those who are intimately united to him in love "by dying a death like his" (Romans 6:5) will also be united to his Resurrection for eternal life (cf. John 5:29). "Then the upright will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43).

2. "Let us not grow tired of doing good"

Christ's Resurrection enlivens earthly hopes with the "great hope" of eternal life, planting the seed of salvation in our present time (cf. Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 3; 7). Bitter disappointment at shattered dreams, deep concern for the challenges ahead and discouragement at the poverty of our resources, can make us tempted to seek refuge in self-centredness and indifference to the suffering of others. Indeed, even our best resources have their limitations: "Youths grow tired and weary, the young stumble and fall" (Isaiah 40:30). Yet God "gives strength to the weary, he strengthens the powerless . . . Those who hope in the Lord will regain their strength, they will soar on wings like eagles; though they run they will not grow weary, though they walk they will never tire" (Isaiah 40:29, 31). The Lenten season calls us to place

our faith and hope in the Lord (cf. 1 Peter 1:21), since only if we fix our gaze on the risen Christ (cf. Hebrews 12:2) will we be able to respond to the Apostle's appeal, "Let us never grow tired of doing good" (Galatians 6:9).

Let us not grow tired of praying. Jesus taught us to "pray always without becoming weary" (Luke 18:1). We need to pray because we need God. Thinking that we need nothing other than ourselves is a dangerous illusion. If the pandemic has heightened the awareness of our own personal and social fragility, may this Lent allow us to experience the consolation provided by faith in God, without whom we cannot stand firm (cf. Isaiah 7:9). No one attains salvation alone, since we are all in the same boat, amid the storms of history; and certainly no one reaches salvation without God, for only the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ triumphs over the dark waters of death. Faith does not spare us life's burdens and tribulations, but it does allow us to face them in union with God in Christ, with the great hope that does not disappoint, whose pledge is the love that God has poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (cf. Romans 5:1-5).

Let us not grow tired of uprooting evil from our lives. May the corporal fasting to which Lent calls us fortify our spirit for the battle against sin. Let us not grow tired of asking for forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, knowing that God never tires of forgiving. Let us not grow tired of fighting against concupiscence, that weakness which induces to selfishness and all evil, and finds in the course of history a variety of ways to lure men and women into sin (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 166). One of these is addiction to the digital media, which impoverishes human relationships. Lent is a propitious time to resist these temptations, and to cultivate instead a more integral form of human communication (*ibid.*, 43) made up of "authentic encounters" (*ibid.*, 50), face-to-face and in person.

Let us not grow tired of doing good in active charity towards our neighbours. During this Lent, may we practise almsgiving by giving joyfully (cf. 2 Corinthians 9:7). God who "supplies seed to the sower and bread for food" (2 Corinthians 9:10) enables each of us not only to have food to eat, but also to be generous in doing good to others. While it is true that we have our entire life to sow goodness, let us take special advantage of this Lenten season to care for those close to us and to reach out to our brothers and sisters who lie wounded along the path of life (cf. Luke 10:25-37). Lent is a favourable time to seek out — and not to avoid — those in need; to reach out — and not to ignore — those who need a sympathetic ear and a good word; to visit — and not to abandon — those who are lonely. Let us put into practice our call to do good to all, and take time to love the poor and needy, those abandoned and rejected, those discriminated against and marginalised (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 193).

3. "If we do not give up, we shall reap our harvest in due time"

Each year, during Lent, we are reminded that "goodness, together with love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realised each day" (*ibid.*, 11). Let us ask God to give us the patient perseverance of the farmer (cf. James 5:7), and to persevere in doing good, one step at a time. If we fall, let us stretch out our hand to the Father, who always lifts us up. If we are lost, if we are misled by the enticements of the evil one, let us not hesitate to return to God, who "is generous in forgiving" (Isaiah 55:7). In this season of conversion, sustained by God's grace and by the communion of the Church, let us not grow tired of doing good. The soil is prepared by fasting, watered by prayer and enriched by charity. Let us believe firmly that "if we do not give up, we shall reap our harvest in due time" and that, with the gift of perseverance, we shall obtain what was promised (cf. Hebrews 10:36), for our salvation and the salvation of others (cf. 1 Timothy 4:16). By cultivating fraternal love towards everyone, we are united to Christ, who gave his life for our sake (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15), and we are granted a foretaste of the joy of the kingdom of heaven, when God will be "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28).

May the Virgin Mary, who bore the Saviour in her womb and "pondered all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:19), obtain for us the gift of patience. May she accompany us with her maternal presence, so that this season of conversion may bring forth fruits of eternal salvation.

"Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity (kairós), let us do good to all" (Galatians 6:9-10).

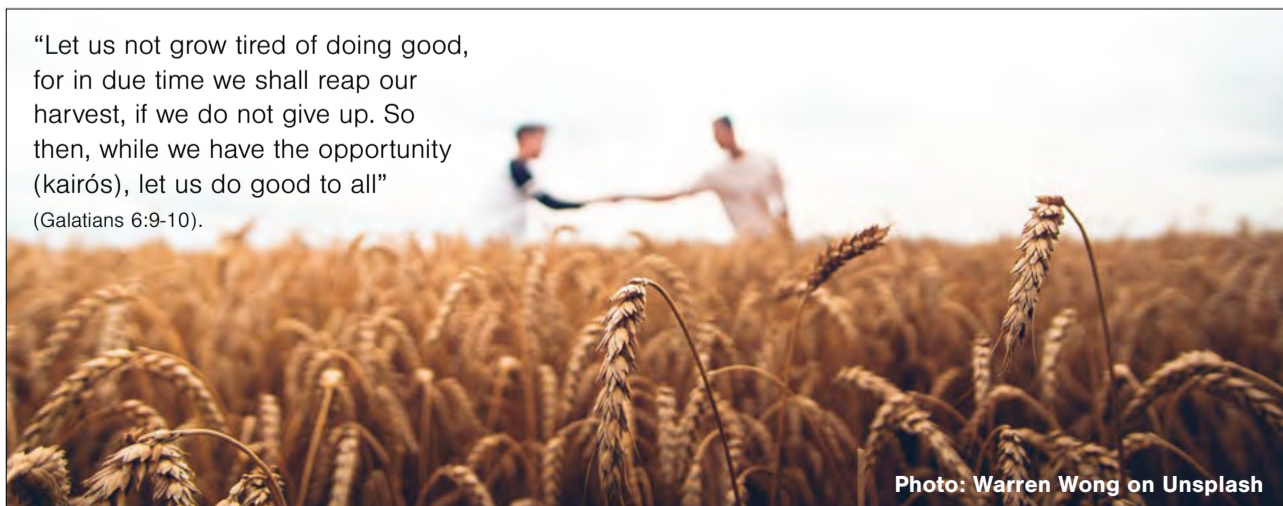


Photo: Warren Wong on Unsplash

Researchers say 5.2 million children orphaned in pandemic

CLEVELAND (CNS) — An estimated 5.2 million children in 21 countries, including the United States, lost at least one parent, a custodial grandparent or a primary caregiver to Covid-19 during the first 20 months of the pandemic, social researchers and child well-being advocates said in a new study.

Notably, the researchers estimated that the number of children orphaned because of the pandemic nearly doubled during the six-month period ending October 31, 2021, a period corresponding largely with the surge in the delta variant of the coronavirus.

The total number of orphaned children during the study period parallels the roughly 5 million Covid-19-caused deaths during the same time frame, the study said.

"This finding means that, globally, for every one reported COVID-19 death, at least one child experienced orphanhood or caregiver death," the researchers concluded.

The study was published online on February 24 by the British medical journal *The Lancet*.

The study defined orphanhood as the death of one or both parents, one or both custodial grandparents, or a primary caregiver.

Catholic Relief Services representatives described the estimates as "eye-opening", and agreed with the researchers' conclusion that "an evidence-based emergency response is becoming increasingly urgent" to meet the challenges faced by children pushed into orphanhood by the pandemic.

Jomey Joseph, CRS's head of office in Chennai, India, said the agency and its partners have introduced broader mental health counselling and case management services to help children deal with the loss of a parent or caregiver. The goal is to help children avoid being sent to an orphanage or other group setting, so they can maintain a connection to their community, she told Catholic

News Service.

Researchers concluded that children who are in orphanages or other mass-residence settings face higher risks of acting violently, teenage pregnancy, mental illness, living a life in poverty, and being trafficked for labour or sex.

"Just providing food and cash assistance to vulnerable children was not sufficient. Therefore, we shifted our approach to virtual monitoring and provision of food and cash, a cash-plus-care approach," Joseph said.

In their report published in the *Lancet*, researchers called for equitable access to vaccines around the world to prevent the death of caregivers, especially in poor countries, and for a boost in support for evidence-based programmes modified for a child's situation and cultural setting.

Researchers focused on 21 countries, including economically prosperous nations, such as the US and

Germany, as well as developing nations such as Zimbabwe and India.

Other nations reviewed were Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, England and Wales, France, Iran, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, South Africa and Spain. These countries represent 76 per cent of Covid-19 deaths worldwide.

Statistically, the United States, with an estimated 149,300 orphaned children, ranked fourth in the world. India had the most orphaned children with more than 1.9 million, followed by Mexico with 192,500 and Brazil with 169,900.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, an estimated 2400 German children were considered orphaned by Covid-19. Since the World Health Organisation declared a pandemic two years ago, the US has had more deaths than any country — 941,909 as of February 24 — according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University.

Pope Francis ordered to rest painful knee

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis did not attend a public event on Ash Wednesday so he could rest a painful knee, the Vatican said.

The Pope did not go to Florence on February 27, and he did not preside over Ash Wednesday Mass on March 2.

That was "because of severe knee pain, for which the doctor prescribed a period of more rest for his leg," said a February 25 communique from the Vatican press office, ahead of the events.

The Pope had been scheduled to visit the Italian city of Florence to speak at a meeting of bishops and mayors of the Mediterranean region, and to celebrate Mass at the Basilica of the Holy Cross. The visit was also to have included an encounter with refugee families.

On Ash Wednesday, the Pope had been scheduled to take part in the traditional penitential procession, that begins from the Benedictine monastery of St Anselm on Rome's Aventine Hill to the Dominican-run Basilica of Santa Sabina, followed by Mass and the distribution of ashes.

According to his official schedule, the Pope's only publicised meeting on February 25 was receiving the letters of credence from Greece's new ambassador to the Holy See, Aikaterini-Katia Georgiou.

But the Pope also visited Russia's Embassy to the Holy See that morning.

In addition to repeated bouts of sciatica that affect his ability to stand for long periods, the Pope also has been open about his knee problems.

At the end of his general audience on January 26, the Pope told visitors that he would be unable to follow his customary practice of walking up to people to greet them. He instead sat in a chair at the foot of the stage for people to come up to him.

"I have a problem with my right leg; a ligament in my knee is inflamed," he said. "It's a passing thing."

Joking with the crowd, he said, "They say this only comes to old people, and I don't know why it has happened to me."

Before the audience, the 85-year-old Pope had shown some difficulty in walking across the stage with a noticeable limp.



Pope Francis arrives to lead his general audience in the St Paul VI hall at the Vatican on February 23 (CNS Photo)

Fraternity can continue with pre-Vatican II liturgies

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has confirmed that members of the Fraternity of St Peter may continue to celebrate the Mass, sacraments and Liturgy of the Hours using the pre-Vatican II texts and forms, the fraternity said.

The fraternity, founded in 1988 by traditionalist priests wanting to maintain the old rites while remaining in full communion with the Pope, published a copy of the Pope's decree on their website on February 21.

In an accompanying statement, the fraternity said that Father Benoit Paul-Joseph, superior of the district of France, and Father Vincent Ribeton, rector of St Peter's Seminary in Wigratzbad, Germany, had met with Pope Francis on February 4, and discussed the Pope's apostolic letter "Traditionis Custodes" (Guardians of the Tradition), which limited celebrations of the Mass according to the rite used before the Second Vatican Council.

"In the course of the audience, the Pope made it clear that institutes such as the Fraternity of St Peter are not affected by the general provisions of the motu proprio 'Traditionis Custodes', since the use of the ancient liturgical books was at the origin of their existence and is provided for in their constitutions," the fraternity said.

The decree, signed by the Pope and posted on the fraternity's website, said Pope Francis "grants to each and every member" of the fraternity "the faculty to celebrate the sacrifice of the Mass, and to carry out the sacraments and other sacred rites, as well as to fulfill the Divine Office, according to the typical editions of the

liturgical books, namely the Missal, the Ritual, the Pontifical and the Roman Breviary, in force in the year 1962".

"They may use this faculty in their own churches or oratories," the decree said. "Otherwise, it may only be used with the consent of the ordinary of the place, except for the celebration of private Masses."

"Traditionis Custodes" affirmed the duty of bishops to regulate the times and places for celebrations of the Mass using the pre-Vatican II liturgy, ensuring that the faithful who attend those liturgies "do not deny the validity and the legitimacy of the liturgical reform" of the Second Vatican Council.

The fraternity's website says it has more than 300 priests and 150 seminarians from 30 countries, and serves in more than 130 dioceses around the world.

■ A notice on the FSSP's New Zealand website stated that members are grateful to the Holy Father for this confirmation of their mission.

All the faithful who feel close to them as a spiritual family were invited to attend or join them in prayer at the Mass on February 22, on the feast of the Chair of St Peter, and to pray for the Supreme Pontiff.

"With the invitation of the Most Rev. Bishop Patrick Dunn, DD, The Priestly Fraternity of St Peter (FSSP) has been serving the Latin Mass Community in Auckland since 2016 throughout the Catholic Diocese of Auckland," the website stated, listing four sites where the FSSP celebrates Masses in the diocese.

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Church leaders urge Russian patriarch to speak with Putin

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholic and Orthodox leaders in Europe have appealed to Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, urging him to convince Russian President Vladimir Putin to put an end to the bloodshed in Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Patriarch Kirill met on March 3 with Archbishop Giovanni D’Agnello, the Vatican nuncio to Russia, according to a statement from the patriarchate.

Neither the Vatican press office nor the nunciature provided information about the meeting; the patriarchate’s description of it focused on values the Catholic and Orthodox churches share and on Patriarch Kirill’s fond memories of meeting Pope Francis in Havana in 2016.

Patriarch Kirill “pointed out that the Holy See’s moderate and wise position on many international issues corresponds to the position of the Russian Orthodox Church”, the patriarchate’s statement said. “It is very important that the Christian churches, our churches among them, should not become, willingly or unwillingly, sometimes without any will, participants in those complex, contradictory and struggling tendencies that are present today in the world agenda,” Holy Patriarch Kirill emphasised,” it added.

“We try to take a peace-making stance, including in the face of existing conflicts,” he said, because the Church cannot be a party to a conflict, it can only be a peace-making force,” the statement quoted the patriarch as saying.

In an open letter published on March 2, Romanian Orthodox Father Ioan Sauca, acting general secretary of the World Council of Churches, told Patriarch Kirill that he received numerous letters asking him to “approach Patriarch Kirill to mediate so that the war can be stopped and the suffering ended”.

“In these times of hopelessness, many look to you as the one who could bring a sign of hope for a peace-

ful solution,” Father Sauca wrote.

“I write to Your Holiness as acting general secretary of the WCC, but also as an Orthodox priest,” he said. “Please, raise up your voice and speak on behalf of the suffering brothers and sisters, most of whom are also faithful members of our Orthodox Church.”

Polish Archbishop Stanislaw Gadecki of Poznan, president of the Polish bishops’ conference, echoed Father Sauca’s sentiments, calling on the Russian patriarch “to appeal to Vladimir Putin to stop the senseless warfare against the Ukrainian people”.

In the letter published by the Polish bishops’ conference on March 2, Archbishop Gadecki also called on Patriarch Kirill to urge Russian soldiers “not to take part in this unjust war, to refuse to carry out orders which, as we have already seen, lead to many war crimes”.

“Refusing to follow orders in such a situation is a moral obligation,” the Polish archbishop wrote.

Although he has prayed for the safety of civilians and a quick end to the fighting, Patriarch Kirill has been criticised for his close relationship with Putin and his lack of support for Ukrainian independence and territorial integrity.

At a divine liturgy in Moscow on February 27, three days after Russia launched its invasion, Patriarch Kirill said, “We must not let dark and hostile external forces laugh at us; we must do everything to maintain peace between our peoples and at the same time protect our common historical fatherland from all outside actions that can destroy this unity”.

The statement prompted an immediate response from Orthodox Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kyiv, head of the independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine, who said the Russian patriarch seemed more concerned with “keeping Putin and the Russian leadership engaged” than taking care of the Ukrainian people, “some of



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow in 2017 (CNS Photo/Reuters)

whom considered you their shepherd before the war”.

“Therefore, it makes no sense to ask you to do anything effective to make Russia’s aggression against Ukraine stop immediately,” he wrote.

Nevertheless, Epiphanius wrote that if the Russian patriarch could not speak out against the invasion, he should at least help facilitate the return of the bodies of “more than 3000” Russian soldiers who “paid for the ideas of the ‘Great Russia’ with their lives”.

“May the Lord give you spiritual

strength at least for this, especially today, Sunday, when we remember the Last Judgement!” he wrote on February 27.

The bishops’ synod of Ukraine’s other Orthodox church, which is in full communion with Patriarch Kirill and the Russian Orthodox Church, also pleaded with the patriarch to “call on the leadership of the Russian Federation to immediately stop hostilities that are already threatening to turn into a world war”, according to the website of Ukraine’s Union of Orthodox Journalists.

Pope to make trip to South Sudan and Congo

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis will travel to the war-scarred countries of Congo and South Sudan in early July, the Vatican press office said.

“At the invitation of their respective heads of state and bishops,” the Pope will visit Kinshasa and Goma in Congo on July 2-5 and Juba, South Sudan, on July 5-7, said Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office.

The Vatican’s announcement on March 3 said further details would be provided later.

Chris Cox, the head of media for Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury, told the Catholic News Service that the archbishop and the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland will join Pope Francis in Juba.

The Pope, the archbishop and the moderator have been supporting the work their counterparts in South Sudan have been doing for years to encourage peace, dialogue and reconciliation among competing political factions.

Most famously, in April, 2019, at the suggestion of Archbishop Welby,

Pope Francis hosted a spiritual retreat at the Vatican with the leaders of all the warring political factions and clans.

South Sudan became independent from Sudan in 2011 after decades of war. But, just two years after independence, political tensions erupted into violence.

At the request of local religious leaders, Pope Francis, Archbishop Welby and moderators of the Church of Scotland have been talking about visiting South Sudan since 2016.

Pope Francis had told a reporter in October that he also hoped to visit Congo in 2022, a nation where about 50 per cent of the population is Catholic. The Church has long been involved in peace efforts in the country, where fighting among a variety of armed groups — both from Congo and from neighbouring countries — has led to death and especially to internal displacement. By the end of 2020, at least 5.3 million Congolese had been displaced within their country, mostly because of conflict and violence, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

Litany of St Joseph (March - month of St Joseph)

Lord, have mercy on us
 Christ, have mercy on us.
 Lord, have mercy on us.
 Christ, hear us, Christ, graciously hear us.
 God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.
 God the Son, Redeemer of the World, have mercy on us.
 God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
 Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.
 Holy Mary, pray for us.
 St Joseph, pray for us.
 Renowned offspring of David, pray for us.
 Light of Patriarchs, pray for us.
 Spouse of the Mother of God, pray for us.
 Chaste guardian of the Virgin, pray for us.
 Foster father of the Son of God, pray for us.
 Watchful defender of Christ, pray for us.
 Head of the Holy Family, pray for us.
 Joseph most just, pray for us.
 Joseph most chaste, pray for us.
 Joseph most prudent, pray for us.
 Joseph most strong, pray for us.
 Joseph most obedient, pray for us.
 Joseph most faithful, pray for us.
 Mirror of patience, pray for us.
 Lover of poverty, pray for us.
 Model of workmen, pray for us.
 Glory of family life, pray for us.
 Guardian of virgins, pray for us.
 Pillar of families, pray for us.
 Solace of the afflicted, pray for us.
 Hope of the sick, pray for us.
 Patron of the dying, pray for us.



Terror of demons, pray for us.
 Defender of Holy Church, pray for us.
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, spare us, O Jesus.
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Jesus.
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Jesus.
 He made him the lord of his household, and prince over all his possessions.
Let us pray:
 O God, in your ineffable providence you were pleased to choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of your most holy Mother; grant, we beg you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our Protector: You who live and reign forever and ever, Amen.
 Saint Joseph, pray for us.

“St Joseph is very powerful – St Teresa of Avila, St Thomas Aquinas and many Popes, asked St Joseph for help and received it. I petition St Joseph regularly – Yes! I get lots of help for family & friends. GO TO JOSEPH! Go often – you won’t be disappointed.” – Judy.
 Are there any churches closing that have a statue of St Joseph to give away? Required height: 1.5 metres, in good condition. Please call Judy (number below). Thank you.

Promoter of St Joseph Prayer Groups: Judy Chandler Jones
 Phone: (04) 293 4936 Email: judychandlerjones@gmail.com

Christian vocation is to build bridges north to south, Pope Francis says

by CHRISTOPHER GUNTY (CNS)

Reflecting themes he has emphasised throughout his pontificate, Pope Francis participated on February 24 in a webinar with university students from North and South America to discuss “building bridges” north to south.

“This is the Christian vocation, to build bridges. Christ came to be the bridge between God the Father and us. If a Christian does not build bridges, it means they forgot their own baptism, because to build bridges is part of our vocation,” the Pope said in his opening remarks for the session.

In the encounter, the Pope dialogued with 16 university students in four groups of four, who made presentations on migration, the environment and non-violence. Pope Francis responded to each group, and could be seen on the video taking copious notes as the students spoke.

Sponsored by Loyola University Chicago and the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, the session was interpreted and captioned in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The Pope spoke in Spanish.

Formally titled “Building Bridges North-South,” the session was organised by the Institute of Pastoral Studies, Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage, and the Department of Theology at Jesuit-run Loyola University Chicago.

More than 130 students from 58 universities in 21 countries participated in the discussions, in seven regional groups that were held over the past several weeks to prepare for the dialogue with Pope Francis.

The Pope said that universities play an important role in solutions to

the problems facing the world. Universities, with a range of disciplines and influence, nourish the minds of students with concepts and ideas.

However, he noted, “a man or woman who just fills their mind with concepts, eventually they are cold, they are heartless, because they have this only in their mind. But university students must follow their studies . . . so they merge their heart and their hands”.

The Pope said he likes to talk to young people, because it makes him feel younger.

■ Presentations

Some of the students asked the Pope for his support or advice on how to move forward with their concept, including a request that he make such a dialogue with college students a new tradition for popes. He responded to them by name, referring to points they had made.

In his response to the first group, he noted that the students had several times used the word “roots” in their discussion about migration issues.

“Everyone takes their energy from the roots,” Pope Francis said, noting that his own family had migrated to Argentina from Italy when his father was in his 20s. He noted that those who did not learn the language of their new country did not do well.

“They have to learn the language without losing their roots,” he said, adding, “We cannot integrate the migrant by making them forget about their roots.”

Another group talked to the Pope about poverty and food insecurity, which often forces people to leave their homes, their land and their cultural roots. The students proposed



Pope Francis participates in a virtual meeting titled ‘Building Bridges: A Synodal Encounter’ with university students from North, Central and South America (CNS Photo)

a programme to help people remain in place, creating “centres of permanence”, which would act as research hubs for technologies and initiatives for sustainable development.

Another student noted that, based on an analysis, no US diocese has committed to carbon neutrality, and that bishops and priests don’t discuss climate change regularly.

Another student urged more centres to train people on nonviolent direct action to address the climate crisis.

The Pope responded to these concerns by saying, “You propose a harmony with nature. Violence always destroys nature, never builds it up. Non-violence is based on dialogue and respect. . . . We must act in such a way that people don’t have a desire to migrate”.

“They should be able to remain in a good life in harmony with nature. When there is violence, there is no life,” he said.

He recalled a Spanish proverb: “God forgives always, we forgive sometimes, nature never forgives.”

The Pope added, “If we destroy nature, then we create a chain of violence”.

■ Collaboration

A third group of students brought to the Pope ideas about pastors not being close to their people; about collaboration and health care, especially in light of the pandemic; and noting the inhumane conditions of migration often exclude migrants from housing and health care.

They encouraged the Pope to con-

tinue to fight for those who are forgotten or without a voice, and asked for advice on how to get corporations and governments to rethink public policy that exploits natural resources.

Pope Francis paused to think before responding, and acknowledged that the students had said they wanted to improve the world. “Am I able to leave the world better than the one I am living in now?” the Pope asked. To do so, “we have to change from the inside”, he said.

In response to the final group of presentations, the Pope decried the stigmatisation of migrants and immigrants, including physical and psychological violence.

He complimented Aleja Sastoque, a native of Colombia, who recently completed master’s degrees at Loyola, on the fact that she spoke Spanish in her presentation.

“The fact you talked in the language of your ancestors means you didn’t forget your roots. These roots became jewels for you,” he told Sastoque, who now serves as a faith formation campus minister at Loyola.

He also noted that a synodal Church should not be a closed Church, citing the example of a priest in his neighbourhood who invited the migrants in his area to the church for a holiday feast if they did not have someone with whom they could celebrate. “If this is the house of God, it is where people feed you and take care of you.”

After concluding remarks, the Pope gave a final blessing and said, “Please don’t forget to pray for me”.

Family Matters

Helen Luxford



Single friends

We have four children now and almost all of our friends are families too. Often the way we meet people is through our children. In the workplace, we seem to gravitate naturally to people with children, even more so those with kids the same age as ours. We have less in common with people who are single or don’t have children. Over the years, I feel like some of those friends and relatives have kind of been left behind.

It’s not a deliberate choice. With our first child, we had plenty of single or child-free friends, and invited them all to the baptism and birthday parties. As we started having more children, it felt a bit odd inviting them to the birthday parties. I have had more than one tell me they really don’t want to come. They feel out of place and awkward and they don’t fit in. They feel most of the conversations revolve around the kids, and their kindy or school, and so they feel left out. Equally, they feel as if they can’t “complain” or comment about being tired or stressed or feeling under financial pressure, when people with families invariably say “you have no idea” and “enjoy it while you can”.

Some people are single and or child-free by choice, but some aren’t. I remember really feeling terrible about telling my childless (not by choice) friends we were having our third

and our fourth. I imagined how devastating it must be for them to hear that. I know at least one left Facebook because they couldn’t bear seeing all the happy children when they couldn’t have any. It must just hurt every single day.

Perhaps those that are single by choice find it easier to be around families, or perhaps they equally don’t want to. I think there is a time and place for different catch-ups with different people in different styles. As a mum of four, I’d be happy to catch up with anyone single or not in the evening or weekend, and have a child-free adult conversation that doesn’t revolve around the kids!

With busy family life and work and trying to keep up with school and all the activities, we both struggle to keep in contact with friends, single or not. There is simply only so much time in the day! Often school and other activities are what hold you together as friends, and maintain the frequent contact. There can be a sort of jealousy that creeps into some friendships when one party perceives the other has things better in life. This can go either way in this situation — the busy mother jealous of the perceived free time and extra disposable income and freedom that the single person has, and the single person may, at times, experience loneliness and longing and be jealous of the family life their friend has.

Jealously often quietly gets in the way of deep relationships.

Single people are a vital part of our Church community. I know some who have been called to vocations, which is a special blessing on them, just as married motherhood is for me. I also wonder if they end up doing more volunteer and lay work within parishes, in which case we couldn’t survive without them. They need to be acknowledged and thanked, as do all of us, for the large amounts of unpaid and unrecognised work that they do. Open dialogue, and always reaching out without judgement, will help to make sure everyone feels included and valued in their role in the life of the Church.

1 John 3:22-24: “And whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.”

Helen Luxford is a physician, working part-time. She is a parishioner of St Michael’s, Remuera. Together with her husband Michael, they are raising their children in the Catholic Faith and reflecting on the challenges and joys that brings.

Faking it on the make

by NEVIL GIBSON

As a cultural force, long-form, or limited series, movies on the major streaming services have become a juggernaut that is leaving traditional fare in the dust. These extra-long features differ from conventional TV series by having a complete story, rather than spinning out episodes in “seasons” with the same set of characters.

In this definition, the source for an extended movie is likely to be an historical event or a major novel that can be sustained over several hours of viewing rather than compacted into a couple for cinemas.

The genre reached maturity during the Covid-19 pandemic as theatres were closed and the “tentpole” blockbusters on which they commercially depended became scarce.

Though recovery is under way, cinemas are still struggling with a lack of big-screen attractions. Studios such as Disney, Warner Bros and Paramount are gearing their output to home viewing to match the streaming pioneers, Netflix and Amazon, who have successfully disrupted the old business model.

Last year, few movies attracted as much attention as *The White Lotus*, a six-part satire set in a Hawaiian resort, or *Nine Perfect Strangers*, based on a novel by Liane Moriarty.

This year, the undoubted standout is *Inventing Anna*, a nine-hour Netflix series based on the case of Anna Delvey, a fictitious multi-million-dollar heiress, who was born Anna Sorokin and whose humble family emigrated to Germany from Russia.

Apart from its production merits, which are excellent, *Inventing Anna* has sparked heated debate on psychological, legal and financial issues among experts and those depicted on



Julia Garner as Anna Delvey in *Inventing Anna*

Movie Review

the screen.

This is because Sorokin created a persona in Delvey that has defied explanation. Few foreigners in their 20s arrive in New York posing as a rich philanthropist wanting to establish a foundation to run a private club dedicated to the arts. To do this, Delvey had to persuade others to pay for her luxurious lifestyle of flash hotels, trendy clothes and expensive dinners. She had already penetrated Manhattan society when her exploits were first revealed in a *Vanity Fair* article by a close friend, who had to cough up a \$US65,000 bill for their holiday in Morocco.

I recall being astounded when I read of the scandal at the time (2018). But there was much more to the Delvey story, thanks to a journalist who provides the basis for *Inventing Anna*. She is tireless in her task, eventually exposing

the extent of Delvey’s confidence trickery.

Sorokin was arrested in 2017 and put on trial, but by then the journalist’s sympathy had switched as she tried to understand the “real” Anna after tracking down her background. Some have explained the extent of Delvey’s fraud, and the way she played on weaknesses in her victims, as akin to the “fake it until you make it” school of entrepreneurs in business.

In this context, her crimes are financially insignificant when compared with the millions involved in other much larger frauds that have been presented as legitimate business practice.

Credits: Created by Shonda Rhimes (*Bridgerton*), with Anna Chlumsky as the journalist and Julia Garner (*Ozark*) as Anna.

Netflix rating: R16. Nine episodes.

CLIPS

The Eyes of Tammy Faye (Disney/Searchlight)

A 2000 documentary that sympathetically traced the life of the flamboyant gospel singer, who was married to disgraced televangelist Jimmy Bakker, has been given the Hollywood star treatment with Jessica Chastain in the title role. Young Tammy first attracted attention when she spoke in tongues at a church service, later turning this into a career when she met Bakker (Andrew Garfield), an even bigger, self-promoting charmer, and a leading figure in American religious broadcasting of the 1970s and 1980s. The mix of music and money purported to do works of charity, while giving its promoters lavish lifestyles. The Bakkers’ 30-year marriage crumbled due to infidelity and Jimmy being convicted of fraud. Tammy, meanwhile, battled addiction and cancer, finding redemption in her work with marginalised groups. This set the tone for both the documentary and the feature, which is directed by Michael Showalter (*The Big Sick*) and adapted by Abe Sylvia. Rating: Mature audiences. 126 minutes.

The King’s Man (Disney/20th Century Studios)

Intended as a sendup of the James Bond franchise, but without its namby-pamby action scenes, Matthew Vaughn’s *Kingsman* series is neither completely escapist nor devoid of serious content. The first two, *The Secret Service* (2014) and *The Golden Circle* (2017), provided relief for jaded Bond fans, as well as those tired of mindless knockoffs. This prequel goes back to World War I, providing a mashup of real events and characters – the second Boer War, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Lord Kitchener, Rasputin, Lenin, Mata Hari, US President Wilson, the Zimmerman Telegraph and, of course, the three monarchs (and cousins) of the UK, Russia and Germany, all played by Tom Hollander. Even Hitler gets a look in. But it’s the fictitious Orlando, Duke of Oxford (Ralph Fiennes), his spy partner (Gemma Arterton) and son Conrad (Harris Dickinson) who take centre-stage in their efforts to undo the conspiracy of a Scottish schemer and Kashmir goat breeder (Matthew Goode). Rating: R16. 131 minutes.

No Exit (Disney/20th Century Studios)

Passed over for a cinema release, this taut, old-school thriller used to be a Hollywood staple in the 1940s and again in the 1990s, usually starring Ashley Judd or Angelina Jolie. The claustrophobic action is typically set in a single location, in this case a visitor’s centre during a blizzard in a remote mountain park. Recent examples include *Red Dot* (Sweden), *The Trip* (Norway) and *The Decline* (Canada). The entrapped heroine is a student in drug rehab (Havana Rose Liu) on her way to visit her sick mother. While sheltering with four others stranded until the snowstorm stops, she discovers a kidnapped child. The plot, based on a book by Taylor Adams, reveals the guilty party early on, but contains enough twists to keep the story rattling until the end. Director Damien Power has form with low-budget mayhem *Killing Ground* (2016) and in Liu has found a face equal to those who have gone before. Rating: R15. 96 minutes.

Author has uniquely Catholic view on common mental health challenges

ST DYMPHNA’S PLAYBOOK: A Catholic Guide to Finding Mental and Emotional Well-Being by Tommy Tighe. Ave Maria Press (Notre Dame, Indiana, 2021). 205 pp., US\$17.95. Reviewed by NANCY ROBERTS (CNS)

Depression, anxiety, trauma and grief are challenging mental health challenges today. In the sea of practical advice given to deal with them, *St Dymphna’s Playbook* offers a uniquely Catholic perspective.

Tommy Tighe, a licensed marriage and family therapist, combines his extensive clinical experience with insights from Scripture and the saints, to give readers practical tools to cope.

Based on Tighe’s podcast of the same name, each chapter of the book gives an accessible explanation of a specific mental health concern. These include loneliness, irritability, hopelessness and relationships.

Tighe then clearly describes characteristic symptoms, and engages Catholic spiritual practice to offer suggestions to address each condition. Each chapter highlights a Catholic saint or holy person who faced the same issue, followed by a

closing prayer.

“Am I anxious or just worried?” Thus begins the chapter on anxiety.

Here Tighe explains that “similar to every other mental health condition, we need to seek help if the symptoms we are experiencing make it hard for us to carry out our day-to-day activities or responsibilities, cause problems in our relationships or at work, or make other areas of our life difficult to engage in”.

Take heed, he advises, “if you experience anxiety even when there’s no specific threat, or if your anxiety is out of proportion to the threat taking place”.

Frequent scriptural mention of anxiety suggests that Christ and the early Church understood how much it affects us. And, Tighe adds, “how deeply Christ wants to give us peace amid our struggles”.

Many will likely recognise themselves in the chapter on irritability. After all, this is one of the most common mental health challenges.

But “persistent irritability is a common sign of depression”, Tighe advises, and the sufferer may benefit from therapy and medication.

He also mentions several relatable saints who lived with irritability, such as St Jerome, “who was known to carry around a stone that he would hit himself with every time he lost his temper”.

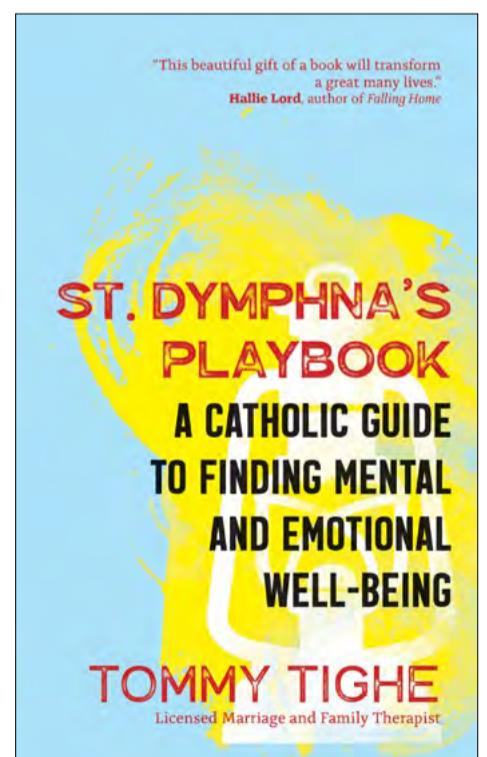
Another is St Vincent de Paul, who was described as “by nature of a bilious temperament and very subject to anger”.

Fittingly, this chapter’s closing prayer is St Teresa of Ávila’s “Let nothing perturb you . . . All things pass. God does not change. Patience achieves everything”.

Aptly titled after St Dymphna, the patron saint of those with mental health issues, the book achieves its author’s hope that it can “remind us that we are not alone”, that we are part of “a Catholic community where we all suffer together, unafraid to walk forward with our sisters and brothers through their valley of tears”.

Engagingly written, “St Dymphna’s Playbook” also includes a brief appendix of mental health resources.

The book will command the attention of anyone seeking a Catholic spiritual perspective on these



common mental health challenges. Nancy Roberts is a journalism professor at the State University of New York at Albany.

We are here: ▼ Second Sunday of Lent

THE CHURCH YEAR

Advent

Christmas

Ordinary Time

Lent

Eastertime

Ordinary Time

An endorsement of God's will for us all

Scripture

by Fr Kevin Waldie sm

Through the biblical writings we are typically introduced to the various ways in which God communicates with his people using special agents.

In the Genesis reading, Abraham is drawn into a quite unusual meeting with the Lord God. The special ritual conditions of the encounter single him out for an experience of divine presence that sets him up for an enduring religious remembrance. As a much-honoured biblical figure, his relationship with God becomes the solid basis of Israel's faith tradition. The covenant forged here is thus hallowed by generation after generation of his descendants. That ancient

bond, therefore, serves to remind us in our time that we too are heirs to a spiritual relationship that must never be forgotten.

Paul's words of advice to the Philippians echo similar sentiments. For his talk of heavenly citizenship is an adapted manner of recalling that we, as brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, belong to a family of faith that must ever honour its spiritual heritage. Walking in the shadow of Christ's cross, we daily acknowledge the extraordinary nature of being proclaimers of the transforming power that comes from believing that Jesus is our Saviour.

That same transforming power shows itself

March 13: Second Sunday of Lent. **Readings:** 1. Genesis 15:5-12,17-18; **Psalm:** 27; 2. Philippians 3:17-4:1; **Gospel:** Luke 9:28-36.

in Luke. What is revealed on the mountain of the transfiguration is an endorsement of God's will for us all. What is seen and heard on that mountain confirms that Jesus' destiny is the ultimate saving event - death on a cross to save us all. Being united with him in this sacrificial act is, therefore, deemed to be how we obediently conform our lives to the mystery of Christ crucified and risen.

The Scriptures chosen for today are both a reminder of our faith heritage and a call to give faithful witness to it.

Time is limited for needed change and right, fruitful actions

These readings present us with a strange set of biblical perspectives. But their purpose clearly redirects our thinking to embrace the fact that God has revealed himself down the ages, and continues to will that we be drawn into a close relationship with him.

The Exodus text relates Moses' amazing meeting with God on the mountain at Horeb. The burning bush aptly symbolises the supernatural dimension of divine presence. This is the context for God to commission Moses as his mouthpiece and agent of change for the people of Israel. God's identity is mysteriously presented as something that can be known and yet remains beyond full human comprehension. This moment in history

establishes the necessary awareness that should underpin a right sense of reverence for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Invoking the name of Moses, while speaking to the Corinthians, Paul makes Israel's wilderness failings an example to ponder upon. This is so that the Christian community might reform itself. That move would accord with what had been revealed through Christ's mission on earth. This is a sober form of address that calls everyone to review their lives and avoid a catastrophic fall.

The Lukan Gospel passage is yet another classic piece of biblical scene-setting. What befalls people cannot be predicted. But, then again, being always ready for the unexpected, or being in a

March 20: Third Sunday of Lent. **Readings:** 1. Exodus 3:1-8,13-15; **Psalm:** 103; 2. 1 Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12; **Gospel:** Luke 13:1-9.

repentant state of mind, can assist a believer to face the future with trust in God. The story of the unproductive fig tree serves a fitting purpose in this context. Given a last chance to produce fruit, the parable teaches that time is limited for needed change and right, fruitful actions.

With these readings, we hear a message that directly prompts some response from us. And that is appropriate in this time of Lent.

SAINTED GLASS



The optional Gospel for Sunday March 20 is about the woman at the well who was offered "living water" by Jesus. This window from St John's church, Trentham, shows the living water flowing from the mountain top into the sea and sustaining life. In the corner is a shell dripping water — John the Baptist is traditionally shown using a shell to scoop up water for baptism. The symbolism is very real to me. Since I received the Holy Spirit, I have changed, and my life has become as full and colourful as the window suggests. Can you say the same? — Glen McCullough

Eastern Catholic leaders meet to discuss importance of liturgical identity

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Eastern Catholic churches must strengthen their liturgical identity, especially given ongoing conflicts in many of the homelands of those churches, and the continuing migration of Eastern Catholics to countries where most Catholics belong to the Latin rite, said a Vatican official.

Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, spoke at the opening of a conference marking the 25th anniversary of an instruction from the congregation, that urged Eastern Catholics to learn more about their liturgies and to exercise great care in translating the texts and modifying the liturgies. He said that Eastern liturgies are a treasure belonging to the entire Catholic Church, and bind it closely to the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches as well.

Cardinal Sandri told conference participants on February 16 that Catholic, Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Christians "feel the wound of still not being able to sit around the one eucharistic table", but they also know that "we are heirs of a common treasure, and very often of the same texts for celebrating the different liturgies".

So he pleaded with the Eastern Catholic churches "to avoid solitary escapes in pursuit of reforms that do not take into account the heritage shared with the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches".

The cardinal repeated the instruction's call for Eastern Catholics belong-

Bible News

ing to the same ritual families — the Alexandrian, Antiochian, Armenian, Byzantine and Chaldean — to work together in studying their rites, developing educational programmes for their faithful, translating texts, and weighing any possible reforms before moving ahead with them.

Archbishop Borys Gudziak, who heads the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, focused on the instruction's call for the Eastern churches to recover the "mystagogical" role of the liturgy, its role as the place where, as the instruction said, "catechesis and religious teaching occurred; the Scripture was proclaimed and commented; the catechumens and penitents were prepared for baptism and reconciliation"; and from which service to the community flowed.

Archbishop Gudziak urged his fellow bishops to make sure their cathedrals are, as the instruction said, "places that transfer us to a different world, to the presence of God" because regular public prayer is taking place there.

If the cathedrals "remain empty because we ourselves are not praying there on a regular basis", he said, "our faithful lay people have every right to ask on the eve of every Sunday and feast day, 'Do you know where your bishop is?'"

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Local Diocese News

Joyful occasion for Gisborne Benemerenti recipient

by ROSS GREGORY

Frances Baumann's contribution and commitment to the parish of St Mary Star of the Sea Gisborne for more than 50 years was recognised by the presentation to her of the Benemerenti Medal by Bishop Stephen Lowe at a recent Friday Mass.

The Benemerenti Medal is an honour awarded by the Pope to members of the clergy and laity for long and exceptional service to the Catholic Church.

It was a great and joyous occasion for the Parish of St Mary Star of the Sea, the Catholic community and the city of Gisborne.

Frances Baumann was born in Thorpe Bay, Essex, England. She is the youngest of a family of seven. All of these children were dedicated to Mary at their baptism.

She graduated as a state registered nurse and midwife from Guy's Hospital, London, during the 1950s.

During 1963, then-Miss Baumann arrived in New Zealand from England and settled in Gisborne, and since her arrival has been an active parishioner of St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic parish.

She met Ambrose Story as a co-worker in the Legion of Mary and, during 1968, they married and, as

Ian Story, her stepson, says "went on to achieve great things for God between them".

Sister Marie Hogan wrote about Mrs Baumann: "When there was any need at the church she was always ready and willing to step in and help. She was a constant visitor of the sick and lonely, tireless in helping those in need, a frequent visitor to the hospital, and welcoming parishioners into her home for praying the rosary."

Mrs Baumann has been involved in setting up for Masses several days of the week for many years — she is still doing this — and she is a daily communicant at Mass. She has a great devotion to Our Lady.

She has been involved with many organisations and activities in the parish of St Mary Star of the Sea, including leadership of the Legion of Mary and member for more than 20 years, being an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist at weekly and Sunday masses and giving Communion to the sick in their homes for more than 30 years, as well as being a reader at Mass.

Mrs Baumann has counted weekly collection plate donations and has managed flower rosters, polished the Church brass and sold Columban calendars for many years. Prior to all weekday masses she has led the



From left: Bishop Stephen Lowe, Frances Baumann and Jacqui Botterill (Frances' niece) (Photo: Facebook)

rosary. After Sunday Mass, she has invited parishioners to her home for refreshments and prayer.

She has been actively involved in the wider community, and was an inaugural member of Pregnancy Counselling services that began in the 1980s; she remained a member for more than 20 years. She was also a committee member for the Society

for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC), and has been very actively involved in the Catholic Enquiry Centre delivering newsletters and collecting donations.

The parish thanks and congratulates her for her long, exceptional and wonderful contribution to the parish of St Mary Star of the Sea and the wider Gisborne community.

Two new knights invested in Holy Sepulchre order

by PAT McCARTHY

Two new knights were invested into the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland, on February 12.

Aaron Dhat and Salvador Soldevilla, both from Auckland, were dubbed with a processional cross by the dean of the cathedral, Fr Chris Denham, deputising for the newly appointed prior of the order, Bishop Stephen Lowe.

The colourful ceremony took place before a small congregation because of Covid restrictions.

Though the historical origins of the order are obscure, there is documentary evidence of investitures as far back as 1336.

In modern times, the order has evolved into

an association of the laity, with the mission of supporting the declining number of Christians in the Holy Land, in particular the religious, charitable and social works of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The Auckland group, which has 28 members, was established in 2011.

It is currently fundraising to renovate a small convent in Nazareth.

Catholics in New Zealand will also have an opportunity on Good Friday to contribute to the upkeep of sanctuaries in the Holy Land and to the wellbeing of Christians who live there.

New Zealand contributions to the annual collection for the Holy Land will be used for two specific purposes — the maintenance of the Wedding Church at Cana in Galilee, and the provision of university scholarships for 20 Palestinian students from needy families.



New knights Salvador Soldevilla (left) and Aaron Dhat bringing the Offertory gifts at the Mass after the investiture

Young Catholic says it is better to listen than preach

◀ Continued from page 20

Ms Carvalho described herself as a cradle Catholic from a very religious family, and being happily the "Jesus kid" throughout high school.

However, all her Catholic friends were a year below her, so that, when she went to university, all she had were "secular" friends.

"My secular friends were great, but it's hard to grow in your faith when you don't have any Catholic friends around you. You can't expect your secular friends to help you because they are not on the same faith journey as you. You end up falling into the secular world without being aware of it," she said.

Ms Carvalho also suggested that, when dealing with people of other faiths, she finds it better to listen than to preach.

She said that some of her workmates were vocal about their faiths, which gave her the confidence to be

equally vocal about hers.

"I think the key to become comfortable in those conversations with other religions is hearing what they have to say and not preaching at them. I think people are way more receptive in hearing what you have to say when you actually hear what they say first," she said.

"You've planted a seed of thought and, if someone wants to come and talk to you about it, they know that they can come back and talk to you about it."

She also found wearing a scapular or having other religious items at the workplace can be a way to open conversations about faith.

■ Hard core

Ms Leung-Wai also described herself as a cradle Catholic with "hard-core" Legion of Mary parents, but said her young faith was "not internalised" despite being "forced" to go to Mass every day at the church

near her house.

Ms Leung-Wai had nothing but praise and love for her parents, who both came from broken homes, but worked hard to ensure that their family would grow in love and faith.

She said that, when she moved to New Plymouth for an engineering job, her faith was tested. She became worldly and was embarrassed to let people know of her faith.

But when she went to World Youth Day in Brazil in 2013, she "realised I needed to own up to my faith". She was later selected to meet with Pope Francis at World Youth Day 2016 in Poland.

Her faith life was further enriched by her subsequent experiences of travelling overseas, joining non-profit organisations like the Society of St Vincent de Paul and Family Life International.

Now that she's back in the engineering field, she said she subtly preaches her faith, like having a St

Josephine Bakhita water bottle, or talking about how she spent time at a monastery.

"Where the real magic happens, where the real evangelising happens, is in the kitchen when we are going for our coffee," she said, explaining that it could be as simple as doing the sign of the cross as she gives thanks to God for her meal.

Being a member of the "water team" at her organisation, and working on water projects, she said she also had "to take courage", not only with people in her organisation, "but I have to take courage and share my faith without speaking it to our clients and contractors".

"Where I am today is a testimony of God's love for me. And being able to open my heart and allow him (Jesus) to work through me, and receiving his love and being able to share that, that's so important for each of us. . . . not just once but every day of our lives," she said.

40 YEARS AGO

TEST-TUBE 'SPELLS PERIL'

While the Catholic Church has not given a final word on the subject, it is Bishop John Mackey's personal view that the production of test-tube babies is not morally permissible.

In a statement this week, the bishop said his objection was basically that the process "is a deformation of humanity and opens the way to procedures that could imperil the freedom and dignity of our future".

Bishop Mackey's comments follow the visit to Auckland by Australian specialist Dr John Leeton of Monash University, who predicted that between 50 and 100 test-tube babies will be born around the world this year. The programme in Melbourne in which he is involved has been going for 11 years and resulted in several births last year, including twins.

The procedure, known technically as in vitro (Latin for glass) fertilisation, involves the removal of an egg from the mother's ova-

ries and its fertilisation by the husband's sperm in a laboratory. The embryo is then implanted in the mother's womb and the pregnancy follows as normal.

The procedure has meant new hope for some couples who would otherwise be childless. But Catholic theologians worry about separating conception from the loving act of intercourse between husband and wife. There are moral questions, too, about the freezing of surplus embryos and their destruction when they are not needed, or if they are judged "sub-standard".

In Auckland last week for a medical conference, Dr Leeton acknowledged that there was need for guidelines to be drawn up by "a broadly based ethics committee", but he said it was difficult to legislate in this controversial area, and that social attitudes should be allowed to shape decisions on the matter.

— *Zealandia*, March 7, 1982

CAPTION CONTEST



Write the best caption for this photo and win a \$30 Countdown voucher. Send in your ideas by Tuesday, March 22 to Caption Contest 632, NZ Catholic, PO Box 147000, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144. Or email: design@nzcatholic.org.nz Please include your postal address so that your prize, if you win, can be sent to you.

The winner of the Caption Contest from issue 630 (right) was **Paul McKee, Christchurch**

Some other suggestions were:

"Some men have been head over heels about me, but losing his head?" — **Russell Watt, Auckland.**

"Hmmm... he seems like a bit of an air-head to me!" — **Colleen Hanratty, Levin.**

"Well George, you don't look any older than when we first met thirty years ago." — **Linda Jennings, Auckland.**

Woman: "Please tell me your secret for eternal youth, I promise I won't tell anyone." — **Patricia Jackson, Auckland.**

"He said he wanted to be incognito, but this is going a bit far." — **Russell Watt, Auckland.**



"I could never get ahead in life."

"He promised the world, but I could see right through him." — **S. Maitland, Auckland.**



Papal Prayer

The Pope's universal prayer intention for March: For a Christian response to bioethical challenges.

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

Kit's Corner



We are in the Church's season of **Lent**. It is the time in the Church's year when God's people **think** about their own special (spiritual) life with God and how they can make it **grow** and get **better** and **better**.



We all **say** and **do** things that we know are **not right (Sin)** and we are **sorry** about them. When we have hurt someone by what we have **said** or **done**, or because we have **said nothing** or **done nothing**, we say sorry to God and to the people we have hurt (**repent**). We **go back** to saying and doing good things again and treating other people with love and respect.

Lent is a time to think extra hard about the **people** in our lives and how we treat them. We can look for ways to be more kind at home and school.



Here are some ideas to help you think about what is right and what is wrong. You can put in your own ideas, too.

I CAN SAY:

YES to Mum or dad or my teacher at once.

YES to _____

NO to _____

YES to doing an extra job.

NO to grumbling.

YES to _____

NO to _____

YES to a bright smile.

I CAN SAY:

NO to being mean.

YES to _____

NO to _____

YES to letting someone else go first.

NO to being selfish.

YES to _____

NO to _____

YES to saying a prayer for someone.



Vatican astronomer discovers mysterious new object in our solar system

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Two Jesuit astronomers from the Vatican Observatory were part of recent discoveries: one finding a new member of the solar system, and another finding evidence for a long-lost galaxy “eaten up” by the Milky Way.

Jesuit Father Richard Boyle discovered the existence of a new object, named “2021 XD7”, in the outer solar system past Neptune, and Jesuit Father Richard D’Souza co-authored a new study identifying a previously unknown dwarf galaxy, named Pontus, that merged with Earth’s home galaxy of the Milky Way.

The Vatican Observatory made the first announcement on February 2, saying Father Boyle discovered the new object in early December after his observations were analysed by Kazimieras Cernis, a Lithuanian astronomer and astrophysicist. Peter Vereš, who works at the International Astronomical Union’s Minor Planet Center, computed the object’s orbit, it said. Vereš is an alumnus of the Vatican Observatory’s 2007 summer school programme and its “super” summer program for alumni in 2009.

Father Boyle, who specialises in observational astronomy, made the discovery using the Vatican Advanced Technology Telescope on Mount Graham in Arizona.

“2021 XD7” is a “trans-Neptunian object”, which is any minor or dwarf planet in the solar system whose orbit is outside the orbit of Neptune, the system’s outermost planet.

The new body takes nearly 287 Earth years to make a complete orbit around the Sun, and it follows an elliptical path ranging from 3.2 billion miles from the sun at its closest point, to 4.8 billion miles from the sun at its furthest away point. For comparison, Neptune, which is the eighth and farthest-known solar

planet from the Sun, takes about 165 Earth years to make a complete orbit, with an average distance of 2.8 billion miles from the sun.

Not much is known yet about the object’s size other than it is smaller than Pluto — the first “trans-Neptunian object” (TNO) to have been discovered. The International Astronomical Union downgraded the status of Pluto from planet to “dwarf planet” in 2006 because it is not “gravitationally dominant” enough to clear away bodies of comparable size in its vicinity.

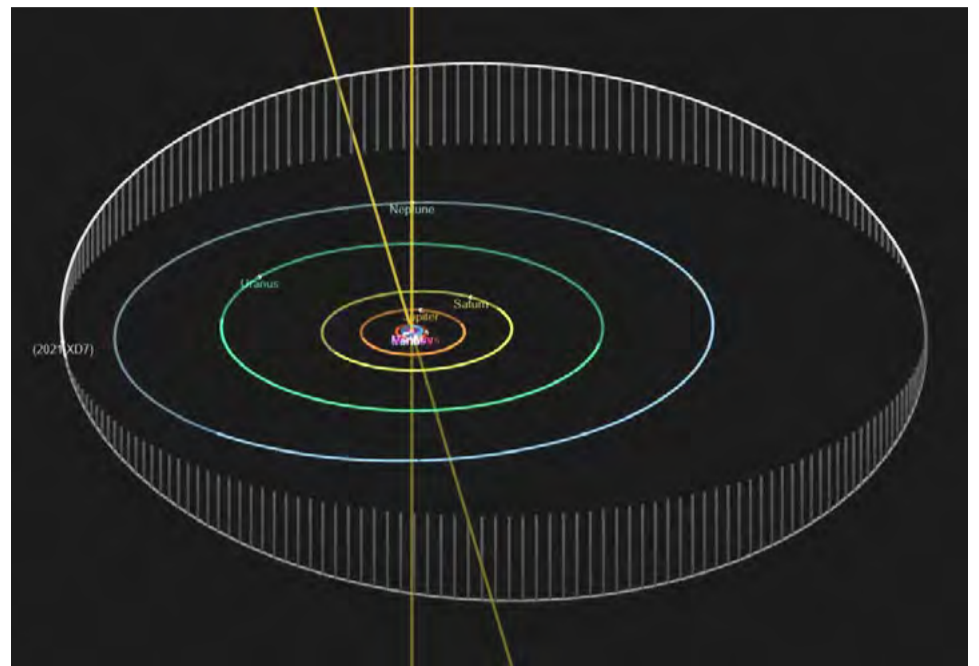
Discovering TNOs adds to building a model of how the solar system may have formed, and some scientists believe these objects may point out the location of “Planet Nine”, a hypothetical planet about the size of Neptune farther away than Pluto.

The Vatican Observatory announced on February 21 that Father D’Souza was one of 10 astronomers contributing to a study led by Khyati Malhan of the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy.

The team used new data from the Gaia spacecraft to study the remains of smaller galaxies that merged with the Milky Way, which began forming 12 billion years ago. Mapping out these mergers is like making the Milky Way’s “family tree”, and reconstructing how it was formed.

The astronomers confirmed evidence of five previously known mergers with former dwarf galaxies, and found evidence for a sixth merger with a dwarf galaxy the authors called Pontus, the name of one of the children of the Greek goddess Gaia, as well as a “new candidate merger”, said the study, published in *The Astrophysical Journal* on February 20.

Detecting such mergers in new ways is now becoming possible “due



“2021 XD7”, an object orbiting the sun beyond Neptune, is seen in this NASA image (CNS Photo)

to the amazingly rich” batches of data being sent by the Gaia space mission, the study said. “This places us in a very exciting position to

disentangle the merging events of the Milky Way halo”, and to explore the chronological history of the galaxy.

WIT'S END

A town decided to form a clergy group to have Catholics, Jews, Protestants and Muslims gather to talk about various issues facing their places of worship.

The rabbi went first and said they were having a terrible issue with squirrels. He said they were hanging around outside of their place of worship, and aggressively begging for food. He said they were scaring their kids.

The preacher said they were hav-

ing the same issue; in fact, a few of the squirrels had actually gotten inside of the church and had done some damage to the roof.

The imam agreed saying that, in fact, one of the squirrels had bitten a few people at the mosque.

The priest then spoke up and said they used to have the same issue but had solved it. He said they took all of their squirrels, baptised them, confirmed them, and now they only come around at Christmas and Easter.

WORDS TO PONDER

“Nothing is lost by peace; everything may be lost by war.”

— Pope Pius XII broadcast message, August 24, 1939.

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sub632



Fatima Leung-Wai and other young people with Pope Francis in Krakow, Poland, in 2016 (CNS Photo)



Fleur Carvalho speaks about how she lives her faith in the workplace (Photo: ACYAC facebook)

Young adults living their faith in the workplace

by ROWENA OREJANA

Three Catholic young adults have spoken of living their faith in the workplace as opposed to preaching it, hoping that their witness of the love of God through their everyday activity will bring their colleagues to the fold.

Manni Nepomuceno, Fleur Carvalho and Fatima Leung-Wai spoke at an event hosted by the Auckland Catholic Young Adult Community titled "How to be a Catholic in the Workplace?" on February 21. It was a hybrid event, which meant some of the participants went in person at the Christ the King church in Owairaka,

while others tuned in using Zoom.

Mr Nepomuceno said he was supposed to go in person, but was advised that he was a close contact of someone who tested positive for Covid-19. Ms Leung-Wai's parents were close contacts of another Covid-positive person, so she also decided to join the discussion via Zoom.

Mr Nepomuceno noted that he and Ms Leung-Wai were breaking the stereotype. He is working as an ICU nurse, in a female-dominated field, while Ms Leung-Wai is an engineer working in a male-dominated field.

"We often think that, as Christians or Catholics, we have to do something radical, like scream out today's Gos-

pel or daily reflections or sing out Gregorian chants in the middle of work. For me, I'd rather take a more subtle approach," he said.

"As Christians we are called to do one thing: live out the Gospel to reflect Christ in our day-to-day lives."

Mr Nepomuceno said that he does this by the way he presents and holds himself at work, maintaining honesty and integrity and taking accountability for his actions.

More concretely, he lives out his faith by praying with and for patients and their families, advocating for the patients in his care, and holding a dying person's hand.

"There was this one case when a

patient was alone in her final hours because she was waiting for her daughter to arrive from overseas," he said.

"The world is in desperate need of witnesses," said Mr Nepomuceno, stressing that we need to see our workplaces as places of mission.

■ Youngest

Ms Carvalho, the youngest speaker at 22, talked about how she maintained her faith through university and work. She said she had been working since her teens and through university.

► Continued on page 17

SUPPORT A SEMINARIAN

Jesus left His Church the gift of the **priesthood** to ensure the **faith was spread** and the **sacraments were brought forth** to **nourish** and **bring life to His people**.

Photos © Ismael Martínez Sánchez / AON

"If I were to meet a priest and an angel, I should salute the priest before I saluted the angel. The latter is the friend of God; but the priest holds His place...When you see a priest, you should say, **"There is he who made me a child of God, and opened Heaven to me by holy Baptism; he who purified me after I had sinned; who gives nourishment to my soul"**

St John Vianney

While we currently experience less priestly vocations, it is **not the same everywhere**. In many countries the faith is flourishing, and an abundance of young men have discerned a call to **leave everything and follow Christ**.

However, the road is not always easy. Their families may be **poor**. Their bishops may **lack resources**. They may live in areas experiencing **persecution towards Christians**.

We are all part of the **one Church**; therefore, it is **up to us**, as members of the body of Christ, to **help the seminarians of today become the priests of tomorrow**.

For 75 years, the Catholic charity **Aid to the Church in Need** has worked to **keep the faith alive**, relying solely on the prayers and financial resources of people **just like you**. Each year, as part of our mission, we support some **15,000 seminarians** on the path to priesthood.

In 2022, **support a seminarian** with your prayers and resources. Help us form the priests of tomorrow.

Scan the QR code, or visit www.aidtochurch.org/seminarians to make an offering. Thank you and God bless you!



As a sign of thanks, you can choose to receive as a gift a rose perfume rosary made by the Christians in the Holy Land.



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Vatican cardinals set out for Ukraine for peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis said the Vatican “is ready to do everything to put itself at the service of peace” in Ukraine.

“Rivers of blood and tears are flowing in Ukraine,” the Pope said on March 6 as he led thousands of people in St Peter’s Square in praying for peace after reciting the Angelus.

Pope Francis said he was sending two cardinals to Ukraine: Polish Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, who runs the office of papal charities, and Canadian Cardinal Michael Czerny, interim president of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

“The presence of the two cardinals there is the presence not only of the pope, but of all the Christian people who want to get closer and say: ‘War is madness! Stop, please! Look at this cruelty!’” the Pope said.

Moments after the Pope spoke, Cardinal Krajewski told Vatican News that he was about to leave Rome for Poland “because from Poland I am sure I will be able to enter Ukraine. Then we’ll see how far I can get to reach the people and show them the closeness of the Pope, tell them he loves them, prays for them and wants to encourage them”.

The cardinal also will bring rosaries from Pope Francis “because with prayer we can move mountains and even stop the war”, he said.

Cardinal Czerny told the Catholic News Service that he would be heading to Hungary’s border with Ukraine and would see what could be done from there.

Even if the cardinals cannot get into Ukraine, the Polish and Hungarian borders are the top two destinations of Ukrainians — mainly the elderly, women and children — fleeing the war.

The UN Refugee Agency said that, as of March 5, more than 1.3 million Ukrainians had fled the country since the Russian invasion began on February 24; more than 750,000 of them had crossed into Poland and almost 170,000 had crossed into Hungary.

In his appeal, Pope Francis again praised the nations, charitable organisations and individuals helping the refugees.

The need for humanitarian assistance in Ukraine, “that tormented country, is growing



Children at the central train station in Kyiv, Ukraine, look out from an evacuation train to Lviv on March 3, 2022, as they say goodbye to their father. (CNS photo/Gleb Garanich, Reuters)

dramatically by the hour,” the Pope said.

“I make a heartfelt appeal for humanitarian corridors to be genuinely secured, and for aid access to the besieged areas to be guaranteed and facilitated in order to provide vital relief to our brothers and sisters oppressed by bombs and fear,” Pope Francis added.

Russia and Ukraine had negotiated a partial cease-fire that was supposed to go into effect March 5 to allow civilians to flee several cities encircled by Russian troops and to allow the delivery of aid to people who are without food, water and medicine. Both sides accused the other

of violating the cease-fire, and only several hundred of the hundreds of thousands of people to be evacuated were able to leave.

“Above all, I plead for an end to armed attacks, for negotiations to prevail — and for common sense to prevail — and for a return to respect for international law,” Pope Francis said.

He also thanked the journalists “who put their lives at risk to provide information. Thank you, brothers and sisters, for this service, a service that allows us to be close to the tragedy of that population and helps us assess the cruelty of a war”.

Kyiv Post @KyivPost

Jesus Christ statue being taken out of Armenian Cathedral of Lviv, #Ukraine, to be stored in a bunker for protection. The last time it was taken out was during WWII.

10:07 AM - Mar 6, 2022 - Twitter Web App

The Kyiv Post on March 6, 2022 posted this photo on Twitter showing a statue of Jesus being taken out of the Armenian Cathedral in Lviv, Ukraine, to be stored in a bunker for protection. The post said the the last time it was taken out was during World War II. (CNS photo/Kyiv Post)



A man carries a box past mounds of humanitarian assistance to be sent to Ukraine at the Basilica of St Sophia, the church of the Ukrainians in Rome, on March 7, 2022. (CNS photo)



Members of the Ukrainian Territorial Defense Forces Lesia Ivashchenko and Valerii Fylymonov listen to a priest at their wedding at a checkpoint in Kyiv on March 6, 2022, during the Ukraine-Russia conflict. (CNS photo/Mykola Tymchenko, Reuters)