‘A wonderful providence’

By John Shaughnessy

The heartbreaking situation saddened Providence Sister Arrianne Whittaker, giving her a deeper perspective of trying to live her life as both a religious sister and a medical doctor.

Moments earlier, a patient had died quickly and unexpectedly in the hospital where Sister Arrianne was doing one of her medical rotations, as part of her training in the Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Indianapolis.

As the death settled in on the staff who had desperately worked to save the patient’s life, it became clear that someone was needed to be there for the patient’s family. Sister Arrianne recalls, “One of the nurses, knowing I was a sister, asked if I would sit with the patient’s family until the chaplain arrived.”

As Sister Arrianne made her way to the family, she sensed the powerful connection between faith and medicine in her life—and how she hopes to use that combination to have an impact on the lives of other people.

“Let me be clear, I am no more qualified than any other person to be a medical doctor. A search for statistics led to a 2018 ABC News story that stated that 10% of patients who are in the hospital are in the hands of a nurse. Yet I was asked if I would sit with the patient’s family.”

“At 31, Providence Sister Arrianne Whittaker pursues the two powerful callings in her life—becoming a religious sister and becoming a medical doctor.” (Submitted photo)

Sister follows the twin desires of her heart to serve God and become a medical doctor

By John Shaughnessy

Pope Francis begins closing Mass in Dublin with penitential plea for thousands of Irish abuse cases

DUBLIN (CNS)—Before celebrating Mass in a Dublin park, Pope Francis solemnly asked forgiveness for the thousands of cases of sexual and physical abuse perpetrated by Catholics in Ireland. “We ask forgiveness for the abuse in Ireland, abuse of power and of conscience, sexual abuse” by clergy and religious, he said on Aug. 26. “In a special way, we ask forgiveness for all the abuse committed in the different institutions run by religious men and religious women and other members of the Church.”

In a litany of penance and prayers for the Lord’s mercy, Pope Francis formally asked forgiveness for the labor that even children were forced to perform in Church institutions.

And, responding to a request made by two survivors he had met on Aug. 25, the Pope responded to claims he knew of Cardinal McCarrick’s abuse, page 3.

Archbishop calls for renewed transparency, accountability

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

When I was called to be a bishop just more than seven years ago, I wanted to believe that the Church had effectively dealt with the crisis of clergy sexual abuse, especially in terms of accountability and transparency. I was not so naive as to think that all victims had come forward, or that all acts of abuse had been reported. In retrospect, I wonder if I was hoping against hope.

While the report revealed only two cases that are within the current statute of limitations in Pennsylvania, the sheer volume of numbers—clergy, victims and cases—of graphic acts of horrendous abuse are appalling, devastating and sickening. It’s as if a dark, heavy pall has been thrust upon us yet again.

One child, in fact, one act, is too many. It is deeply painful and shameful that so many lives have been so wounded, broken and scarred for life. We can spare no expense to protect and well-being of each and every child, young person and vulnerable adult both within and outside the Church.

As a survivor of such a large family, I am aware of a couple of family members who have been sexually abused, one as a child and the other as a very young adult. Given the size of my extended family—which has included 50 aunts and uncles, 90 first cousins and more than 200 second cousins—there are likely more who have suffered such atrocities.

Worshippers wait for Pope Francis to celebrate Mass at Phoenix Park in Dublin on Aug. 26. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
Chicago Catholics see WYD cross, icon as symbols of Church’s universality

CHICAGO (CNS)—When more than 100,000 young people gathered with Pope Francis in Panama this January for World Youth Day, on prominent display will be two symbols the Archdiocese of Chicago on Aug. 20.

The World Youth Day Cross and the Icon of Our Lady Salus Populi Romani, entrusted to the youth and young adults of the world by St. John Paul II in 1984, were displayed in the sanctuary at Holy Name Cathedral from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m. They were venerated by the faithful who attended the many services held around the visit.

It was the first time these symbols visited Chicago. Much like the Olympic torch, the symbols make a pilgrimage to various countries leading up to World Youth Day.

St. John Paul instituted the annual observance of World Youth Day after two successful international gatherings with young people in Rome in 1984 and 1985. It is a gathering of youth and young adults for prayer, worship and celebration of the Catholic faith.

It is currently held every few years in different countries. In between, the international gathering World Youth Day is held on the national level in several countries. The pilgrimage experience is aimed at those ages 16 to 35.

Daisy Chavez, a member of Mission of Blessed Trinity Parish in Waukegan, took a vacation day from her job in the library at National Louis University to come and visit the World Youth Day Cross and Marian Icon at Holy Name Cathedral.

She found the icon especially meaningful, as her mother died two years ago.

"Now that I know what it is to be without a mother, Mary has really stepped into that role as mother of the Church," said Chavez, 39, after the 12:10 p.m. Mass.

Chavez always wanted to go to World Youth Day, but was never able to make it. She did travel to Peru during the 1984 pilgrimage, and traveled again in 1993 to a group from France, which was having trouble with its radios.

The American group shared its radios, the French group shared baguettes and juice, and the young Mueller was struck by how, even though they were from different countries and couldn’t understand one another, they were all part of the same Church, children of the same God.

The sense of the universality of the Church is one of the gifts of World Youth Day, noted Delvaux. "While we all have different lives and different experiences, we are all part of one body."  

A young adult venerates the World Youth Day Cross following Mass on Aug. 20 at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago. The U.S. bishops announced in June the cross and icon would make a U.S. tour on Aug. 19-27. (CNS photo/Karen Callaway, Chicago Catholic)
Pope says he trusts people to judge archbishop’s claims about him

ABROAD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM DUBLIN (CNS)—Pope Francis told journalists travelling with him from Dublin to Rome on Aug. 26 that Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò’s 11-page document calling for the resignation of Archbishop McCarrick was written in a way that people should be able to draw their own conclusions.

“I read the statement this morning and, sincerely, I must say this to you [journalists] and anyone interested:

Read that statement attentively and make your own judgment. ... I think the statement speaks for itself. You have a sufficient journalistic ability to make a conclusion.”

The pope said his lack of comment was “an act of faith” in people reading the document. “Maybe when a bit of time has passed, I’ll talk about it.”

As a direct response to the first learned of the former Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick’s sexual abuse, Pope Francis said that the pope later accepted Archbishop McCarrick’s resignation from the College of Cardinals.

In June, the Vatican announced that the pope had asked the former Washington archbishop to live in “prayer and penance” while a canonical process against him was there with him.”

“Among them were two letters by Cardinal O’Malley has apologized for his alleged that several U.S. prelates were aware of or should have known about then-Cardinal McCarrick’s behavior, including retired Bishop Paul G. Moats of Metchen, retired Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark; Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark expressed his “great dismay at my superiority for the concealment of any measure against the cardinal, and for the complete lack of any communication with me since my first memo in December 2006,” he said.

The former nuncio named that Pope Benedict XVI later “imposed on Cardinal McCarrick sanctions similar to the ones you imposed on him by Pope Francis,” although Archbishop Viganò did not know precisely when those measures were enacted.

Then-Cardinal McCarrick, he said, “was excluded from the readings where he was living” which, at the time, was the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Washington, D.C.

Archbishop McCarrick, he added, was also “forbidden to celebrate Mass in public, to participate in public, to give lectures, to travel, with the obligation of dedicating himself to a life of prayer and penance.”

However, no such sanctions, which normally are made public, were announced by the Vatican at the time.

The alleged sanctions, he said, continued to be in effect when Archbishop Viganò became apostolic nuncio to the United States in 2011 and were relayed to then-Cardinal McCarrick.

“I repeated them to Cardinal McCarrick at my first meeting with him at the nunciature,” Archbishop Viganò wrote.

Archbishop Viganò also said that he spoke directly to Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington, D.C., on several occasions about Archbishop McCarrick.

“His recent statements that he knew nothing about it, even though at first he cunningly referred to compensation for the two victims, are absolutely laughable,” the archbishop wrote.

According to an Aug. 27 statement on the website for the Archdiocese of Washington, “Cardinal Wuerl has categorically denied that any of this information was communicated to him. Archbishop Viganò at no time provided Cardinal Wuerl any information about an alleged document from Pope Benedict XVI was sent to Rome regarding Archbishop McCarrick.”

In his letter, Archbishop Viganò also alleged that several of his letters were aware of or should have known about then-Cardinal McCarrick’s behavior, including retired Bishop Paul G. O'Malley of Metchen, retired Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark; Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark; and former auxiliary bishop of Washington, Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, head of the Vatican office for laity and family, and former auxiliary bishop of Washington, D.C., Patrick P. O'Malley of Boston, president of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

Cardinal Farrell told CNS on July 24, “I was shocked, overwhelmed; I never heard any of this before in the six years I was there with him.”

Cardinal O’Malley has apologized for what he described as an administrative communication failure in which his secretary did not relay to him a 2015 letter from Father Ramsey about allegations against Archbishop McCarrick.

Viganò himself has been accused of suppressing an investigation into alleged homosexual activity committed by retired Archbishop John C. Mietni of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

A 2014 memo to St. Paul-Minneapolis Auxiliary Bishop Lee P. Piché notes the former nuncio’s call to end the investigation against Archbishop McCarrick and to destroy a piece of evidence.

Archbishop Mietni and Bishop Piché resigned in 2015.

On Aug. 27, Archbishop Viganò issued a statement in which he denied ordering a stop to the investigation or the destruction of documents related to the case.

Viganò has been at odds with Pope Francis previously.

In January, nearly two years after the release of the pope’s apostolic exhortation on marriage and family life, “Amoris Laetitia” (“The Joy of Love”), Archbishop Viganò lamented comments from several cardinals that, according to a report from the Holy See Press Office, were among the pope’s teachings.

A shaft of light illuminates Pope Francis as he responds to a question from reporter Anna Matrang of Italy’s Vatican News aboard his flight from Dublin to Rome after he read aloud a statement made by Italian Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former apostolic nuncio to the United States, concerning Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick. (CNS/Paul Haring)

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, former nuncio to the United States, has been accused of suppressing an investigation into alleged homosexual activity committed by retired Archbishop John C. Mietni of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

A 2014 memo to St. Paul-Minneapolis Auxiliary Bishop Lee P. Piché notes the former nuncio’s call to end the investigation against Archbishop McCarrick and to destroy a piece of evidence.

Archbishop Mietni and Bishop Piché resigned in 2015.

On Aug. 27, Archbishop Viganò issued a statement in which he denied ordering a stop to the investigation or the destruction of documents related to the case.

Archbishop Viganò has been at odds with Pope Francis previously.

In January, nearly two years after the release of the pope’s apostolic exhortation on marriage and family life, “Amoris Laetitia” (“The Joy of Love”), Archbishop Viganò lamented comments from several cardinals that, according to a report from the Holy See Press Office, were among the pope’s teachings.

A shaft of light illuminates Pope Francis as he responds to a question from reporter Anna Matrang of Italy’s Vatican News aboard his flight from Dublin to Rome after he read aloud a statement made by Italian Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former apostolic nuncio to the United States, concerning Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick. (CNS/Paul Haring)
Remember why we are Catholics

We are not Catholics because the Church is composed only of holy men and women. It’s not. Of course, there have been thousands of saints who have led very holy lives, and many converts have been attracted to the Church by people they admire. But that’s not why we are Catholics.

We are Catholics because we have been given the gift of faith and are, therefore, convinced that it will be through the Church that we will attain eternal happiness in heaven. That will be done with the help of the Church’s sacraments, especially the holy Eucharist.

That is why it is disheartening to hear people say that the current news about the clergy sex-abuse scandal makes them want to abandon the Catholic Church, or others who say that they would never join the Church because of the scandal.

Why would you punish yourself because of the human failings of others?

The Church has always been composed of sinners, from the time of the Apostles to the present. This editorialist has written a book titled How Could This Church Survive? that shows the many times throughout history when it should have disappeared.

To take only one example, imagine how the average Catholic in the 15th century felt knowing that Pope Alexander VI used the papacy to enrich his children Juan, Cesare, Lucrezia and Goffredo. The Renaissance popes ruled as secular kings and princes, interested mainly in enriching their families. Yet Catholics remained faithful to their beliefs.

The Church has survived because it is more than a human institution. It has always been, and it is today, guided by the Holy Spirit.

However, we need to say a few things about the report of the Pennsylvania grand jury that found credible allegations against 301 clergy and religious involving more than 1,000 children in six Pennsylvania dioceses (Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Allentown, Scranton, Greensburg and Erie), plus the fact that bishops in those dioceses tried to cover those allegations up.

It doesn’t seem to get across that these clergy sex-abuse cases go back as far as 70 years, and only two of them happened recently enough to be indicable. Most of them are the same cases that came to light beginning in 2002 after the Boston Globe’s investigation in that archdiocese.

Since then, the U.S. Bishops have set up all sorts of new procedures to try to ensure that they don’t happen again. It’s much harder for any man with tendencies to abuse boys or girls to enroll in a seminary because of psychological tests, background checks and other stringent measures. And any charges against clergy are now immediately reported to civil authorities, which often didn’t happen in the past.

In the past, too, bishops sent priests, who had been charged of sexual misconduct to institutions that they thought could cure them. After a few months, the institutions returned the priests, saying that they were cured. We now know that they weren’t.

The grand jury report acknowledged that “much has changed over the last 15 years” in how the Church in Pennsylvania approaches claims of clergy sex abuse. Not just in Pennsylvania, but throughout the country.

One of the most disturbing things to come out of the grand jury’s report was the cover-up by bishops. It’s abhorrent to realize that such acts happened, no matter what the bishops intended.

As the Church tries to get through this mess, our message is simple: Remember why we are Catholics and keep the faith.

—John F. Fink

Letter to the Editor

Sisters of Providence say administration is wrong in replacing Clean Power Plan

We, the Leadership Team of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, stand with other organizations across our beautiful Earth as we express our disappointment and dismay with the Trump administration’s decision to replace the Clean Power Plan with its proposed Affordable Clean Energy rule. The proposed new plan is much weaker than the original Clean Power Plan that was put in place by the previous administration.

The Clean Power Plan was designed to help combat global warming by making utilities switch to greener power sources. As an analysis provided for the Affordable Clean Power Plan called for a reduction of between 1,500 and 3,600 premature deaths per year by 2030, and a reduction in the number of missed school days by close to 200,000 annually.

According to The New York Times’ article, “Cost of New E.P.A. Coal Rules: Up to 1,400 More Deaths a Year,” the analysis of the Affordable Clean Energy rule is rather stark.

The Times’ article stated that the analysis—provided by the Environmental Protection Agency—predicted as many as 1,400 premature deaths annually by 2030. The increase was tied to the entanglement of fine particulate matter connected to heart and lung disease. The analysis also forecast 13,000 new cases of upper respiratory problems, a rise in bronchitis and tens of thousands of missed school days a year.

We, the Leadership Team of the Sisters of Providence, are concerned about the health of everyone. We are also concerned about the health of our unique community, the Sisters of Providence. These ethical and safety concerns. There can be long-term risks for the donor. A kidney, moreover, would not be therapeutic for us—only for someone else—and in fact might slightly increase our own risk for eventual renal failure at some point in the future.

Clearly we have a general duty to respect the integrity of our body. This means we shouldn’t cause injury to it, or damage it, for example, through surgeries or treatments that are not necessary to preserve our health or save our life. In light of these considerations, donating one of our kidneys would seem to run counter to our responsibility to maintain bodily integrity.

Yet the notion of integrity can also be understood in a broader sense, namely, as functional integrity, so that if one of our kidneys were removed without imposing undue risk, and without suffering a significant loss of blood filtering function, then we could say that the functional integrity of our renal system was preserved. In that case, the removal of one of our kidneys, as a sacrificial act and for a proportionate reason, such as saving another person’s life, could be justified. This is what the Church affirms.

A further ethical concern, however, centers on the fact that the decision to donate must be made freely by the donor, and consent should be given without any undue pressure. This means that offering payments for organs is fundamentally contrary to an essential part of our relationship with another person’s life, could be justified. This is what the Church affirms.

A further ethical concern, however, centers on the fact that the decision to donate must be made freely by the donor, and consent should be given without any undue pressure. This means that offering payments for organs is fundamentally contrary to an essential part of our relationship with another person’s life, could be justified. This is what the Church affirms.

We face a serious shortage of available kidneys for transplant in the United States. Average wait times for a kidney are approaching five years, and about 15-20 people die each day while waiting for an organ—the majority for a kidney. According to a conversation with some of the health policy team members at the White House as they considered possible strategies for increasing the supply of live donor kidneys. We discussed the ethical, legal, economic and health implications of some proposed solutions, including the proposal to reward organ donation by providing various non-cash benefits.

During the White House meeting, some parties to the discussion offered recommendations that the government provide lifetime guaranteed coverage of all future medical expenses, or lifetime health insurance for every person who becomes a living kidney donor. I emphasized that we should not be “encouraging” donation by offering “incentives” to donors as a direct benefit at all.

Offering lifetime health insurance or similar schemes would, in my view, constitute a form of payment or “valuable consideration” offered to the donor, and would again raise the responsibility of improperly incentivizing the donation of organs, pressuring someone to consider donating as a way to secure lifetime health insurance coverage.

When Congress passed the National Organ Transplant Act in 1984, it expressed concern about incentivizing donations was directly addressed. This law prohibits the purchase of organs or any exchange of valuable consideration.” This same law, however, clearly permits reimbursement of various expenses associated with the transplant, such as travel costs to get to the hospital in order to have the kidney removed, temporary housing at the time of surgery, lost wages incurred in connection with the donation of the organ, etc.

For this reason, reimbursement of expenses should not be viewed as encouraging or incentivizing the donation itself, but rather “eliminating disincentives” or “removing hindrances or roadblocks.” An organ donor should not have to assume extra personal expense or take on any See DONATE
Reflexiones sobre el significado del trabajo en el Día del Trabajador

“Cada trabajador posee una dignidad fundamental porque él o ella está hecho a imagen y semejanza de Dios. El trabajo es el elemento vital de la vida humana. El trabajador es verdaderamente digno de ser amado cuando realiza su deber en el estado de su vida laboral” (cf. Lk 10:7), y porque una sociedad que se preocupe por los más necesitados, lo protegerá como la vida y el bienestar de los hijos de Dios, así como en su bienestar material y espiritual.

• Para abordar los grandes desafíos que enfrenta actualmente la economía en el estado de Indiana, debemos examinar cuidadosamente el efecto que surten las políticas, la legislación y las normas gubernamentales sobre la gente real, los hombres y las mujeres que luchan para ganarse la vida, mantener a sus familias y llegar a fin de mes. No pueden reparar la economía mediante el uso de teorías de trabajo abstractas que nada tienen que ver con aquellos con quienes realizamos nuestra vida diaria y en el trabajo. Tal como lo expresó San Juan Pablo II, no podemos simplemente tomar en cuenta las necesidades materiales (alimento, vivienda, vestido, atención de salud, etc.) sin menoscabo de la importancia que tienen para las personas, las familias y las comunidades. También debemos fomentar el trabajo espiritual, que reconoce su profunda influencia sobre la vida intelectual, moral, cultural y religiosa de las personas, las familias y las comunidades.

La Iglesia no propone programas detallados dirigidos a crear plazas de trabajo o promover el desarrollo económico. Sin embargo, la Iglesia recuerda a los líderes gubernamentales, empresariales y de la comunidad que la única medida verdaderamente efectiva de que una política económica y su aplicación práctica son realmente sólidos, es hasta qué punto las personas en la vida real creen y prosperan individualmente y como trabajadores.

• Además de los beneficios empresariales y comunitarios, el trabajo brinda a las personas más oportunidades para enaltecer su dignidad personal. El trabajo debería ser la principal forma mediante la cual los padres proveen para sus familias y aportan para el bienestar de una comunidad sana. Los programas gubernamentales deberían existir principalmente para proporcionar una protección social adecuada para aquellos que se encuentren en situación de transición o que sufren enfermedades o lesiones incapacitantes.

Por consiguiente, proponemos que el estado de Indiana dedique recursos para mejorar las oportunidades para las familias hosier de encontrar trabajos importantes y que sean económicamente satisfactorios. Los planes gubernamentales deben incluir estrategias tendientes a romper el ciclo de la pobreza y los programas de seguridad.

“Que Dios derrame su bendición sobre todos los residentes de Indiana y los estadounidenses en general para que vivamos en paz, en la ciudad de Dios, y porque una sociedad que se preocupe por los más necesitados, lo protegerá como la vida y el bienestar de los hijos de Dios, así como en su bienestar material y espiritual.”
Volunteering around ‘the clock’

Judy Saunders of St. Patrick Parish in Saline poses with the Clock Award she received from the Indiana Retired Teachers Association. The Clock Award is presented annually to 10 retired teachers for the greatest number of volunteer hours and for exceptional service. Saunders represented Washington County. Her numerous volunteer efforts include serving her parish as a catechist and on the parish council, and she currently volunteers as president of the board of directors for C.A.R.E. Pregnancy Center in Saline. (Submitted photo by Stephanie Ferrall, The Saline Leader)
WASHINGTON (CNS)—An independent lay advisory board that would hold bishops accountable for their actions, a national day for Mass or prayers in their honor, and a day to help parishioners to become more involved in their church and help begin to dismantle long-standing clericalism that has sought to preserve the reputation of offending clergy at the expense of the safety of children.

“These concerns are not new, and it’s heartening that finally after all these years, and we hope it’s more than just verbiage, that the very things that the bishops attacked us for saying, they’re saying it now,” she added.

The USCCB continued working on a series of measures on Aug. 23, nine days after a Pennsylvania grand jury detailed more than 1,000 claims of alleged sex abuse in six dioceses in the state over 70 years and identified 310 clergy, religious and Church workers who may have committed or complicitly supported also singed out some bishops for their improper handling of accused abused.

Prior to Cesareo’s comments, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, USCCB president, called for laypeople to take a greater role in addressing the “moral catastrophe” of the latest abuse scandal.

He said on Aug. 7 that the “substantial involvement of the laity from law enforcement, psychology and other disciplines will be essential to the process of developing a comprehensive plan that was expected to be presented at a bishop’s fall general assembly in November in Baltimore.

F. DeKarlos Blackmon, secretariat director of life, charity and justice in the Diocese of Austin, Texas, urged people “to step up and speak up” to address the catastrophe described by Cardinal DiNardo.

He called on the bishops to make a “substantial role” of laypeople to “advise of lay people in areas in which the bishops may not have expertise, particularly when investigating abuse claims.

“We as laity need to be able to talk with the leadership. Pope Benedict stated the Church can never be without the dedicated laity. I think it’s really important that we keep that in mind. We have a place at the table,” he added.

—F. DeKarlos Blackmon, secretariat director of life, charity and justice in the Diocese of Austin, Texas

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

By working together, laypeople can “help Church officials catch up with the laity” in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

Cesareo said that auditors preparing required reports on the charter’s implementation have a place at the table, said Blackmon, an adviser to the bishops’ Subcommittee on African American Affairs.

Teresa Tomeo, host of a syndicated Catholic radio talk show, said it is the laity’s job to convince the bishops that more oversight of their actions is good for the Church.

She suggested that the new scandal will “wake up a sleeping giant” as laypeople “respectfully and lovingly” address the bishops about the issue of clerical sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made,” Tomeo said. “We need to stay, pray, and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church.”

By working together, laypeople can “help Church officials catch up with the laity” in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

Eileen Boll, of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island, said that in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

Eileen Boll, of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island, said that in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

Eileen Boll, of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island, said that in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

Eileen Boll, of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island, said that in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.

Eileen Boll, of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island, said that in addressing sexual abuse and help set a new course for the Church.

“We need to come together as a group and ... work with the hierarchy to come up with the steps that need to be made. We need to stay, pray and get organized and be willing to make a difference for the sake of the Church,” he said.
Families called to share joy, love, life with the world, pope says

DUBLIN (CNS)—In a stadium of Catholic families from around the world, Pope Francis told the laypeople they are the “majors” of the Church. And so, without that, without them, the Church would be cold, a collection of statues.

He wants everyone to be a “beacon of joy of his love to our world,” the pope said on Aug. 25, celebrating the Family Festival in Dublin's Croke Park Stadium.

The Irish dance troupe Riverdance then created a crowd-appropriate big smile to Pope Francis’ face. “The Priests,” a classical Irish trio of priests, performed, as did the Canadian tenor, and tenor Andrea Bocelli.

Families from India, Canada, Iraq, Iran and Burkina Faso stood on stage near the pope while pre-recorded video versions of their testimonies played.

The pope told the families that “all things is what makes possible marriage and a conjugal love marked by fidelity, indissolubility, unity and openness to life,” he said. “God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—created mankind in his image to share the life of a family of families and to enjoy the peace that he alone can give.”

Members in the stadium remained empty. Years of revelations of the extent of decades of physical, sexual and emotional abuse in Catholic homes and Church-run institutions in Ireland were “immense.” It included victims in Church-run industrial schools, the Magdalene laundries, mother and baby homes and parishes.

Redmond Malone, two of the survivors who met with the pope and said the eighth asked to remain anonymous. “There is an intrinsic tendency to cover up within the Church through this abuse scandal, not necessarily a surprise. “There is an intrinsic impinge upon our own sense of freedom.”

The people of Ireland have a right to be angry and to be used. And they're using their voice.”

Earlier in the day, Pope Francis spent 90 minutes meeting privately with eight survivors of abuse in Ireland. One survivor, Father Patrick McCafferty, tweeted that it was “an excellent meeting in every respect.”

“I think all this with the abuse is taking its toll,” said Laura Egan of Dublin, who was “an excellent meeting in every respect.” The people of Ireland have a right to be angry and to be used. And they’re using their voice.”

The Iraqi couple, Enass and Sarmaad Balas, rescued by the Church in 2010, then-Pope Benedict XVI wrote to say the government had “ pagina 8
DES PLAINES, Ill. (CNS)—When someone survives a brush with death, such as a plane crash, and has stood at the precipice between this world and the next, they often ask, “Why did I survive?” or “What is waiting for me after I die?” They also ask, “Why did I survive?” or “What is waiting for me after I die?” such as a plane crash, and has stood at the precipice between this world and the next, they often ask, “Why did I survive?” or “What is waiting for me after I die?”

Father Esequiel Sanchez, rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Des Plaines, addressed questions about life and death in his homily during his first Mass at the shrine on Aug. 12 following the crash of a Aeromexico flight on July 31 in Durango, Mexico. He and the other 103 people aboard survived the accident.

The plane crashed almost immediately after takeoff. About 15 of his family members and friends who were in Mexico to celebrate his 50th birthday also were on the plane.

Father Sanchez supported multiple flights in his arm and required surgery. Journalists from around the world covered the story and focused on the priest’s experience in particular.

He recently met with Chicago Catholic, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Chicago, to share the spiritual implications of surviving a brush with death and the impact it has had on him and the other survivors.

The priest said he believes it was a miracle from God that everyone survived. Father Sanchez took the time to share the lessons of the past few years ago and understand the science behind what happened.

It was raining and hailing when the plane took off. Then a microburst pushed it back down on the runway. The landing gear packed, and the plane went into a slide but didn’t tip over. The fuel tanks were punctured.

“If the plane had flipped over, it would have been a different story,” he said. “If we were punctured, it would have been a different story.”

“Your original purpose is to allow what’s happening in heaven,” the priest said. “You’re not sleeping in a hammock up there. You’re not drinking margaritas saying, ‘I’m done.’ No. It’s a life of adoration. It’s a life of service.”

Survivors also are asking, “Why were we spared?” In Durango that same day, a bus accident killed 11 people.

“How do you say, ‘I had a miracle,’” he asked. “And they didn’t?”

During his homily, Father Sanchez said that in the weeks following the crash, what has changed him personally is people’s expressions of love and gratitude to God that made it out alive.

“They are telling you how much they love you. People are telling you how much it hurt them if you were gone. You normally hear this stuff in a cathedral or when you’re dead.” He added, “Well, I’m not at my funeral Mass and I’m hearing this stuff.”

People are happy to see him because their faith in miracles has been confirmed, he said.

“I really want to take better care of those who love you and take better care of the gifts that you’ve been given,” Father Sanchez added. “That’s why I pray that I become a better priest. Not because the experience scared the bejesus out of me, and it did, but because they showed me how much love toward me. My response has to be [to be] a better priest.”

Byzantine bishop calls attack on Indiana priest ‘reprehensible’

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. (CNS)—The priest who was attacked by an unknown assailant in the sacristy of St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Parish in Merrillville on Aug. 20 was admitted to the hospital two days later, where he continues to recover from the assault and resulting trauma.

Bishop Milan Lach of the Byzantine Rite Eparchy of Parma in Ohio shared an update on Father Basil Hutsko in a letter read at all weekend services throughout the eparchy on Aug. 25-26.

Bishop Lach read the letter personally to members of the northwest Indiana parish after the evening Divine Liturgy on Aug. 25.

Father Hutsko, 64, was assaulted as he prepared to celebrate morning Divine Liturgy. The assailant came up behind him, threw him to the ground and beat his head against the sacristy floor. The priest lost consciousness and never saw his assailant.

Father Hutsko told investigators his attacker said, “This is for all the kids,” which they believe was a reference to the recent revelations in Pennsylvania of clergy sex abuse in the Catholic Church.

The Merrillville Police Department classified the attack as a hate crime and referred the case to the FBI, which is conducting the investigation. No suspects had been arrested as of Aug. 27.

Bishop Lach’s letter described the sex abuse scandal as “devastating for all” in the Church.

“In my own conduct, including that of bishops, underlying the sex abuse scandal is inexcusable and, as a bishop of the Church, I do not condone the Church’s failure to properly address and respond to allegations of sexual abuse,” he said.

Nonetheless, neither the underlying immoral behavior nor the Church’s inadequate response justifies the attack on Father Basil. The violence against Father Basil was reprehensible,” he said.

The bishop also addressed inaccuracies in some reports that followed the attack, including questions about Father Hutsko’s history, “including whether he was ever accused of any abuse.”

“In 2004, a woman accused Father Basil of abusing her when she was a child,” the bishop’s letter said. “The alleged abuse occurred between 1979 and 1983. The eparchy, assisted by a retired FBI agent, promptly investigated the allegations.”

He said the eparchy’s independent review board concluded “on the basis of that investigation, that the allegations were not substantiated due to insufficient evidence.”

“Father Basil, therefore, should not be deemed guilty of any allegations, and he remains a priest in good standing in the Eparchy of Parma,” the bishop said.

Bishop Lach, who came from Slovakia to serve in the eparchy in June 2017, said he only learned of the allegation after the attack.

“I am deeply troubled by any allegation of clergy abuse and take very seriously my duty to create an environment in which every person is treated with dignity and respect,” he said.

He asked the faithful to pray for Father Hutsko, and said arrangements would be made for the pastoral care of the parish.

After liturgy, parishioners said they appreciated the bishop’s message of transparency and concern.

Michael Hiltzik, who wrote “Horizons,” the newspaper of the Eparchy of Parma, that the bishop’s initiative “to communicate and be transparent with all of us here in the parish is good.”

“I’ve been Byzantine all my life. I’ve known Father Basil since we were little kids. It’s tragic that someone would attack him in the manner that they attacked him for no reason whatsoever,” he said. “We’re a small parish here in this community and for something like this to happen, I was just shocked.”
Sister Arrianne has also tried to determine how unusual her life journey is. She’s the kind of friend who if I ever needed to take a step back from my professional lives. Since entering medical school, I’ve had to learn how to balance them. It’s the same constant support as she has tried to combine the dual parts of her life. “It was tough at first. They’re two massive demands on my life. I’ve had to learn how to balance them. It’s the same for plenty of med students who struggle to find a balance in their personal professional lives.” Since entering medical school, my community [of sisters] has been incredibly supportive. That gives me life. It’s a journey that has already been marked by twists and turns for the life Sister Arrianne is following, says Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator. There are ways to make a report:

- Call the Sexual Abuse Hotline at 1-888-600-4584.
- Send a confidential email to chill@archindy.org.
- Contact the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Child & Youth Protection Standards. Dr. Deborah Hart, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

“Fascinating and challenging, I feel how she is as a Sister of Providence,” says Schmitt. “She’s come to see her primary identity as a Sister of Providence. It’s a wonderful providence that this has come together in her life.”

Schmitt says that Sister Arrianne even turns to her fellow Providence sisters at Saint Mary of the Woods to supply prayers for her classmates. “I just took our boards that you have to pass to graduate medical school,” Schmitt says. “She had all the sisters praying for me. And then when I passed, I let them all know. They all sent me e-mails congratulating me and saying they were praying for my future.”

Classmate Jenny Biesiadecki offers another intriguing perspective. Once a Catholic, she has left the faith, so she thought it would be “awkward” when she accepted Sister Arrianne’s invitation earlier this year to visit Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. “I met people she’s become close to,” Biesiadecki says. “I had lunch with a whole bunch of sisters. They were very welcoming. I got to light a candle for my grandfather who passed away in early January and say a prayer. It was pretty cathartic actually.”

She pauses for a moment before adding. “Arrianne has been a real inspiration to me. She’s kind of the friend who if I ever needed her to be there for me, she would there with no judgment.”

“A wonderful providence!” The combination of caring and connection is a double blessing for the path Sister Arrianne is following, says one of her mentors at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. “She’s come to see her primary identity as a Sister of Providence,” says Sister Dawn Tomaszewski, general superior of the Sisters of Providence. “And she’s been faithful to the desire of her heart to also be a doctor. Doctors really meet you when you’re most vulnerable. That’s when a person like Arrianne understands the importance of presence, that it’s being with people and helping them be faithful.”

“Fascinating and challenging,” I feel how she is as a Sister of Providence will make her a wonderful doctor. And her focus on the whole person and healing as a doctor will make her a better Sister of Providence. It’s a wonderful providence that this has come together in her life.”

Scheduled to graduate from medical school in May of 2019, Sister Arrianne hopes to gain a residency in family practice—moving her another step closer to her desire to serve the poor and marginalized in a rural setting. For her residency, her plan is to profess her final vows as a Providence sister.

“She wants to combine faith and healing. I want every one of my patients to feel that they matter to me, no matter who they are or where they have come from. I pray that in my actions and my words I can bear witness to the Gospel values of love, acceptance and compassion. That’s what God calls us to do.”

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person monitoring on behalf of the Church, or you know of anyone who has been a victim of any misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator: there are no reports too small. To make a report:

1. Ethics Point Confidential Online Reporting
   www.archindyconfidential.ethicspoint.org or 888-393-6810
2. Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator
   317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
   chill@archindy.org

For more information, please log on to
www.archindy.org/layministry
WASHINGTON, D.C. — It has been a summer of anguish and shame in Washington, and some of it has nothing to do with politicians.

The season had just begun when news detailing sexual abuse allegations against the Archbishop of Washington’s retired Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick began quickly spreading from news sites and into the pews of the area’s Catholic parishes.

Weeks later came a grand jury report out of Pennsylvania that offered a mixed view of how Washington’s current archbishop, Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, handled some sex abuse allegations before him when he was serving in one of the six dioceses named in the report inquiring church leaders in a possible cover-up of alleged crimes.

“The proximity of the crisis is definitely acute here in D.C.,” said John Gehring, Catholic program director at the Washington-based nonprofit Faith in Public Life and a member of the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, home of Washington’s archbishop.

These are men who you see at events, these are people you might see on the Metro. They are part of the Washington landscape.

Both Church leaders were constant presences at fundraising events for the area’s Catholic organizations, as well as guests and sometimes players in the capital’s political power circles, and quasi-celebrities at popular religious celebrations important in the life of faith someone of the area’s immigrant Catholics.

“Washington Catholics have certainly experienced whiplash,” said Gehring, from watching the two prelates under abuse revelations, particularly older members of the local Church, but a leader, even in retirement, she said, who was when mixed views in the grand jury report on Cardinal Wuerl became public, that blow felt stronger.

As a member of the Church, if affects you,” Reyes said.

As the end of summer winds down, there is less talk passing past about getting ready for the upcoming session of Congress, when locals begin organizing to defend causes of importance to the Church and its members, and more chatter about how to deal with the fallout of the summer’s sex abuse revelations.

“My faith is strong,” said Reyes, adding that in no way have the revelations given her pause about her religious beliefs or the Church. She said she has started thinking about ways that she, as a layperson, can do something to help her local community of faith wounded by the revelations, particularly older members who were raised to place blind faith in leaders they saw as “infallible.”

But she said she wanted to see the Church as a body address “the undeniable pain of the victims, our brothers and sisters.”

She said she wanted to offer her closeness to victims of abuse in the local area, as well as to clergy who did nothing wrong and are now under a cloud of suspicion because of the sins and crimes of others.

“I believe we can do something as a flock. Why wait for it to come from above?” she said.

Holy Trinity parishioner Legowski said she was struggling with the revelations, especially because, “of the duplicity of the institutional Church, making and enforcing rules about sexuality … while this was going on.”

Even if some of the allegations took place 70 years back, “it made me so angry at the institution,” she said.

“The first phrase that comes to me this summer is that it’s been one of spiritual summer is that it’s been one of spiritual,” she said.

In conversations with family and friends, “the temperature is set at boiling,” Gehring said.

“But it’s also made some reaffirm the beliefs at the center of it all.”

“Very few people are those in leadership [the Church].”

Abuse scandal puts politics on hold for some faithful

The proximity of the crisis is definitely acute here in D.C.,” said John Gehring, Catholic program director at the Washington-based nonprofit Faith in Public Life and a member of the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, home of Washington’s archbishop.

These are men who you see at events, these are people you might see on the Metro. They are part of the Washington landscape.

Both Church leaders were constant presences at fundraising events for the area’s Catholic organizations, as well as guests and sometimes players in the capital’s political power circles, and quasi-celebrities at popular religious celebrations important in the life of faith someone of the area’s immigrant Catholics.

“Washington Catholics have certainly experienced whiplash,” said Gehring, from watching the two prelates under abuse revelations, particularly older members of the local Church, but a leader, even in retirement, she said, who was when mixed views in the grand jury report on Cardinal Wuerl became public, that blow felt stronger.

As a member of the Church, if affects you,” Reyes said.

As the end of summer winds down, there is less talk passing past about getting ready for the upcoming session of Congress, when locals begin organizing to defend causes of importance to the Church and its members, and more chatter about how to deal with the fallout of the summer’s sex abuse revelations.

“My faith is strong,” said Reyes, adding that in no way have the revelations given her pause about her religious beliefs or the Church. She said she has started thinking about ways that she, as a layperson, can do something to help her local community of faith wounded by the revelations, particularly older members who were raised to place blind faith in leaders they saw as “infallible.”

But she said she wanted to see the Church as a body address “the undeniable pain of the victims, our brothers and sisters.”

She said she wanted to offer her closeness to victims of abuse in the local area, as well as to clergy who did nothing wrong and are now under a cloud of suspicion because of the sins and crimes of others.

“I believe we can do something as a flock. Why wait for it to come from above?” she said.

Holy Trinity parishioner Legowski said she was struggling with the revelations, especially because, “of the duplicity of the institutional Church, making and enforcing rules about sexuality … while this was going on.”

Even if some of the allegations took place 70 years back, “it made me so angry at the institution,” she said.

“The first phrase that comes to me this summer is that it’s been one of spiritual summer is that it’s been one of spiritual,” she said.

In conversations with family and friends, “the temperature is set at boiling,” Gehring said.

“But it’s also made some reaffirm the beliefs at the center of it all.”

“My faith is strong,” Gehring said.

“But I have lost a lot of trust in those leading [the Church].”
Suffering a bout of insomnia, I wandered to a bookshelve in the middle of the night and selected ten Boom's memoir, In Pharos's Army: Memories of the Lost War, by Terri Baskin.

Although not exactly balm to some of my weary soul, Wolf's first-person experiences in war and trauma throughout her life are not what I was seeking. Everyone probably has one book that has brought history alive for them. If that book also gave birth to the chestnut, “When you promote one another as Christ’s friends, who may not agree with us. We learn to work together not only shows Christ’s authority. The word “encouragement” at its best. The word “encouragement” exactly balm to jealousy. By Corrie ten Boom.

TheCriterion Friday, August 31, 2018

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Journey together as a family of faith in the pilgrimage of life

My father, two of my sons, Raphael and Emmitt, and I recently took a trip to Arizona and back. We drove more than 4,000 miles in one week.

As challenging as driving to Arizona and back can be, it was filled with blessings. It was amazing to be reminded that the vastness that is America by driving through.

We went from the lush green and largely flat farmland of Indiana, Illinois and Missouri to the cattle country of Oklahoma and Texas.

As we drove through the western part of the Texas panhandle, the land became dry, rocky and slightly hilly. That only increased as we drove through New Mexico.

Seeing massive rock formations and canyons in Arizona was, of course, a work of art. What’s more, some parts of Petrified Forest National Park made us feel like we were on another planet. It was peaceful, calm and in massiveness in our beloved Hoosier state to even begin to compare with the Grand Canyon.

As impressive as the sites in Arizona were that we visited, I experienced peace on this day of our trip when we crossed the Mississippi River into western Illinois, and huge green corn and soybean fields filled the light of early evening were laid out before us.

We appreciated the abundant life that burst out all around us in contrast to the dry deserts, hills and mountains of New Mexico and Arizona.

We take this pilgrimage of our lives together as families, like we three generations and geography. Whether we realize its immensity or not in our daily lives, we are always pilgrims in it, seeking our way to what Shakespeare called the “undiscovered country,” the infinite spiritual landscape of eternity which we will never reach.

We rejoice together in the verdant parts of Petrified Forest National Park and back was at the northern edge of Arizona. Indeed, some parts of Petrified Forest National Park are indeed the most impressive as the sites in Arizona were that we visited, I experienced peace on this day of our trip when we crossed the Mississippi River into western Illinois, and huge green corn and soybean fields filled the light of early evening were laid out before us.

Seeing massive rock formations and canyons in Arizona was, of course, a work of art. What’s more, some parts of Petrified Forest National Park made us feel like we were on another planet. It was peaceful, calm and in massiveness in our beloved Hoosier state to even begin to compare with the Grand Canyon.

As impressive as the sites in Arizona were that we visited, I experienced peace on this day of our trip when we crossed the Mississippi River into western Illinois, and huge green corn and soybean fields filled the light of early evening were laid out before us.

We appreciated the abundant life that burst out all around us in contrast to the dry deserts, hills and mountains of New Mexico and Arizona.

We take this pilgrimage of our lives together as families, like we three generations and geography. Whether we realize its immensity or not in our daily lives, we are always pilgrims in it, seeking our way to what Shakespeare called the “undiscovered country,” the infinite spiritual landscape of eternity which we will never reach.

We take this pilgrimage of our lives together as families, like we three generations and geography. Whether we realize its immensity or not in our daily lives, we are always pilgrims in it, seeking our way to what Shakespeare called the “undiscovered country,” the infinite spiritual landscape of eternity which we will never reach.

We appreciate the abundant life that burst out all around us in contrast to the dry deserts, hills and mountains of New Mexico and Arizona.

We take this pilgrimage of our lives together as families, like we three generations and geography. Whether we realize its immensity or not in our daily lives, we are always pilgrims in it, seeking our way to what Shakespeare called the “undiscovered country,” the infinite spiritual landscape of eternity which we will never reach.

We appreciate the abundant life that burst out all around us in contrast to the dry deserts, hills and mountains of New Mexico and Arizona.

We take this pilgrimage of our lives together as families, like we three generations and geography. Whether we realize its immensity or not in our daily lives, we are always pilgrims in it, seeking our way to what Shakespeare called the “undiscovered country,” the infinite spiritual landscape of eternity which we will never reach.
The Book of Deuteronomy is the source of the first reading for this weekend’s Mass. Deuteronomy is from the Pentateuch, the collection of five books that appears as a group first in sequence in the present versions of the Bible.

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
The Sunday Readings
reminder that by serving orphans and importantly, in eternity.
way to life, in the earthly sense but, more means eternal life. Not only does God in the broader Christian context this revelation that God wills us to live. God because this is from the New Testament, revelation that God wills us to live. God

The Pharisees and other religious scholars of the time hardly overlooked the fact that Jesus spoke and acted in this way. Because Jesus was God and spoke as the lawgiver.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

Reflection
The first reading contains a thought that humans invariably dismiss. The thought simply is that, because of human limitations and shortcomings, people often put themselves in unfortunate situations. They can doom themselves. Unwilling to accept this fact, humans make excuses and blame God for misfortunes.

God actually and lovingly rescues people by drawing them from the quicksand, but also by leading them away from the quicksand. He leads us all away from the quicksand by giving us the law, or the roadmap, to life.

God’s law is precise, but going through motions is not the idea. With our hearts, minds and souls, we must wholeheartedly follow God by following his Son. It is as simple as that. We are true disciples by obeying God, indeed in every circumstance, but always with eagerness and love.

My Journey to God
There You Are
By Jan Riley
Slipping and falling
Keep trying
To stay up
Be steady and strong
Impossible it seems
How can I
Then I look up
And there you are

JAN RILEY is a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: Alaina Sincic, a member of St. John Neumann Parish in Sunbury, Ohio, kneels in prayer on Nov. 21, 2015, during the closing Mass of the National Catholic Youth Conference at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Question Corner
Fr. Kenneth Doyle
Revision of catechism on death penalty reflects development of doctrine

Q have always been against the death penalty, since the prisoner is behind bars and removed from doing further harm to the public.

But a recent piece in The Wall Street Journal included statements by criminals who said that they were not as aggressive with victims when they knew they were at risk of death penalty. So it does seem to have served as a deterrent and to have saved some lives.

I still, though, don’t believe that society should take a life of someone who might need more time to turn to God, and I’m wondering whether the pope’s recent pronouncement removes the death penalty completely from the Catholic conversation. (Virginia)

A According to a revision of the Catechism of the Catholic Church ordered by Pope Francis earlier this month, the use of the death penalty is now a settled question in Catholic moral teaching: The Church stands unalterably opposed to it.

The text of the catechism will now say that the death penalty “is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the human person” (#2267).

That language replaces a text in place since 1997 in the same paragraph that had permitted capital punishment in exceptional cases “if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor.”

The new text will note, in present-day society, “more effective systems of detention have been developed, which ensure the due protection of citizens but, at the same time, do not definitively deprive the guilty of the possibility of redemption.”

Far from marking a radical change in the Church’s position, the new revision simply elucidates what has been a developing Church teaching over a number of years. St. John Paul II in his 1995 encyclical “Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel of Life”) had written in opposition to the death penalty, and he, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis had regularly pleaded for clemency and stays of execution for inmates on death row.

In 2015, Pope Francis called capital punishment “cruel, inhumane and degrading,” and said that it “does not bring justice to the victims, but only foments revenge.”

The Church, with this latest clarification, makes clear that no matter how horrendous the crime perpetrated, civil society has no right to “play God” and decide that a prisoner’s life on Earth is over. The death penalty, said Pope Francis in announcing the revised text, “is, in itself, contrary to the Gospel, because a decision is voluntarily made by the true judge and guarantor.”

The Vatican announcement reflects a worldwide trend. Today, more than 140 countries have eliminated the death penalty or simply stopped executions by de facto moratoriums.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr, Albany, New York 12203.)
Worlds bishops call for action on abuse; English bishop wants synod

MANCHESTER, England (CNS)—A global synod on priests could help the Church to end the “terrific” scandal of clerical child abuse, an English bishop told Pope Francis.

In an open letter to the pope on Aug. 22, Bishop Philip Egan of Portsmouth said an “extraordinary synod on the life and ministry of the clergy” would help to combat the scourge of clerical sex abuse.

Bishop Egan told the pope his letter was prompted by the “terrible abuse of minors by clergy” documented by the Pennsylvania grand jury report. The findings spoke of credible allegations against 301 clergy and religious and Church workers in cases involving more than 1,000 children during seven decades.

“Scandals in the United States, England, Ireland, Australia and Chile. Bishop Egan said, have proven that such sex abuse by members of the clergy is a ‘a widespread phenomenon in the Church’ that must be addressed.

“The synod might begin with a ‘conversation’ attended by the bishops but formed of laity and other experts in the clergy abuse argument—and in the safeguarding of children and the vulnerable,” he said in his letter, forwarded by e-mail to Catholic News Service on Aug. 22.

The conclusions of the congress, he added, “could then be taken forward into a Synod of Bishops proper.”

“I suggest the synod be devoted to the identity of the English priest/bishop, to devising guidance on lifestyle and supports for celibacy, to proposing a rule of life for priests/bishops, and to establishing appropriate forms of priory/episcopal accountability and supervision,” Bishop Egan said.

He also explained that as a former seminary founder, he devised a system of “annual assessments and scrutiny” based on St. John Paul II’s apostolic exhortation on the formation of priests “Pastores Dabo Vobis” (“I will give you shepherds”).

However, as a bishop, there are few tools available to “facilitate the day-to-day management of clergy” and continual assessments, he said. “It ought to be possible to devise mechanisms to help bishops in their responsibilities toward clergy and to help clergy realize they are not ‘lone operators’ but ministers accountable to the direction and leadership of the diocese,” Bishop Egan wrote.

Priests, Bishop Egan suggested, should be supported by “ongoing assessment or ministerial supervision.”

Church leaders and episcopal conferences have also called for concrete measures to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

“In London, Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster, president of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, said he was ‘utterly ashamed that this evil has, for so long, found a place in our house, our Church. This evil has partial aberration because not only is it a terrible abuse of power, but also because, in its evil, it both employs and destroys the very goodness of faith and trust in God,” Cardinal Nichols said."

Apostolic visitor to Medjugorje will see to ‘spiritual-pastoral’ needs of pilgrims

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina now has a pope-appointed apostolic visitor. Archbishop Henryk Hoser, the retired archbishop of Warsaw-Praga, Poland.

“The mission of the apostolic visitor has the aim of assess[ing] the stability and continuous accomplishment of the parish community of Medjugorje and of the faithful who go to the Marian apparitions, whose needs require special attention,” the Vatican announcement explained.

Hoser was a Polish archbishop who was appointed in February 2017 as the pope’s special envoy to study the pastoral situation in Medjugorje.

Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, told journalists that Archbishop Hoser “will reside in Medjugorje,” and that his mission does not involve investigating the authenticity of the alleged apparitions.

Archbishop Hoser’s mission “is strictly pastoral and not doctrinal,” Burke said.

At a news conference following his first visit, Archbishop Hoser said although he has no authority or expertise “to discuss the authenticity of the alleged apparitions, it is true that there is a special spiritual miracle” in Medjugorje.

“The biggest miracle of Medjugorje are the daily apparitions of Our Lady, who appears every day,” Archbishop Hoser told reporters in April 2017.

The commission’s report has not been made public, although some of its points were revealed after Pope Francis spoke about the commission’s work.

Pope Francis acknowledged that pilgrims to the Marian site deserve spiritual care and support, but he also expressed doubts about claims of the continuing apparitions of Mary in Medjugorje.

The “real core” of the commission’s report, he said, is “the spiritual fact, the pastoral fact” that thousands of pilgrims go to Medjugorje and are converted.

“For this, there is no magic word; this spiritual-pastoral fact cannot be denied.”

After the pope made his remarks, Servite Father Salvatore Perrella, a member of the commission, told Catholic News Service, “The commission did not make a definitive pronouncement.”

However, he said, in discussing the recommendations that supposedly began on June 24, 1981, and continue today, the commission opted to distinguish between what occurred in the first 10 days and what has occurred in the following three decades.

The commission held as credible the first apparitions,” he said. “Afterward, things became a little more complicated.”

The Medjugorje commission recommended that Pope Francis lift the ban on official diocesan and pilgrim pilgrimages to Medjugorje, and that he designate the town’s parish Church of St. James as a pontifical shrine with Vatican oversight, the Servite priest said."

Dominican Sister Mary Jo Sobieck, a theology teacher at Marian Catholic High School in Chicago, threw out a ceremonial first pitch during the Chicago White Sox and Kansas City Royals game on Aug. 18. In Chicago, Sister Mary Jo, an athlete and graduate of Cathedral High School in St. Cloud, Minn., bounced the ball off her arm before coming to a set position and letting loose with a curveball. (CNS photo/Anthony Peter, Chicago White Sox)
Clay and Zach were on board with the idea as well. While the couples did their formal marriage preparations through the Catholic Church separately, the four came together in front of family and friends this summer at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Munjor to celebrate their nuptials. As planned, the sisters served as witnesses for each other, with their brother, Tyler Woolridge, serving as best man and witness for Zach and Amber’s vows, and friend Philip Nowak serving in the same capacity for Clay and Brianna. For celebrating Father Jaret Konrade, the July 7 double wedding was a first. “I think there have been two or three times in my 13 years of priesthood where I’ve had two weddings in one day, but a double wedding is rare,” he said. “In fact, it proved to be a little more challenging, as the rites and rituals of the sacrament are generally written with only one couple in mind, so I had to adjust some of the wording to incorporate two couples.” Now, having been married for almost two months and living on opposite sides of Kansas, Clay and Brianna in Edgerton and Zach and Amber in Hays, the couples agree that sharing their wedding ceremony was truly something unique. Brianna recalled watching a home video of the twins’ baptism during a visit with some family members a week after the ceremony. “I watched as they went through the parts for Amber and then for me, and you know, you had to remain a witness to attend one wedding over the other.” “Yes, our family started joking about it a lot,” said Amber. “But we thought, We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!” Anderson calls for ‘full accounting of misdeeds’ that have led to scandal

WASHINGTON (CNS)—After years of Catholics having to confess their sins to the clergy, it is now time for priests to be held accountable for sins and other “misdeeds” to come clean about what they have done and what led them to fail to do their duty, the CEO of the Knights of Columbus said in a letter to his brother Knights and the organization’s lay volunteers.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson’s letter, dated Aug. 23, is in response to the recent release of the Pennsylvania grand jury report on abuse claims in six dioceses and archdioceses that resulted in a sexual cover-up by some church leaders, and the allegations of past abuse and other sexual misconduct made against Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick.

“Repentance should include a full accounting of the misdeeds by those who have committed them. Archbishop McCarrick and others at fault owe us a full account of their actions, motivations and cover-ups,” he said.

The abuse crisis represents “a crisis of commitment to the Gospel,” Anderson wrote, “a crisis of commitment to the sacrament of marriage.”

“Sadly, the disgrace not only is borne by those whom it directly perpetrated or covered up,” he said. “But we—like all Catholics—owe a distorted sense of mercy toward the faithful laborers” in the Lord’s vineyard who have been betrayed by those whom they trusted to lead them to God.”

Anderson called for repentance, reform and a rebuilding of the Church. He called for repentance, reform and a rebuilding of the Church. “We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!” said Amber. “But we thought, We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!”

Clay and Zach were on board with the idea as well. While the couples did their formal marriage preparations through the Catholic Church separately, the four came together in front of family and friends this summer at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Munjor to celebrate their nuptials. As planned, the sisters served as witnesses for each other, with their brother, Tyler Woolridge, serving as best man and witness for Zach and Amber’s vows, and friend Philip Nowak serving in the same capacity for Clay and Brianna. For celebrating Father Jaret Konrade, the July 7 double wedding was a first. “I think there have been two or three times in my 13 years of priesthood where I’ve had two weddings in one day, but a double wedding is rare,” he said. “In fact, it proved to be a little more challenging, as the rites and rituals of the sacrament are generally written with only one couple in mind, so I had to adjust some of the wording to incorporate two couples.” Now, having been married for almost two months and living on opposite sides of Kansas, Clay and Brianna in Edgerton and Zach and Amber in Hays, the couples agree that sharing their wedding ceremony was truly something unique. Brianna recalled watching a home video of the twins’ baptism during a visit with some family members a week after the ceremony. “I watched as they went through the parts for Amber and then for me, and you know, you had to remain a witness to attend one wedding over the other.” “Yes, our family started joking about it a lot,” said Amber. “But we thought, We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!”

Anderson calls for ‘full accounting of misdeeds’ that have led to scandal

WASHINGTON (CNS)—After years of Catholics having to confess their sins to the clergy, it is now time for priests to be held accountable for sins and other “misdeeds” to come clean about what they have done and what led them to fail to do their duty, the CEO of the Knights of Columbus said in a letter to his brother Knights and the organization’s lay volunteers.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson’s letter, dated Aug. 23, is in response to the recent release of the Pennsylvania grand jury report on abuse claims in six dioceses and archdioceses that resulted in a sexual cover-up by some church leaders, and the allegations of past abuse and other sexual misconduct made against Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick.

“Repentance should include a full accounting of the misdeeds by those who have committed them. Archbishop McCarrick and others at fault owe us a full account of their actions, motivations and cover-ups,” he said.

The abuse crisis represents “a crisis of commitment to the Gospel,” Anderson wrote, “a crisis of commitment to the sacrament of marriage.”

“Sadly, the disgrace not only is borne by those whom it directly perpetrated or covered up,” he said. “But we—like all Catholics—owe a distorted sense of mercy toward the faithful laborers” in the Lord’s vineyard who have been betrayed by those whom they trusted to lead them to God.”

Anderson called for repentance, reform and a rebuilding of the Church. He called for repentance, reform and a rebuilding of the Church. “We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!” said Amber. “But we thought, We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!”

Clay and Zach were on board with the idea as well. While the couples did their formal marriage preparations through the Catholic Church separately, the four came together in front of family and friends this summer at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Munjor to celebrate their nuptials. As planned, the sisters served as witnesses for each other, with their brother, Tyler Woolridge, serving as best man and witness for Zach and Amber’s vows, and friend Philip Nowak serving in the same capacity for Clay and Brianna. For celebrating Father Jaret Konrade, the July 7 double wedding was a first. “I think there have been two or three times in my 13 years of priesthood where I’ve had two weddings in one day, but a double wedding is rare,” he said. “In fact, it proved to be a little more challenging, as the rites and rituals of the sacrament are generally written with only one couple in mind, so I had to adjust some of the wording to incorporate two couples.” Now, having been married for almost two months and living on opposite sides of Kansas, Clay and Brianna in Edgerton and Zach and Amber in Hays, the couples agree that sharing their wedding ceremony was truly something unique. Brianna recalled watching a home video of the twins’ baptism during a visit with some family members a week after the ceremony. “I watched as they went through the parts for Amber and then for me, and you know, you had to remain a witness to attend one wedding over the other.” “Yes, our family started joking about it a lot,” said Amber. “But we thought, We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!”

Anderson calls for ‘full accounting of misdeeds’ that have led to scandal

WASHINGTON (CNS)—After years of Catholics having to confess their sins to the clergy, it is now time for priests to be held accountable for sins and other “misdeeds” to come clean about what they have done and what led them to fail to do their duty, the CEO of the Knights of Columbus said in a letter to his brother Knights and the organization’s lay volunteers.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson’s letter, dated Aug. 23, is in response to the recent release of the Pennsylvania grand jury report on abuse claims in six dioceses and archdioceses that resulted in a sexual cover-up by some church leaders, and the allegations of past abuse and other sexual misconduct made against Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick.

“Repentance should include a full accounting of the misdeeds by those who have committed them. Archbishop McCarrick and others at fault owe us a full account of their actions, motivations and cover-ups,” he said.

The abuse crisis represents “a crisis of commitment to the Gospel,” Anderson wrote, “a crisis of commitment to the sacrament of marriage.”

“Sadly, the disgrace not only is borne by those whom it directly perpetrated or covered up,” he said. “But we—like all Catholics—owe a distorted sense of mercy toward the faithful laborers” in the Lord’s vineyard who have been betrayed by those whom they trusted to lead them to God.”

Anderson called for repentance, reform and a rebuilding of the Church. He called for repentance, reform and a rebuilding of the Church. “We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!” said Amber. “But we thought, We’ve done all these other major milestones together, so let’s do it!”
Pro-life conference calls leaders to be missionary disciples

PHOENIX (CNS)—More than 100 diocesan, state and national pro-life leaders from across the U.S. gathered for the annual Diocesan Pro-Life Leadership Conference to discuss how best to build a culture of life.

The conference took place just days before Pope Francis revised the Catechism of the Catholic Church to say the death penalty is “inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person.”

The reinstatement of the death penalty in some states was just one of a host of life-related issues the pro-life leaders came together to discuss. Abortion, physician-assisted suicide, contraception and pornography all figured into the sessions, but the entire undertaking was seen through a spiritual lens.

The theme of the July 29-Aug. 1 conference, “Missionary Disciples Building a Culture of Life,” pointed to the reality of each person being created in the image and likeness of God and that in baptism, each Christian is called to be both a missionary and a disciple.

Deacon Omar Gutierrez, director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith office for the Archdiocese of Omaha, Neb., attended the conference alongside three others from that state. Deacon Gutierrez referenced Gov. Pete Ricketts, a Catholic who has strongly opposed efforts to oppose assisted suicide and the promotion of the culture of life.

“Abortion, physician-assisted suicide, contraception and pornography all figured into the sessions, but the entire undertaking was seen through a spiritual lens.”

Jerry Peters, the pro-life director for the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas, said he and his wife Kathy attend the conference almost every year.

“Abortion, physician-assisted suicide, contraception and pornography all figured into the sessions, but the entire undertaking was seen through a spiritual lens.”

He said the 50th anniversary of “Humanae Vitae,” Blessed Paul VI’s encyclical, could be seen as “a mustard seed that Jesus is planting afresh for this present generation” so that the truth about human life could be planted in the cultural soil of our time.

The national conference featured the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities on Catholics who have answered the call outlined by St. John Paul II’s encyclical “The Gospel of Life” (“Evangelium Vitae”). The winners have demonstrated a lifetime of devotion to the pro-life cause and the promotion of the culture of life.

Honored this year were Msgr. Joseph Ranieri, coordinator of pastoral care of priests in the Archdiocese of Washington, and Janice Benton, executive director of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability.

Msgr. Ranieri assists his diocesan Project Rachel Ministry in many capacities. He is also an active member of the Project Rachel Ministry National Training Team for the USCCB.

James J. Hanson, the third recipient, received the award posthumously for his efforts to oppose assisted suicide and his personal witness to the dignity of each human life, even as he experienced a terminal illness himself. Hanson died at age 36 on Dec. 30, 2017, from brain cancer.