At Angelus, pope prays for Ida victims, Afghan refugees

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis offered prayers to the victims and families affected by Hurricane Ida, which devastated the southern and northeastern United States.

Pope Francis also offered prayers for countless refugees fleeing Afghanistan in the wake of the Taliban’s Aug. 15 takeover of Kabul and expressed his hope that “many countries will welcome and protect those seeking a new life.”

“I assure my prayers for the people of the United States of America who have been hit by a strong hurricane in recent days,” the pope said.

Speaking about Afghanistan, Pope Francis said he is praying “for the internally displaced persons and that they may receive assistance and the necessary protection,” he said. “May young Afghans receive education, an essential good for human development. And may all Afghans, whether at home, in transit, or in host countries, live with dignity, in peace and fraternity with their neighbors.”

Before praying the Angelus, the pope reflected on the way in which Jesus healed a man who was born deaf and mute.

“Jesus was asked to lay his hand on him, the man was healed, noting that while he ‘put his finger into the man’s ears and breathed on him,’ Jesus said, ‘This order is not based on any other power but on mine to forgive sins.’

Cassie Stewart never met the late Father Glenn O’Connor, but she believes that his dream not only changed her life, it has saved her.

Before his death in 2019 at the age of 66, Father O’Connor spent his 39 years as a priest using his deep faith, his Irish joy and his love for the underdog to try to bring people closer to God and their potential.

And nowhere is that purpose more evident than in Seeds of Hope, the faith-based recovery program that he founded to give struggling women hope and a home.

Sacramento's archdiocesan priest started the Seeds of Hope program in 1999 to help women overcome their struggles with drugs and alcohol. Standing near the tribute to Father O’Connor are Marvetta Grimes, the executive director of Seeds of Hope, and Sean O’Connor, one of the priest’s seven siblings. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Outpouring of love fulfills priest’s dream to give struggling women hope and a home

By John Shaughnessy

The smiling image of the late Father Glenn O’Connor greets people near the entrance of the new Seeds of Hope residence center on the grounds of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis. The archdiocesan priest started the Seeds of Hope program in 1999 to help women overcome their struggles with drugs and alcohol. Standing near the tribute to Father O’Connor are Marvetta Grimes, the executive director of Seeds of Hope, and Sean O’Connor, one of the priest’s seven siblings. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Supreme Court rules against blocking Texas’ new 6-week abortion ban

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a late-night decision on Sept. 1, the Supreme Court ruled against blocking a Texas law banning abortions at six weeks of pregnancy.

The 5-4 vote, issued with a one-paragraph unsigned opinion, said the challengers to the Texas law—which went into effect on Sept. 1—did not adequately address the “complex and novel antecedent procedural questions” in this case.

“This order is not based on any conclusion about the constitutionality of Texas’ law, and in no way limits other procedurally proper challenges to the Texas law, including in Texas state courts,” the opinion said, leaving open the possibility that the state’s abortion providers could challenge it in other ways.

The Texas abortion providers had come to the

See SCOTUS, page 8
Annual Festival of Faiths to take place online, interactive on Sept. 26

By Sean Gallagher

The Center for Interfaith Cooperation in Indianapolis will host its ninth annual Festival of Faiths from 2-4 p.m. on Sept. 26. The theme of this year’s festival is “Sharing Gifts of Faith: Compassion, Resilience and Hope.”

Because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the festival will be held online this year in the virtual meeting platform Hopin. Those interested in taking part in the festival can register at no cost at www.indycic.org/festival-faiths.

Freewill donations to the center can also be made there.

Representatives of faith traditions from around the world that have settled in the Indianapolis metropolitan area and formed communities will have virtual booths in the festival’s online exhibit hall. Some will include video recordings from faith communities. Others will be interactive in which visitors can have conversations with people from various faith traditions.

There will also be a virtual main stage that will feature an opening ceremony in which representatives from different faith traditions will offer a message to all in this year’s online event.

“The festival has helped me in my work through making connections with other religions, to encourage a small part of our enthusiasm, longings and values,” said Father Ginther, who is also pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. “I have experienced human goodness in the people of other religions. Most of all, I have witnessed a clear longing of the varied people wishing to live in peace with their neighbors.”

Father Ginther encourages people to open their ears and hearts to God. “The event is only two hours long,” he said. “Take at least some of that two hours to explore one other religion with which you are not familiar. If the booth of that religion offers direct interaction, ask a basic question about their religion or religious practices. You will be surprised by how important religious day or festival of the year? How do you celebrate it?”

Father Ginther encourages people to open their ears and hearts to God. “The event is only two hours long,” he said. “Take at least some of that two hours to explore one other religion with which you are not familiar. If the booth of that religion offers direct interaction, ask a basic question about their religion or religious practices. You will be surprised by how important religious day or festival of the year? How do you celebrate it?”

“I believe there is a common Christian celebration of a similar focus, share how a Catholic would celebrate it and what it means to them.”

Pope continued from page 1

touched his tongue with saliva.”

The person’s condition, the pope said. “Jesus is the Word: If we do not copy of the Gospels in their pocket and

“Today, the CDF is responsible for helping people understand the beauty of the sacraments and safeguard the Church’s teachings and the universal Church in helping to foster a greater understanding of the faith, aiding bishops in their role as teachers of the faith and answering difficult questions that arise on faith and morals.”

Rome is a familiar place to Father Liaugminas, who earned a doctorate in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in 2017. He was nominated for the university’s Bellarmine Award in 2018.

Father Liaugminas was ordained to the priesthood in 2010 and served as associate pastor at Mary, Seat of Wisdom Parish in Park Ridge, Ill., from 2010 to 2013.

For the past four years, he has served as chaplain and director of Calver House, the Catholic chaplaincy at the University of Chicago, and taught theology to seminarians at Mundelein Seminary.

The appointment to the CDF was unexpected, Father Liaugminas said. “It came as a surprise to me,” he told Chicago Catholic, archdiocesan newspaper. “After praying over this, I saw that it was the Lord’s will. There was a real sense of the Holy Spirit being in this call to service.”

While the roles of university chaplain and seminary professor are different in several ways, in both roles I was serving the encounter with St. Jesus Christ and helping people understand the beauty of our faith,” he said.

As a pastor to students on a secular campus, he was able to draw on his studies in Rome to help them answer the deepest questions of faith they were asking.

“In an academic setting where students and professors are used to asking critical questions and seeking answers through engaging conversations, a Catholic chaplaincy serves to engage the questions people are asking and to help them understand the beauty and truth of our faith,” he said.

The CDF is staffed by priests from around the world, Father Liaugminas, who has some fluency in six languages, will have responsibilities covering the English-speaking world.

For Catholics who may not be familiar with the role of the CDF, the Chicago cathedral said it helps to think of it as having the responsibility and mission of assisting those in the Church who have the sacred duty of teaching the faith.

“The work trusts in the intercession of the Holy Spirit, who Jesus promised would lead the faithful into the whole truth at all times, he said.

“The congregation has a special responsibility to serve the Holy Father and the universal Church in helping to clarify questions of the faith and settle questions that arise,” he explained. “In all matters concerning faith and morals, the congregation offers a vital and indispensable service to help Catholics navigate important topics in the light of Christ.”

Chicago priest prepares to join doctrinal congregation at the Vatican

September 16 – 9:45 a.m.
Mass for students of Bishop Chatard High School, at Bishop Chatard High School
Catholic Charities agencies rely on virtual outreach in Ida relief

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (CNS)—With several Northeast states now joining major metropolitan regions in the Gulf Coast as major Ida-related disaster areas, Catholic Charities agencies are using virtual deployment systems refined during the coronavirus pandemic to maximize their outreach to those in need.

Prolonged power outages or record flooding that are making quick disaster response access to the greater New Orleans and New York City areas an impossibility following the remnants of Hurricane Ida as it marched north after making landfall on Aug. 29 in Louisiana. Now, disaster response teams, turning to virtual workarounds using staff members well outside the disaster zones.

“COVID set the stage for being able to do virtual deployment: instead of a physical presence on the ground, teams can assist by doing phone calls, setting up shared documents on the Internet, and taking an administrative burden off the local staff,” said Kathleen Oldaker, senior director of disaster strategy for Catholic Charities USA.

As it did during Hurricane Katrina, Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, La., is expected to serve as the central support center for virtual outreach for those hit New Orleans and Houma-Thibodaux.

“But we are looking at possible virtual actions: a staff member on the ground in California or Indiana—if there is a way of doing things with our network that might require some bandwidth—can help the agencies on the ground can focus on their outreach,” Oldaker told Catholic News Service.

Hurricane Ida’s remnants delivered a deadly surprise punch in the Northeast, causing more than 50 deaths and flooding roads and cities after slogging across New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

The post-tropical cyclone reportedly dropped more than three inches of rain in an hour in New York.

Catholic Charities staff have learned that text messages can be a more reliable form of communication when cellphone service is knocked out, which includes a large area of southeastern Louisiana.

In addition, e-mail communications for one disaster area can be managed through a related diocesan office of Catholic Charities. The e-mail for Houma-Thibodaux’s Catholic Charities office, for example, was being intercepted this week by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Lafayette, La., Oldaker said.

Each year, staff members at Catholic Charities complete a training program called “The Applied Institute for Disaster Excellence,” a decade-old preparedness platform that can prepare a staff person with disaster experience in Maine, for example, to deploy to Louisiana.

But Hurricane Ida left infrastructures so badly damaged in places like Louisiana that teams will have to wait for electricity and water to come online.

“What we are really seeing is in this response is the neighboring agencies offering support,” Oldaker said. “People in Baton Rouge, and Biloxi, Mississippi—they have had staff go and help Houma with assessments and seeing where they could do distribution sites,” Oldaker said.

In the South, Houma may have experienced some of the greatest wind damage following Ida, whereas New Orleans is mostly suffering from a damaged power infrastructure. Catholic Charities in New Orleans have been focused on checking in on residents living in senior care homes and other residential facilities who are there.

“The Catholic Charities agency in Houma is trying to get on their feet a bit in a place where they were outside and the house next door is either destroyed or damaged,” Oldaker said. “We have a House of Charity helping a family lose a home down to the concrete slab there.”

In the Northeast, Catholic Charities workers spent Sept. 2 helping agencies in the Mid-Atlantic states and New York and New Jersey especially, which took some of the heaviest flash flooding.

The rapid accumulation of rainfall from Ida’s remnants turned city streets into rivers, flooded basement-level residences and shut down subway services in New York.

“Right now, the agencies are not in assessment mode,” Oldaker said. “They have some 10,000 phone calls or requests from evacuees, with people lining up outside their doors even before they opened.

“People are sleeping in the car, finding hotels are not available, or the hotel bills are getting expensive for those who cannot go home for a few weeks. Those costs get pretty expensive pretty fast,” she added.

When asked what may be different about the emergency response in 2021 over past years, Oldaker said the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic adds an additional burden to the crisis response and distribution work.

“Ten years ago, I would not have been ordering masks and gloves and personal protective gear—it wasn’t something we thought about, and in Louisiana it is something they are thinking about in terms of spacing evacuees and people having to wear masks in such high heat. How do you balance response with safety? That is a normal as we move forward with disaster work,” Oldaker said. For September, she said, is national disaster preparedness month, and getting people prepared is a good thing “because you get to know when what might look like just rain could be a big event. When a river washes out it is shocking how fast you can have water coming into your home.”

Patricia Cole, vice president of communications Catholic Charities USA, noted that contributions are critical right now and that 100% of the donation proceeds will be directed to the disaster areas following Ida.

(To donate to those affected by Ida, go to www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.)

**Invites you to the 39th Annual Celebrate Life Dinner**

**Tuesday, September 28, 2021**

Marriott Downtown Indianapolis

Registration - 6:00 p.m.  Dinner and Awards - 6:45 p.m.  Gianna Jessen - 8:00 p.m.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

Gianna Jessen – Abortion survivor

Gianna Jessen has overcome unspeakable challenges but her grit, determination, and joy has resonated around the world. She is living the impossible as she was intended to be one of the 1.2 million abortions that happen each year. Instead, she survived and was provided the gift of cerebral palsy, as she calls it “as it allows me to really depend on Jesus for everything”.

For a voice that was never intended to speak, she has testified before the Australian Parliament, British House of Commons and US Congress. A life that was never meant to be has been used to inspire even save Others.

**REGISTER ONLINE AT**

www.CelebrateLifeDinner.com

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, TO VOLUNTEER OR DONATE visit: www.RTLindy.org**

MCCARRICK pleads not guilty to two more lawsuits filed against him

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Former Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick pleaded not guilty on Sept. 3 in a Massachusetts courtroom where he is facing counts of sexually assaulting a teenager in the 1970s.

Local news reporters posted video on Twitter of the 91-year-old McCarrick, wearing a face mask and slowly heading toward Dedham District Court with the aid of a walker as pedestrians shouted, “Go to hell, McCarrick,” and “How many lives, how many children?”

He was not taken under custody but was ordered to post $5,000 bail and have no contact with the alleged victim or children.

He was under high-ranking, globe-trotting as a cleric, and that he also had abused seminarians as a bishop in New Jersey.

In 2018, however, the Archdiocese of New York in 1971 “credible and substantiated” and turned the case over to the Vatican.

McCarrick was elevated him to a cardinal. †
A victory for pro-lifers

For almost 50 years, American women have had the legal right to kill their own unborn children. That began in 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion. Now it appears that things may be changing as more and more states are putting restrictions on when women can have abortions. The Supreme Court, with a 5-4 ruling on Sept. 1, declined to overturn a Texas law that bans abortion after the baby’s heart is beating, or about at six weeks of pregnancy. Naturally, the pro-abortion forces are livid about that. Pro-life people are jubilant because they believe that the court’s decision could lead to a future decision to reverse Roe v. Wade. That would not make all abortions illegal, but it would allow states to pass more restrictive laws, which some have already started to do.

The move toward the court’s decision has been going on for several years, including during the presidential campaign of 2016 between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. You probably remember how difficult it was for pro-life people to vote, especially because of Trump’s views when it came to immigration policy—recall that he wanted to forbid immigrants from certain countries—and Clinton’s uncompromising support of abortion rights.

But then Trump promised to appoint pro-life justices and judges, and that was enough for many in the pro-life movement. Call many of those people “one-issue voters” if you want, but they believed that no other issue could be as important as ending abortion.

Trump won the election and had the opportunity to nominate three justices to the Supreme Court—Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett—plus 44 circuit court judges. Those three Supreme Court justices all voted to allow the Texas law to stand, they were joined by justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito.

The court’s decision on the Texas law, therefore, is a great victory for the pro-life movement, just as the Roe v. Wade decision was a great victory for the pro-abortion movement nearly half a century ago. Whether or not the Supreme Court will next reverse Roe v. Wade, it seems clear that the abortion battles are now going to be in the states. So yes, unfortunately, whether or not abortion is legal or illegal is now a political matter and it will depend on which party controls a state’s legislature.

What the pro-life movement should be doing, though, and has been trying to do all along, is convincing people that abortion is immoral. It is, whether pro-abortion proponents admit it or not, exactly what the first sentence in this editorial says it is: the killing of women’s unborn children.

Biologists have always taught that a new human being is created when a man’s sperm penetrates a woman’s ovum. It is not part of the woman’s body, as so many say it is, it is a separate human person that should be protected, not destroyed.

Many women have come to realize that fact when they have a sonogram, many often out of curiosity about the sex of the baby. It’s impossible to know how many women have changed their minds about having an abortion after seeing the images of their children in this way, but we believe that the number is high.

However, for many women, the issue isn’t whether or not it’s a baby, or when it becomes another human being, but simply the mother’s right to choose whether or not to have the baby. For the past 50 years, they have been taught that it’s the mother’s right to choose. The baby’s right to life has been denied. Such a thing should be abhorrent, and we believe that members of the youngest generations are coming to realize that. There is evidence that young people tend to be pro-life. But that’s difficult in a society in which the “right” to abortion has been taken for granted for so long.

What will happen here in Indiana, which is recognized by many as a pro-life state? The legislature has passed some laws that restrict abortion practices, but not to the extent that the Texas law has. Our legislators won’t do anything more this calendar year, but if abortion is on their agenda next year, you can expect a battle with the pro-abortion forces.

—John F. Fink

Reflection

Father Mychal Judge’s last homily continues to inspire 20 years later

The date for this issue of The Criterion is Sept. 10, 2021. Twenty years ago on that day, Francisican Father Mychal Judge preached his last homily.

A chaplain for the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) since 1992, Father Mychal celebrated a Mass on Sept. 10, 2001, on the occasion of the dedication of a new firehouse in the city. Originally during the Mass, Father Mychal reflected on the sacred nature of the work of the firefighters to whom he ministered.

“Good Days. And bad days. Up days. Down days. Sad days. Happy days. But never a boring day on the job.”

“You do what God has called you to do. You show up. You put one foot in front of another: You get on the rig and you go out and you do the job. Which is a mystery. And a surprise.

“You have no idea what you get on that rig. No matter how big the call. No matter how small. You have no idea what God is calling you to do.

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Father Mychal didn’t hesitate to go to the World Trade Center. After terrorism struck, two firefighters flew two airliners into its twin 110-story towers. He knew God called him to be there at the side of the hundreds of FDNY firefighters who rushed to ground zero while thousands fled in the opposite direction.

The danger Father Mychal faced in going there didn’t ultimately matter to him. Following God’s call, ministering to the firefighters, did.

He ended up dying there at ground zero, along with 343 FDNY firefighters, all giving their lives while trying to help others and not giving a second thought about it. When Father Mychal’s body was discovered soon after his death, five ash-covered firefighters and civilians placed it in a chair and took it to a nearby Catholic church, laying it before the altar and covering it with a sheet.

The stories of self-sacrifice from 9/11 inspire just as much, if not more, than the stories of evil from that day horrific. They inspire because they lead us to awe in learning of just how much ordinary people can give of themselves in extraordinary situations. They lead us perhaps to ponder, “How would I have responded in the same situation?”

May it please God that none of us will ever be faced with such evil as gripped so many ordinary people on 9/11.

But each of us is called to self-sacrifice of some kind every day of our lives. It’s at the heart of who we are as Catholics. We’re disciples of Christ who are called to follow in his footsteps. “Whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me,” Jesus said (Mt 10:38).

So, what Father Mychal said to firefighters in his final homily applies just as much to all of us whether we are spouses, parents, children, workers, parishioners, neighbors and friends and even strangers.

Seen from God’s perspective, none of our days are boring. He calls us in the little ins and outs of each day to do his will.

With the help of his grace, we can follow God’s lead, we can step up and put one foot in front of another. When we awake each morning, we don’t have to know what God has in store for us. We might have big calls, small ones or a combination of the two. But, no matter what God calls us in each moment to give of ourselves and, by doing so, to allow his life and love to fill our hearts all the more.

The phrase “Never forget” has become closely connected to 9/11. Let’s as Catholics never forget the many stories of self-sacrifice of that day 20 years ago. May they continue to inspire us to answer God’s call to give of ourselves in similar Christ-like love to others in our daily lives.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter of The Criterion.)
Discipleship requires self-sacrificing love

“Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the Gospel will save it” (Mt 8:34-35).

The Gospel reading for the Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 8:27-35) teaches us about the nature of Christian discipleship. If we wish to follow Jesus, we must be willing to set aside our personal interests, including our comfort and security, and “take up our cross,” the cruel instrument of capital punishment that was the cause of Jesus’ death. Pope Francis reminds us frequently that we cannot be passive or indifferent—remaining on our “comfortable couches.” In his Angelus message on Aug. 30, 2020, Pope Francis said, “The life of Christians is always a struggle. The Bible says that the life of the believer is a militancy: fighting against the bad spirit, fighting against evil. If we want to be [Jesus’] disciples, we must struggle against it, expending our life unreservedly out of love of God and neighbor.”

In Sunday’s Gospel, Jesus asks his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” (Mt 8:27) They repeat what they have heard people speculate: “Some say John the Baptist, others that Elijah, and others that Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” But Jesus wants to know if they really believe in him. He asks Peter, “Do you believe?” Peter said to him in reply, “You are the Christ” (Mt 8:29).

Peter’s bold affirmation of Jesus’ identity as the Anointed One, the long-awaited Messiah, does not prevent him from protesting against Jesus’ prophecy that “the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days” (Mt 8:31). On the contrary, as Pope Francis observes, “At the prospect that Jesus may fail and die on the cross, Peter himself resists and says to him: ‘God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you!’” (Mt 8:33). The pope describes the conflict Peter finds himself in. “He believes in Jesus; he wants to follow him, but he does not accept that the Lord’s glory will pass through the Passion.”

The second reading for this Sunday (Rom 6:23) is a passage that is reminiscent of Paul’s words in Galatians. In it, Paul reminds us of the things we are called to do, “Beloved, never let the wrong things make you part of the wrong thing. Our body, what good is it? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (Rom 1:28). What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,’ but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (Jas 2:14-17).

Following Jesus demands that we “take up our cross.” This means that we must be willing to practice what we preach. It also means we must be ready to sacrifice our own interests for the good of others. Let’s pray for the grace to recognize Jesus as the Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. Let’s also pray for the willingness to find our own self-interest in order to follow Jesus in doing good works for the sake of others. †

Si alguien quiere ser mi discípulo, que se niegue a sí mismo, lleve su cruz; y me siga. Porque el que quiera salvar su vida la perderá; pero el que pierda su vida por mi causa y por el evangelio la salvará” (Mc 8:34-35).

La lectura del Evangelio del vigésimo cuatro domingo del tiempo ordinario (Mc 8:27-35) nos enseña sobre la naturaleza del discípulo cristiano. Si queremos seguir a Jesús, debemos estar dispuestos a dejar de lado nuestros intereses personales, incluyendo nuestra comodidad y seguridad, y “llevar nuestra cruz,” el cruel instrumento de la pena capital que fue la causa de Jesucristo’s death. El Papa Francisco nos recuerda con frecuencia que no podemos ser pasivos o indiferentes, ni permanecer en “la comodidad del sillón.” En su mensaje del Angelus del 30 de agosto de 2020, el Papa Francisco dijo: “La vida de los cristianos es siempre una lucha. La Biblia dice que la vida del creyente es una milicia: luchar contra el espíritu malo, luchar contra el Mal. Si queremos seguir a Jesús, estamos llamados a imitarlo, gastando sin reservas nuestra vida por amor de Dios y del prójimo.” En el Evangelio del domingo, Jesús pregunta a sus discípulos: “¿Quién dice la gente que soy yo?” (Mc 8:27) Repiten lo que han oído especular a otros: unos dicen que es Juan el Bautista, otros que Elías, y otros que son uno de los profetas. “Y ustedes, ¿quién dicen que soy yo?” Les pregunta Jesús. Pedro le respondió: “Tú eres el Cristo” (Mc 8:29).

La audaz afirmación de Pedro con respecto a la identidad de Jesús como el Único, el Mesías largamente esperado, no le impide protestar contra la profecía de Jesús de que “el Hijo del hombre tiene que sufrir muchas cosas y ser rechazado por los ancianos, por los jefes de los sacerdotes y por los maestros de la ley. Es necesario que lo maten y que a los tres días resucite” (Mc 8:31).

Por el contrario, como observa el Papa Francisco, “Frente a la perspectiva de que Jesús pueda fracasar y morir en la cruz, el mismo Pedro se rebela y le dice: ‘Dios no lo quiera, Señor: no te ocurra eso’” (Mc 8:32). El Papa describe el conflicto en el que se encuentra: “Cree en Jesús—Pedro es así—tiene fe, cree en Jesús, cree; le quiere seguir, pero no acepta que la gloria pase a través de la pasión.”

Para ser sinceros, debemos admitir que la mayoría de nosotros nos encontramos en un dilema similar. Crememos en Jesús y queremos seguirlo, pero nos resistimos a lo que Dietrich Bonhoeffer, el teólogo luterano que fue hacinado por los nazis en 1945, llamó “el costo del discípulo.”

Como San Pedro en la lectura del Evangelio del domingo, preferiríamos no asociar la alabanza de la fe cristiana con los sacrificios, incluido el martirio, que se exigen a los seguidores de Cristo.

San Marcos nos dice que la respuesta de Jesús a Pedro fue inmediata e inflexible. Al oír esto, se dio la vuelta y, mirando a sus discípulos, replicó a Pedro y le dijo: “¡Alejate de mí, Satanás! Tú no piensas en las cosas de Dios, sino en las de los hombres” (Mc 8:33).

Los caminos de Dios no son nuestros caminos, y el costo del discípulo es claro: “El que quiere salvar su vida la perderá; pero el que pierda su vida por mi causa y por el evangelio la salvará” (Mc 8:35).

El Papa Francisco ha descrito las dos actitudes a las que está llamado el discipulo cristiano a renunciar a sí mismo, es decir, convertirse, y tomar la cruz. Ambas requieren humildad y la voluntad de aceptar nuestro propio interés. “No se trata solo de soportar con paciencia las tribulaciones cotidianas—dice el Papa—sino de llevar con fe y responsabilidad esa parte de cansancio, esa parte de sufrimiento que la lucha contra el mal conlleva.” La segunda lectura de este domingo es de Santiago (Stg 2:14-18) da una idea clara de algunas de las implicaciones prácticas del “Cueste lo que cueste” de la Carta de Santiago. Seguir a Jesús exige que primero “lleven nuestras cruz,” lo que significa que debemos estar dispuestos a practicar lo que predicamos. También significa que debemos estar dispuestos a sacrificarse por nuestra propia comodidad. 

“Hermanos míos, ¿de qué le sirve a uno alegar que tiene fe, si no tiene obras? ¿Acaso podrá salvarlo esa fe? Spongamos que un hermano o una hermana no tiene con qué vestirse y carece del alimento diario, y uno de ustedes le dice: ‘Que le vaya bien, abriguése y coma hasta saciarse’, pero no le da lo necesario para el cuerpo. ¿De qué servirá eso? Así también la fe por sí sola, si no tiene obras, está muerta” (Stg 2:14-17).

Seguir a Jesús exige que primero “llevemos nuestras cruz,” lo que significa que debemos estar dispuestos a practicar lo que predicamos. También significa que debemos estar dispuestos a sacrificarse por nuestra propia comodidad. 

“¿Qué es lo que se esperará al final si no aceptamos estas dos actitudes que determine la fe cristiana a la hora de amarnos mutuamente?” (Stg 2:18). El Papa Francisco nos recuerda que “el que quiere salvar su vida pierde la suya, y el que pierde su vida por mi causa y por el evangelio, la salvará.”

En el Evangelio del domingo, Jesús pregunta a su discípulo: “Qué hace san Pedro?” (Mc 8:29) San Pedro dice a Jesús: “Le quiere seguir, pero no acepta que la gloria pase a través de la pasión.”

Para ser sinceros, debemos admitir que la mayoría de nosotros nos encontramos en un dilema similar. Crememos en Jesús y queremos seguirlo, pero no nos resistimos a lo que Dietrich Bonhoeffer, el teólogo luterano que fue hacinado por los nazis en 1945, llamó “el costo del discípulo.”

Como San Pedro en la lectura del Evangelio del domingo, preferiríamos no asociar la alabanza de la fe cristiana con los sacrificios, incluido el martirio, que se exigen a los seguidores de Cristo.

San Marcos nos dice que la respuesta de Jesús a Pedro fue inmediata e inflexible. Al oír esto, se dio la vuelta y, mirando a sus discípulos, replicó a Pedro: “Tú no piensas en las cosas de Dios, sino en las de los hombres” (Mc 8:33).

Los caminos de Dios no son nuestros caminos, y el costo del discípulo es claro: “El que quiere salvar su vida la perderá; pero el que pierda su vida por mi causa y por el evangelio la salvará” (Mc 8:35).

El Papa Francisco ha descrito las dos actitudes a las que está llamado el discipulo cristiano a renunciar a sí mismo, es decir, convertirse, y tomar la cruz. Ambas requieren humildad y la voluntad de aceptar nuestro propio interés. “No se trata solo de soportar con paciencia las tribulaciones cotidianas—dice el Papa—sin de llevar con fe y responsabilidad esa parte de cansancio, esa parte de
September 12
St. Mary Parish, 512 N. 4th St., St. Louis.
Fall Festival, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; fried chicken dinners, raffles, kids’ activities, face painting, pony rides, ability, crafts, free admission. Information: 753-912-2588 or dorinet@stmaryrush.org.

September 12, 19
Benedictine Father conversations via GroupMe: 4 p.m. Sundays, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, sponsored by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: vocation@thesd.org.

September 12-14
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5692 Central Avenue, Indianapolis. Parish Mission: “Welcome Home,” 7 p.m.; Father Joseph Donnelly facilitator, fee: Information: 317-257-2266 or udcell@ stmaryrush.org.

September 13, 20
St. Therese of the Child Jesus Little Flower Parish Center, St. Therese Room, 6:30-7:15 p.m., prayer and SoulCore Rosary Workout 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. Center, St. Therese Room, St. Therese of the Child Jesus Little Flower Parish Center, Indianapolis. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.thereseacenters.com.

September 14
Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. “The Spirit Breathes” monthly Taizé Prayer Service, 7-8 p.m.; silent and spontaneous prayer, simple music, silence, virtual option available as cztl.fr.

September 15

September 16
St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickey Ave., Indianapolis.
Third Thursday Adoration, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

September 16

September 17
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis.
Pro-Life Film Series: Divided Hearts of America, 6 p.m., catered pizza dinner, space limited to 100 attendees, required registration. Information and registration: curt@dividedhearts.org.

September 17-18
St. Bridget of Ireland Parish, 404 E. Vine St., Liberty. Oktoberfest, 4:10 p.m.; Mass, 4 p.m.; German food served 4-7 p.m. at $10 adult, $5 child, beer/wine garden, poker, raffle, 50/50 drawing, country store, snack, kids’ games. Information: 317-495-2010 or www.sbip.org.

September 17-19
Knights of Columbus Annual Indiana Biking for Babies Midpoint Rally/Prayer Service. 1:30 p.m., rally in support of riders participating in the Knights of Columbus’ Biking for Babies event, speakers, light refreshments. Information: life@indiana-kofc.org. Sponsor a rider or donate: www.kofc437.com.

September 18
St. Bridget of Ireland Parish, 404 E. Vine St., Liberty. Holy Faces: Traditional Icons of Our Lord, His Mother and the Saints,” an icon exhibit will take place in Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, Oct. 4—the archdiocesan Creation Care week, a celebration of the liturgical Ordinary Time in the Eastern Catholic Church, a celebration of the liturgical Ordinary Time in the Eastern Catholic Church, an event. †

September 19

September 20

September 28 Green Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Indy to mark Season of Creation
To celebrate the Season of Creation—recognized each year between Sept. 1- Oct. 4—the archdiocesan Creation Care Commission is celebrating a Green Mass at 6 p.m. on Sept. 28 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis.
Father Rick Ginther, the parish’s pastor, will be the principal celebrant. The public is invited to attend the liturgy. The Creation Care Commission aims to help Catholics across central and southern Indiana live out Pope Francis’ call to care more deeply about our intertwined relationships with God, people and Earth. †

Icon exhibit will take place in Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library through Oct. 30
The gallery will exhibit works by Connecticut artist Marek Czarniecki and Benedictine Sister Jeanal Veniel of Ferdinand, Ind. There will be an opening reception on Sept. 12 at 3 p.m. Central Time.
Czarniecki developed, practiced and preserved primarily by the Eastern Rite, icons carry a patrimony of both theology and art. Unlike naturalistic portraits that seek to capture the likeness of an individual at a particular time in his life, icons convey eternal, domestic and biographical information that embody the saint depicted.
The practice of making icons—which are referred to as being “painted” instead of “printed”—is often learned as an apprentice. Czarniecki studied under Russian Orthodoxy iconographer Koen Pokrass, Czarniecki uses natural materials to make the icons. Lamin is glued to a wood panel and primed with a marble-based gesso. It is then painted with egg tempera mixed with natural earth pigments. The halo and backgrounds are gilded with 22-karat gold. He has received awards for his work, including two artists fellowships with Czarnecki and has been writing about his work since 2006. Icons have been a major part of his academic work and the subject of his master’s thesis and dissertation.
For library hours, call 812-357-6401 or 800-987-3711 or visit the Archabbey Library’s website at www.marchav.free.fr/library/library-hours.
The exhibit is free and open to the public. Those wishing to view the exhibit may need to arrive at least 30 minutes before closing time. †

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September 20

Wedding Anniversaries

CRAIG AND SUSAN ALLEN
Craig and Susan (O’Neil) Allen, members of St. Paul Catholic Church in Bloomington, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 12.
The couple was married in St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 12, 1961. They have two children: Holly Barton and Paige Grodecki.
The couple also has two grandchildren.
They received a papal blessing in honor of the event. †

DONALD AND D. MARILYN KENNEDY
Donald and D. Marilyn (Doyle) Kennedy, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 2.
The couple was married in St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 2, 1961. They have two children: Dawn Hobbs and Keith Kennedy.
The couple also has seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. †

RONALD AND JOANN NEVITT
Ronald and Joann (Carson) Nevitt, members of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 21.
The couple was married in Holy Angels Church in Trenton, N.J., on Aug. 21, 1971. They have four children: Jennifer Morris, Melissa, Christopher and Father Jonathan Nevitt.
The couple also has two grandchildren. †

DUANE AND THERESA MEYER
Duane and Theresa (Meyer) Meyer, members of All Saints Parish in Mount Carmel, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 21.
The couple was married in Holy Angels Church in Mount Carmel, Ind., on Aug. 21, 1971. They have one daughter, Jennifer Morris, and one granddaughter. †

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to crcl@archindy.org or call 317-236-1485.
Por Francisco tuvo buenas razones para reflexionar sobre la importancia de la atención médica de calidad este pasado verano: se sometió a una operación del colon y pasó varias semanas en recuperación, primero en el Hospital Gemelli de Roma y después en su apartamento en el Vaticano.

El 11 de julio el Santo Padre dirigió el Ángelus desde un balcón del Hospital Gemelli. En su párgrafo, el papa dijo:

“¿He visitado a los abuelos? ¿He pasado tiempo con mis amigos enfermos? ¿He escuchado a los mayores de la familia o de mi vecindario? ¿He visitado a los abuelos, mis amigos enfermos o a los mayores de mi vecindario? ¿He escuchado a los mayores del vecindario? ¿He escuchado a los enfermos? ¿He escuchado a mis amigos enfermos? ¿He escuchado a mis amigos de mi vecindario? ¿He escuchado a mis amigos enfermos? ¿He visitado a mis amigos enfermos?”

Torcedent y ‘closeness’ are at heart of caring for sick, elderly

En sus homilías de la primera Jornada mundial de oración por los abuelos y los mayores, el 25 de julio, el Papa Francisco siguió reflexionando sobre las virtudes de la cercanía y la ternura. “Los abuelos y los mayores no son obras de la vida, deseos que se deben tirar,” expresó el Santo Padre. Por el contrario, son “valiosos pedazos de pan que han quedado sobre la mesa de nuestra vida, que pueden todavía nutrirnos con una fragancia que hemos perdido.”

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

“La ‘ternura’ y la ‘cercanía’ es la esencia del cuidado de enfermos ancianos.”

El Papa Francisco en su homilía: “La ‘ternura’ y la ‘cercanía’ son palabras que el Papa Francisco utiliza con frecuencia para describir el amor de Dios por nosotros, y para animarnos a cuidarnos unos a otros. Creo firmemente que tenemos la solemne obligación de compartir el amor tierno y misericordioso de Cristo con todos, pero especialmente con los niños, los enfermos, los ancianos y todos los que son vulnerables. Para quienes son discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo, la atención médica no tiene que ver con la ciencia y la tecnología, por muy importantes que sean para diagnosticar y tratar problemas de salud graves. Para ellos, la verdadera sanación tiene que ver con el amor. Se trata de cuidarse unos a otros y dar consuelo y esperanza a los enfermos. Los trabajadores de la salud deben ser profesionales cualificados, pero también deben ser seres humanos que se preocupan profundamente por la salud mental, física, emocional y espiritual de sus pacientes.”

En su homilía de la Jornada mundial de oración por los abuelos y los mayores, el 25 de julio, el Papa Francisco siguió reflexionando sobre las virtudes de la cercanía y la ternura. “Los abuelos y los mayores no son obras de la vida, deseos que se deben tirar,” expresó el Santo Padre. Por el contrario, son “valiosos pedazos de pan que han quedado sobre la mesa de nuestra vida, que pueden todavía nutrirnos con una fragancia que hemos perdido.”

“Pregúntennos—señaló el Papa—‘¿He visitado a los abuelos? ¿He escuchado a los mayores de mi vecindario? ¿He visitado a los abuelos? ¿He escuchado a los mayores de mi vecindario?’”

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

“La ‘ternura’ y la ‘cercanía’ es la esencia del cuidado de enfermos ancianos.”

Por Francisco expresó: “El atender a los enfermos y a los ancianos es una oportunidad para que las personas mayores nos inspiren y animen con sus historias de vida y sus luchas a largo del tiempo.”

“Sufrí cuando veo una sociedad que corre—asevera el Sumo Pontífice—, atareada, indiferente, afanada en tantas cosas e incapaz de detenerse para dirigir una mirada, un saludo, una caricia. La cercanía y la ternura son calles de dos sentidos. Tenemos que darlas para recibirlos.”

En un mensaje en las redes sociales con motivo de la Jornada mundial de oración por los abuelos y los mayores, el cardenal Joseph W. Tobin escribió: “Un bendecido Día de los Abuelos para todas las mujeres y hombres que comparten el tiempo de amor de Dios con los niños del mundo. Recemos especialmente por nuestro Abuelo Espiritual, el Papa Francisco, mientras sigue recuperando su salud de la operación a la que fue sometido a principios de este mes.”

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.)

“Tenderness” and “closeness” are words that Pope Francis uses frequently to describe God’s love for us, and to encourage us to care for one another. He believes strongly that we are called to share, to love, to be tender, merciful love of Christ with everyone, but especially with children, the sick, the elderly and all who are vulnerable.

For those who are missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, health care is not about science and technology—as important as these are for diagnosing and treating serious health problems. True healing is about love. It’s about caring for one another and giving comfort and hope to those who are all. Health care workers must be skilled professionals, but they should also be human beings who care deeply about the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health of their patients.

In his Angelus remarks, Pope Francis said: “In these days of being hospitalized, I have experienced once again how important good health care is, as well as charity. The fact that quality medical care is costly does not mean that it should be available only to those who can afford it. The pope believes that caring for the sick is not a matter of economics. It is a vocation, he says, “to offer care, and service is always freely given.”

In his homily for the first World Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly on July 25, Pope Francis continued to reflect on the virtues of closeness and tenderness. “Older people are not leftovers to be discarded,” the pope said. On the contrary, “they continue to be precious nourishment for families, young people and communities.”

“Let us ask ourselves,” the pope said, “Have I visited my grandparents, my elderly relatives, the older people in my neighborhood?” Have I listened to them? Have I spent time with them?”

All of us have an obligation to care for the senior members of our families and communities. But this should not be seen as a burden. Rather, it is an opportunity to allow older people to inspire and encourage us with their life stories and their struggles over the years.

“I worry when I see a society full of people in constant motion,” the Holy Father said, “too caught up in their own affairs to have time for a glance, a greeting of a hug.” Closeness and tenderness are a two-way street. We need to give them away in order to get them back.

In a social media message on the World Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin wrote: “A blessed Grandparents’ Day to all the women and men who share the tender love of God with the world’s children. Let’s pray especially for our Spiritual Grandfather, Pope Francis, as he continues to recover from surgery earlier this month.”

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.)

“Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.”

—Pope Francis, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“The Face of Mercy”)

“Jesus of Nazareth with his parable, with his gestures and with his entire person reveals the misericordia of Dios.”

—Papa Francisco, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)
here. Now, every dream I’ve ever had is coming true. Now I’m sure, I have a relationship with God. I work in recovery. I have a very good relationship with my family. I’m saving up to buy a house. It brings tears to my eyes.”

She shares her story, Stewart is sitting in a place that is one of Father O’Connor’s last dreams—a dream that has become reality through the tremendous and exhilarating support of Seeds of Hope that Father O’Connor longed to create before he died of cancer. The state of Texas had provided a transitional residence center for the women in the program, but the priest wanted to have what he called a “three-quarter house”—a place where the women could live for another 18 months after they completed the program and before they immersed themselves in society. Before this new facility, the women were released from treatment centers and reeling and relapsing, says Marvetta Grimes, the long-time executive director of Seeds of Hope who was also a successful graduate of the program. Grimes remembers how Father O’Connor would have shared how they wanted to stay clean of drugs—but that once they graduated from treatment, they had nowhere to go. So he worked with the state to build a house to the places where they had lived before, where drugs were still readily available. He knew the importance of giving them a safe and sound place and how scared they were, “This is what he wanted for them. He just ran out of time.”

It was here that Father O’Connor raced toward to honor his life and his vision, including his siblings. A week after the funeral of Father O’Connor—the oldest of eight children—his brother Sean asked to join the Seeds of Hope board. When he did, he brought along a true shining point—giving up the plan of trying to get a federal grant for the project and “just raising the money ourselves.”

Yet even Sean was stunned by what happened eight weeks later at the annual Seeds of Hope fund raiser—a usual year, the fundraiser nets $50,000. In 2019, it raised $800,000, plus in-kind donations from contractors and sub-contractors to build the three-quarter house and also to completely furnish the 22 apartments within the facility. “It was emotional,” Sean recalls. “People opened their hearts and wallets. Glenn was there in spirit.”

An unusual twist and a lasting tribute

The fundraiser evolved as a twist: When someone or some group donated at least $20,000 for one of the apartments, that donation was recognized with a sign near the door of the apartment. The same was true for a donation of at least $40,000 for two of the family rooms in the building.

While it’s likely that many of those large donations would have been made without the incentive of the sponsor signs, the signs do capture the variety of people and corporations who wanted to help make Father O’Connor’s dream come true. Among them are the Indianapolis Colts, Father O’Connor’s many Seeds of Hope siblings and his fellow priests of the archdiocese.

Another contribution honored Father O’Connor’s long-time commitment as a pit crew member for IndyCar racing at the Indianapolis 500. When one came from the Beneficent Fund of Motor Sports, an organization that offers financial assistance to members of the IndyCar racing community and their families when their lives have been impacted by injury or disease.

Grimes was especially touched by one donation—in honor of Jim McGee, a member of the Indianapolis chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, an Irish heritage organization, and a long-time friend of Father O’Connor as much as he embraced it. “Jim passed away, so his wife bought a room in honor of him.”

Grimes says, Sean believes his brother would also appreciate one other aspect of the new three-quarter house. “We got this done without any debt,” Sean says. “That’s what he would really fire up about.”

Still, there is one part of the building that Father O’Connor would hate, according to both his brother and Grimes.

‘Father and the Church had enough faith in us’

That’s the sign outside the facility that proclaims its name—“The Father Glenn O’Connor Home.”

“Father Glenn didn’t want it,” he dreamed this,” Sean says. “It’s not his name, it’s his legacy.”

As he talks, Sean sits inside the facility, at a table near a wall that offers a collage of small photos that include Father O’Connor water-skiing, working as a pit crew member and shaking hands with the late St. Pope John Paul II. In most of those photos, the priest is flashing his trademark smile, the one that embraced his joy in life and the one that also embraced his joy of mischief.

This sign is also captured in the larger-than-life image of him near the entrance of the three-quarter house. Again, Sean and Grimes believe it’s a tribute that Father O’Connor would have resisted, but they have their memories and their stories of him, and he’ll just have to forgive them and so many others who want to make sure he is remembered for the way he approached his life and his faith.

After the dead, he had ‘Live Like Father Glenn’ bracelets and T-shirts made.”

As one of his nieces was walking in downtown Indianapolis with a ‘Live Like Father Glenn’ T-shirt, and a homeless guy saw the shirt and said, “I love that guy. I don’t know why I did him, for but....

Grimes quickly chimed in. “He would give them a couple dollars. He would get them something to eat. He would talk to them about recovery. He was just there to help.”

She’s on a roll, turning her thoughts to his way he compassion focused on the women who came to Seeds of Hope.

“I believe that Father Glenn and the Church had more faith in them than the women coming in,” she says. “The women didn’t have faith in anything. Father and the Church had enough faith in us to recover and live well until we had our own faith. And he moved mountains to do it.”

Sean nods and adds, “He was the most Christ-like person I’ve ever encountered, and I’m not just saying that because he’s my brother. At Christmas, we couldn’t give him anything nice because he would turn around and give it away. One of his parishes gave him a new car, and he gave it away.”

“It’s What Would Jesus Do?” That’s how he lived. This place is a continuation of that. He lived for others.

Cassie Stewart now knows that she’s part of his legacy.

As one of the first residents in The Father Glenn O’Connor Home, Stewart believes it’s the transition she needs—giving her a combination of support and freedom—before she reaches her goal of having her own home.

As she carves out a new life for herself, she’s ever grateful to the priest she never met and to the God who is always with her.

“I was just dreamed of when I was in a jail cell. Doing something on my own. Making a life of my own,” she says. “He’s been to me. God is shining down on me.”

...continued from page 1

Supreme Court with an emergency appeal to stop the law, but the court did not rule until after Roe v. Wade.

The Texas Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state’s Catholic bishops, said the Supreme Court’s action marked the first time since Roe v. Wade that the state’s Catholic bishops, said the Supreme Court’s action marked the first time since Roe v. Wade that the nation’s high court “has allowed a pro-life law to remain in place.”

In 2019, it raised $800,000, plus in-kind donations from contractors and sub-contractors to build the three-quarter house and also to completely furnish the 22 apartments within the facility. "It was emotional," Sean recalls. "People opened their hearts and wallets. Glenn was there in spirit."

Kagan similarly called the Texas law "patently unconstitutional," for its emphasis on encouraging "private parties to carry out unconstitutional restrictions on the state's behalf."

"The legislative scheme imposes a prohibition on abortions after roughly six weeks, and then essentially delegated enforcement of that prohibition to the populace at large," the court found. "That desired consequence appears to be to insulate the state from responsibility for implementing and enforcing the regulatory regime."

Harris also noted that case is not shut, saying that although the court denied the emergency relief sought by the applicants, its opinion is "emphatic in making clear that this case is not disposed of as sustaining the constitutionality of the law at issue."

In a statement just after the court’s decision, Nancy Lopez, the executive director of the Center for Reproductive Rights, which represents abortion providers challenging the Texas law, said these challenges would keep fighting. She also said this decision that the Supreme Court has refused to block a law that blatantly violates Roe v. Wade," she added.

Kristan Hawkins, the president of Students for Life of America, who is suing against the law, 'celebrating this decision for what it is, baby steps in the right direction toward the obvious conclusion that Roe is flagrantly unconstitutional law engineered to prohibit women from exercising their constitutional rights and "flagrantly unconstitutional law engineered to prohibit women from exercising their constitutional rights and evading judicial scrutiny, a majority of Justices have opted to bury their heads in the sand."

We celebrate every life saved by this legislation. Opponents of the law argue the term ‘heartbeat’ is misleading. They call it ‘embryonic cardiac activity’ or ‘worse, ‘electrically induced flickering of embryonic tissue.’ These attempts to dehumanize the unborn are disturbing,” the Texas bishops said in a Sept. 3 statement.

The night before the court took effect, court watchers on both sides of the issue kept vigil at the Supreme Court waiting for an order that never came. Abortion providers in the state had argued that the law would prevent about 85% of abortions in the state and will likely cause many clinics to close. Currently, at least 12 other states have legislation banning abortions early in pregnancy, but these bans have been blocked by courts.

This law will begin saving the lives of tens of thousands of Texas babies, and we look forward to the day that babies’ lives will be spared across America," said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life.

She also applauded the efforts of the Texas Right to Life and ‘pro-life Texans who have been devoted to providing a voice for the voiceless. We praise all of our state affiliates who have diligently and tirelessly worked with state legislators to protect unborn babies by passing laws that protect children whose hearts have begun to beat,” she said in a Sept. 1 statement.

Two months after the law was signed, abortion providers challenged it in court, saying it violated patients' constitutional right to a pregnancy before viability, when a fetus is said to be able to survive on its own. The Supreme Court has consistently ruled that states cannot restrict abortion before the 24-week mark. This fall, the court will take up a Mississippi abortion ban after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

The decision will be made this fall. The law’s future is uncertain. But the decision will be made this fall. The law’s future is uncertain.
Sisters of Providence celebrate significant jubilees

80-year jubilarians

Sister Agnes Eugene Cordak is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Sept. 14, 1941, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1950. Sister Agnes Eugene earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods and master’s degrees in education and history from Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

Sister Agnes Eugene served in the archdiocese as a teacher at the former St. Mary School in Richmond (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School), and the former St. Ann School, the former Gibault Community in Chicago, as a teacher and principal at the former St. Margaret Mary and Sacred Heart schools and St. Patrick School, and as teacher and principal both at the former St. Leonard of Port Maurice School in West Terre Haute.

At the motherhouse, Sister Mary Mark worked in the Development Office. She also served in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts and North Carolina. Sister Mary Mark currently ministers as a volunteer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Mary Lois Hennd is a native of Evansville, Ind. She entered the congregation on July 21, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1954. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College as well as a master’s degree in education from Indiana State University. In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Lois served as a teacher at the former St. Anne School in New Castle, the former St. Andrew the Apostle School in Indianapolis and the former St. Joseph School in Indianapolis.

At the motherhouse, she served in operations, on the central business office staff and in residential services. Sister Mary Lois also served in the Diocese of Evansville and in California, Illinois, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

She currently serves at the motherhouse in residential services and as a volunteer.

Sister Lois Ann Stoiber is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany; as a principal at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis; as a religious educator, parish minister and pastoral associate at St. Anne Parish in New Castle; as director of religious education at Sacred Heart Parish in Terre Haute and in the ministry of care at Rockville Women’s Prison.

At the motherhouse, Sister Adele served as director of development, a volunteer, on the wellness ministry staff, for the ministry of care and as a tutor. She also served in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

75-year jubilarians

Sister Adele (formerly Sister Joseph Therese) Beacham was born in Toronto, Canada. She entered the congregation on July 22, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1954. Sister Adele earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. In addition, she earned a master’s degree in reading from Cardinal Stritch University in Glendale, Wis., and a master’s degree in theological studies from Saint Meinrad Theological Seminary in St. Meinrad.

She served in the archdiocese as a teacher at the former St. Anthony School in Indianapolis; as a principal at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis; as a religious educator, parish minister and pastoral associate at St. Anne Parish in New Castle; as director of religious education at Sacred Heart Parish in Terre Haute; and in the ministry of care at Rockville Women’s Prison.

At the motherhouse, Sister Adele served as director of development, a volunteer, on the wellness ministry staff, for the ministry of care and as a tutor. She also served in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Mary Lois Stoller is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education from Illinois State University.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at the former St. Joseph School in Indianapolis.

Sister Lois Ann also served in the Diocese of Evansville in California, Illinois, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

She currently serves at the motherhouse in residential services and as a volunteer.

Sister Lois Ann Stoiber is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany; as a principal at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis; as a religious educator, parish minister and pastoral associate at St. Anne Parish in New Castle; as director of religious education at Sacred Heart Parish in Terre Haute and in the ministry of care at Rockville Women’s Prison.

At the motherhouse, Sister Adele served as director of development, a volunteer, on the wellness ministry staff, for the ministry of care and as a tutor. She also served in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

70-year jubilarians

Sister Noralee (formerly Sister Joseph Edward) Keefe is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Jan. 9, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1958. She earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and also has a master’s degree in education administration from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

In the archdiocese, Sister Noralee served as a teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany and the former St. Ann School in Indianapolis. She also served in California, Illinois and North Carolina.

Currently, she ministers in residential services and as treasurer for Providence Retirement Home in New Albany; as director of adult education and nutrition at Providence Spiritual Companion Program in New Albany; and as director of adult education for Providence Place in Georgetown.

She also ministered in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and the Diocese of Gary, Ind., and in Illinois and Maryland.

Sister Joanne currently serves in the ministry of care in the New Albany area.

Sister Mary Mark Dede is a native of Terre Haute. She entered the congregation on Jan. 13, 1946, from the former St. Ann Parish in Terre Haute and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953.

Sister Mary Mark has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education from Indiana State University.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany; in Terre Haute at the former St. Margaret Mary and Sacred Heart schools and St. Patrick School; and as teacher and principal both at the former St. Leonard of Port Maurice School in West Terre Haute.

At the motherhouse, Sister Mary Mark worked in the Development Office. She also served in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts and North Carolina. Sister Mary Mark currently ministers as a volunteer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Lois Ann Stoiber is a native of Evansville, Ind. She entered the congregation on July 21, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1954. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College as well as a master’s degree in education from Indiana State University. In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Lois served as a teacher at the former St. Anne School in New Castle, the former St. Andrew the Apostle School in Indianapolis and the former St. Joseph School in Indianapolis.

At the motherhouse, she served in operations, on the central business office staff and in residential services. Sister Mary Lois also served in the Diocese of Evansville and in California, Illinois, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

She currently serves at the motherhouse in residential services and as a volunteer.

Sister Lois Ann Stoiber is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in music education from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

In the archdiocese, Sister Joseph Ellen served in Indianapolis as a teacher at Immaculate Heart of Mary School and at the former St. Andrew the Apostle School, and at the former St. Margaret Mary School in Terre Haute.

She also served in Illinois, New Hampshire and Texas.

Sister Joseph Ellen currently serves in pastoral ministry of presence for the Northwest African American Community in Chicago.

Sister Lucille (formerly Sister Mary Louise) Lechner is a native of Jasper, Ind. She entered the congregation on Jan. 9, 1951, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1957. She has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education from Xavier University in Cincinnati.

In the archdiocese, Sister Lucille served as a teacher at St. Charles Borromeo School in Bloomington; in Indianapolis at St. Matthew the Apostle, St. Jude and the former All Saints and St. Bridget schools, and in the learning center of St. Joan of Arc School; in Richmond at the former St. Mary School (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School).
At the motherhouse, she served as a wellness assistant.
Sister Mary Lou also served in the Indiana dioceses of Evansville and Lafayette, and in Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio and Oklahoma.
Currently, she serves as a volunteer at St. Michael Parish in Orland Park, Ill.
Sister Mary (formerly Sister Barbara Francis) Hopf is a native of Evansville, Ind. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.
Sister Betty has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master’s degree in elementary education from Indiana University and a master’s degree in pastoral theology from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.
Sister Betty served as a teacher at St. Philip Neri School in Terre Haute and St. Mary-of-the-Woods parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and as the coordinator of the Providence Residence Services.
At the motherhouse, Sister Margaret also served in the ministry of care and as a volunteer.
Sister Mary Catherine (formerly Sister Martha Patrick) Guiler is a native of Washington, D.C. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.
Sister Betty also served in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Gary and Lafayette, as well as in Illinois and Ohio.
Currently, she serves in residential services and as the assistant to the Director of Residential Services at Providence Hall.
Sister Margaret (formerly Sister James Patrick) Lynch is a native of Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and at Father Thomas Scecina Catholic Center in Indianapolis, and at Father Thomas Scecina Catholic Center in Indianapolis, and at Father Thomas Scecina Catholic Center in Indianapolis.
Sister Margaret served as the coordinator of the Providence Residence Services.
At the motherhouse, Sister Margaret also served in the ministry of care and as a volunteer.
Sister Mary Catherine also served in the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.
Sister Margaret earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in early childhood education from the University of Illinois in Chicago.
And, of course, we know where that departure from God’s path led. We need to promote marriage and having children!
Sister Mary has a bachelor’s degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in reading from Western Illinois University.
Sister Margaret earned a master’s of pastoral studies from Loyola University and a master’s of pastoral studies from Loyola University.
Sister Margaret served as the coordinator of the Providence Residence Services.
In the archdiocese, the sister served as a teacher at the former St. Agnes Academy and the former Ladywood-Saint- Agnes Academy, and at Father Thomas Scecina Catholic Center in Indianapolis, and at Father Thomas Scecina Catholic Center in Indianapolis.
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Faith

Author's high-praised writings are imbued with her Catholic faith

By Effie Caldarola

By the time you reach page 4 of Alice McDermott’s stunning book, *The Ninth Hour*, a man is speaking the words of the “Hail Mary” as he dies.

Is Alice McDermott a Catholic writer? Her faith background permeates her work. And no one who grew up Catholic, especially those of “a certain age” who lived through the ecclesial changes of the second half of the 20th century, can fail to be moved by her stories.

And yet, like all great writers, her themes are universal. Lost love, lasting love, the confusion and sorrows of childhood, the fragility of people, the coming to terms with sexuality, the inevitability and surprise of death—McDermott weaves common stories in an uncommon way.

Born into an Irish Catholic home in Brooklyn in 1953, McDermott wrote even as a child. She told an interviewer in the journal *Image* that, in her first creative writing course, the professor told her, “I got bad news for you, kid. You’re a writer, and you’re never going to shake it.”

That was good news for the millions of readers of her eight novels. McDermott’s list of achievements is long. Three of her novels were finalists for the Pulitzer Prize. *Charming Billy* won the National Book Award for fiction in 1998. Her novels routinely make the bestseller lists for whatever year they’re published.

In *The Ninth Hour*, which begins against the dreary background of immigrant tenements in Brooklyn in the early part of the 20th century, we meet a character that might just live with the reader forever: Sister St. Saviour. (CNS photo/courtesy Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

In the interview with *Image*, McDermott is clear about her own love for the Church, a faith in which she raised her three children.

“I see the Church not as something to be evolved,” McDermott shares with the interviewer. “It would be a different Church if I were running it,” Sister St. Saviour muses. “We meet a character that might just live with the reader forever: Sister St. Saviour. (CNS photo/courtesy Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

In her book *Someone*, we follow the life of Marie Connefford, a little girl born in Brooklyn novels. We see life on her street in its grittiness and in detail. There’s the Syrian-Irish couple next door, and their clumsy daughter Pegeen. There’s blind Bill Corrigan, who was gassed in the war, sitting outside on a kitchen chair his mother puts him in on nice days. We see Marie slip out in the evenings with her father, who craves a drink at the speak-easy in the alley as Marie waits under the streetlight.

McDermott’s attention to detail is precise, yet many things are left subtly to our imagination. The alcoholism, the ambiguity of sexual identity in the days when gays were closeted, all these are laid gently upon the reader.

McDermott is very kind to her characters, and even the ones who mistreat Marie as she grows into womanhood, and eventually old age, are met with understanding. Their inner lives, their struggles, the goodness within, are revealed along with their failings.

In the interview with *Image*, McDermott is clear about her own love for the Church, a faith in which she raised her three children.

“I see the Church not as something that can evolve, but something that must evolve.”

She echoes what many readers would say about being Catholic: “It’s what you are.”

(Effie Caldarola is a columnist for Catholic News Service and a freelance writer.)
God never turns his back on us despite our behavior

Palm to the forehead in a pose commonly referred to today as a “face plant” Head slanted down and slightly shaking back and forth in what can only be described as disappointment. This is how I picture God as we pass creation in the midst of our man-made problems.

Our planet is experiencing immense changes in weather—from increased floods and fires to hurricanes and earthquakes, from intense heat waves to rising sea levels. Despite the realization of climate change, we have all been experiencing irreparable evidence of these changes. Imagine God surveying the vast expanse of his creation and seeing the damage done to our environment, to our rivers and lakes, to our polar ice caps, the atmosphere, rain forest and ocean reefs, and thinking to himself, “I gave them nothing more than this. It is not unbalanced and beauty, and they have squandered this gift.”

Through his eyes, he must see war, violence, crime, racism, poverty and unfathomable atrocities against humanity. I envision him weeping to see the humans treat one another. I envision him saying aloud, “I gave them one another that they might show compassion, compassion, together and experience community, but they often turn their backs on each other.”

I must examine the state of this country throughout the world and wonder at how we cannot seem to collaborate to make sure everyone is protected, much less eradicate the virus. I can only imagine that God is dismayed to see his children not working to correct our mistakes and make the necessary sacrifices to ensure the health and safety of all. I can hear him saying, “I expected them to parent before God, to uphold their own rights, freedoms and self-agendas.”

Anyone who is a parent, teacher, coach or mentor in our youth is in the middle of this feeling of disappointment when a young person does not live up to expectations, or wastes the gifts and talents entrusted to them. Imagine that feeling on a global scale and among the more than 7 billion inhabitants of this planet. What is it from that perspective, I am astonished that God does not give up on us. And yet, he does the exact opposite.

He continually lavishes us with his love—whatever we deserve it or not. He offers us infinite chances to try again and make things right. He offers us charity, provides light and gives us hope—that we might rectify our mistakes and work for the people for which he has created us.

He inspires in us ingenuity that we might solve problems that we may support projects, programs and people, and empathy that we might better understand what it means to walk in another’s footsteps.

Despite the disappointing way we, as humanity, have been dealing with time, and how we renew in us a passion to embrace an uncertain future with faith. And he leads us to trust that he holds the whole world in the palm of his hand. He alone will provide us what we need to change our fate, to truly care for one another, to persevere.

What is needed from us is belief in his promises, faith in his countenance and trust in his power to make all things right. (Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.)

Life is just beginning: expansion at any age

I submitted two articles tonight, and moments after I hit send, I was struck by the parallel.

Sure, they both involved Catholicism. I was in my focus on the specifics of their world—man-made toothpicks sculpted by a Minnesota grandpa, the awesome travel guide written by a New Mexico single—I nearly missed how their paths mirrored each other.

Both had discovered a roundabout way to finding my dreams.

Jery Hackett always wanted to be an architect but opted for a practical path and worked as an accountant. He quietly provided for his six children. Then one day in retirement, the ’70s-revival school of architecture had done back in the ’80s: toothpick assembly.

Soon Jerry was looking up the dimensions of the Eiffel Tower and squirming Elmer’s Glue-All. Now 81, he’s created dozens of toothpick sculptures—bridges, windmills, ships and a grand sculpture to scale. There is a great deal of measuring. 1 inch of toothpick represents 4 feet. Turns out he’s an architect after all—a toothpick architect.

“I’ll wake up at night thinking about how to do this part of the church and I can’t go back to sleep,” said Jerry, a member of St. Mark Parish in Shapooke, Minn.

Marion Amburg, meanwhile, harbored starry-eyed ambitions of being a detective. She planned to study law enforcement. There was just one problem: She couldn’t stand the sight of blood.

Instead she turned her attention to writing for her local newspaper. The work entailed plenty of sleuthing. “Part of reporting is connecting the dots,” she said.


“Even if it’s on a church website, you can’t take it as Gospel truth,” said Marion, a member of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe. “I tried to verify every single fact.”

So behold, this 60-something is not a detective—but no blood is involved!

“Your dreams may change as you get older,” Marion said, “but I don’t think I feel wrong that I feel like the feels are just the beginning of my life.”

Immediately I thought of my late grandpa, who started writing an autobiography he’d titled Life Begins At 70.

At 73, he taught himself to play clarinet, put together number of tapes on key composes and wrote string quartets. Weeks later, he was playing the second movement of Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto.

This recent accomplishment was a surprise to a Jesuit priest recently told me. Father Chris Collins was reading a program and saw his name listed as a jubilarian. He assumed it was a mistake. How could he possibly be 25 years of priesthood already?

“I can’t believe I’m almost 50,” he said, “because it feels like I’m just getting going.”

These Catholics demonstrate that our Creator is a God of surprises. We may be

Twenty Something/ Christina Capecci
The last and third section of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass on this weekend in Ordinary Time. This passage is one of several similar sections in this part of Isaiah called the Songs of the Suffering Servant. Poetic and expressive, they figure in the liturgies of Holy Week and Good Friday because Christians historically have applied them to Christ, the Lamb of God.

Who was in the mind of the author of this part of Isaiah as these songs were written? The author? Another loyal and devoted follower of the covenant who faced many difficulties? The chosen people, or the servant being a collective symbol for them?

The answer is unknown, but the picture is vivid. The servant is steadfast. Harshships and obstacles abound in the servant’s path to fidelity, but God unalterably provides strength and guidance.

Assured of God’s help and resolute in faith, the servant is indomitable in obeying God. For its second reading this weekend, the Church gives us a passage from the Epistle of St. James. This reading affirms the classic Catholic interpretation of revelation. God gives us the healing and empowering grace so that we can believe and bear witness.

God reveals to us the way to salvation and the purpose of life, but we must ratify our belief in our worthy Christian faith, the servant is undaunted in obeying the Master. Note that St. Peter spoke for his successors have been the universal shepherds of the Church. Also note Peter’s firm answer: “You are the Messiah!” (Mk 8:29).

The Twelve heard from Jesus lessons about their thoughts as to the identity of the Master. Note that St. Peter spoke for the group, not out of turn. He was the leader among the disciples as ever since his successors have been the universal shepherds of the Church.

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, September 12, 2021

- Isaiah 50:5-9a
- James 2:14-18
- Mark 8:27-35

The Church does not allow for the commingling of cremated remains

Among my dying husband’s wishes was the desire to save land for the living and therefore to be cremated and interred at Willamette National Military Cemetery near Portland, Ore. I, too, shall be cremated and interred at Willamette National, sharing my husband’s niche. I would like my ashes to be mingled with his. Does that violate Catholic teaching?

(Cbraska)

Faith Purified
By Maria Harr

Scales on my eyes
Have courage.
A hardened heart
Without you Lord
Not set apart
From this world’s lies
To My Sacred Heart
That I’m all alone
Heaven on Earth
You’re set apart
Purify me Lord.
Created for greatness

As you chip away
There is work to be done.
Day by day
My heart softens
As You lovingly say, “Turn your gaze to Me. My dear child”

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.)
Franciscan Sister Helen Eckstein served for 40 years at St. Michael School in Brookville

Franciscan Sister Helen Eckstein, formerly Sister Antonette, died Aug. 9 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 81.

Sister Helen was born on March 31, 1940, in Ripley County. As she grew up, her family had many members for different periods in the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis, including her mother and siblings. At the time of her death, she was a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis.

Sister Helen was a member of the Sisters of St. Francis for 40 years and served as a teacher in Catholic education for 45 years in Indiana and Ohio before retiring to the motherhouse in 2005. In the archdiocese, she served at Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove from 1960-63 and at St. Michael School in Brooklyn from 1965-69.

At the motherhouse, she ministered in the community’s associate office from 2005-06 and in its development office from 2006-18. Sister Helen is survived by a sister, Rosella Koehne of Batesville, and a brother, Anthony Eckstein of Cincinnati.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, PO Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47876-0100.

South Korean diocesan officials say remains of first Catholic martyrs are recovered

SEUL, South Korea (CNS)—The mortal remains of the first three Korean Catholic martyrs have been recovered more than two centuries after their deaths, announced the Diocese of Jeonju.

Ucanews.com reported that following historical research and DNA tests, it has been confirmed that the remains are of Paul Yun Ji-hwan, who was beheaded in 1791, and Yun’s brother, Francis Yun Ji-heon, who was martyred in 1801. Bishop John Kim Son-tae of Jeonju made the announcement during a news conference on Sept. 1.

During his visit to South Korea in 2014, Pope Francis beatified the three along with 121 other martyrs persecuted and killed during the rule of the Joseon dynasty in Korea. Bishop Kim said the remains were recovered in March in Wake County, near the burial ground of family members of another beatified person that was being converted to a shrine.

“The discovery of the remains is a truly amazing and monumental event,” the bishop said, according to Yonhap News Agency.

“This is a true Church, which has grown on the foundation of the bloodshed by martyrs, has finally found the remains of the people who began the history of martyrdom,” the bishop said.

The diocese said the remains showed cuts made by a sharp object around the necks of Paul Yun Ji-chung and Kwos, and around the neck, upper arms and left femur of Francis Yun Ji-heon.

Christianity came to Korea during the Japanese invasion in 1592, when some Koreans were baptized, probably by Chinese Jesuits, according to Church sources. It started as a lay movement. Korean Yi Seung-hun, who was baptized in China in 1784, began to baptize others that year. The faith began to spread, and grew rapidly in the 18th and 19th centuries. South Korean diocesan officials say remains of first Catholic martyrs are recovered

Franciscan Sister Mary Ryan served as an educator, librarian and archivist

Providence Sister Ryan Mary served as a teacher, librarian and archivist for five years in Catholic schools in Illinois. She later served as a librarian in Massachusetts. In 2005, she returned to the motherhouse where she served as archivist until retiring due to poor health in 2013. In retirement, Sister Mary continued to stay in touch with her family and at a public library in West Terre Haute.

Sister Mary is survived by her brother, James Ryan of Danvers, Massachusetts.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary of the W oods, IN 47876.†
need during their two-week quarantine. We ensured they had plenty of culturally appropriate food, cleaning supplies and masks. Once they arrived, we were able to set up the internet and teach them English classes and engaging with friends and family.

Mr. Munsif used this Chromebook to shop online and connect with his family. He said he has shared its message with other young adults, including Latino farmworkers in California.

The Munsifs are amazed and thankful for the support they received during their quarantine. They have been better able to manage their diabetes and continue their education, which was essential during this time.

David Burke is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at davidburke@archindy.org.

The consequences of climate change are readily apparent to Teresa Tosen, director of religious education at St. Jude Parish in Tuba City, Ariz., where she serves the Navajo people. Her work around climate issues got the attention of Johnson, who invited her to join the conference as a track leader.

The farms and grazing land of the Navajo are experiencing profound drought, something that Tosen, 34, said she does not recall from her childhood. She tells how her grandmother was a sheep herder, but that those days are difficult for the Navajo people to keep animals. She cited a recent memo from Navajo leaders that called for ranchers to reduce the size of their herds because of a water shortage.

She wonders what the future holds for the Navajo and is concerned for the world they will inhabit. She said the Navajo see climate change as something that affects their immediate environment, such as the availability of water.

As a Native American, she’s often asked what she would say to those who doubt the science and prefer to believe in a natural process. She said she has shared the message of Pope Francis’ encyclical, Laudato Si’, with others and encourages them to take action and make changes in their daily lives.

The Munsifs are grateful for the support they received during their quarantine and hopeful for the future. They said they are excited about the possibilities that come with living in a more sustainable way.

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Two members of the Sisters of Providence profess vows in Aug. 14 Mass

Providence Sister Jessica Vitente

professed first vows during the Mass.

A native of Pomona, Calif., Sister Jessica, 37, was born in Glendale, Calif., entered the community as a postulant on Sept. 10, 2018, and received the title of Sister on Aug. 3, 2019, when she entered the novitiate.

Sister Jessica graduated from Mount Saint Mary College in Walnut, Calif., with an associate’s degree in accounting. She also has a bachelor’s degree in human development from California State University in Long Beach, Calif.

Prior to joining the community, Sister Jessica worked more than seven years in the legal field as an associate’s degree in accounting and an associate’s degree in Walnut, Calif., with an associate’s degree in accounting. She also has a bachelor’s degree in human development from California State University in Long Beach, Calif.

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She currently ministers as the Catholic Campus Minister for the Newman Center at the University of Evansville in Evansville, Ind.

(For more information about the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, visit www.providence-indiana.org)

Vaccine mandates open door for bishops to discern an appropriate action

CLEVELAND (CNS)—The rise in coronavirus vaccine mandates around the country, including at Catholic diocesan offices, hospitals and universities, has prompted a parallel increase in interest in a vaccine exemption tempest that developed by the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC).

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, the center’s director of education, confirmed in an e-mail to Catholic News Service (CNS) on Aug. 24 that the bioethics think tank has seen a jump in interest in the letter that people look to explain to employers their choice, rooted in conscience, not to receive any of the vaccines developed in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Questions surrounding the three vaccines administered in the United States — Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson—from within the Church revolve around whether already widely used cell lines developed decades ago from aborted fetuses are used in manufacturing or testing processes.

The NCBC has had the template letter on its website since July 2, 2020, when it posted a statement explaining that it “does not endorse mandated COVID-19 immunization with any of the three vaccines” that have received emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (The Pfizer vaccine has now received final FDA approval, as of Aug. 23.)

The bioethics center cited guidance from the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which in December explained that individuals must decide to be vaccinated or not based on personal conscience and discernment.

The Vatican’s doctrinal office said at the time that when alternative vaccines are not available, it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines developed or tested with cell lines originating 50 to 60 years ago from aborted fetuses.

“It must therefore be considered that in such a case the vaccinations recognized as clinically and effective can be used in good conscience with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute a cooperation in the evil, but merely a help toward the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive,” the statement said.

However, the challenge added, “the licit use of such vaccines does not and should not in any way imply that there is a moral endorsement of the use of cell lines proceeding from aborted fetuses.”

The doctrinal office also said those who refuse for reasons of conscience “must do their utmost to avoid, by other prophylactic means and appropriate behavior, becoming vehicles for the transmission of the infectious agent” to those who are the most vulnerable.

Father Pacholczyk wrote in an e-mail to CNS that the NCBC’s July 2 stance remains unchanged even though vaccine mandates are being implemented in at least two dioceses and several bishops have directed priests not to write letters for parishioners seeking an exemption from vaccination.

He said the template does not require a priest’s signature but “certify” or “authenticate” its contents. “Priests, in fact, cannot ‘certify the state of another’s conscience, and really do not need to be asked to do so,” he explained.

Since the NCBC posted its statement, dioceses have come down on both sides of the religious exemption question.

The Catholic bishops of Colorado, South Dakota and Wisconsin have issued statements supporting the conscience rights of individuals to seek a religious exemption from being vaccinated.

The Colorado Catholic Conference followed the NCBC’s lead and has included a template letter for vaccine exemption on its website that can be downloaded.

The state’s four bishops affirmed in early August that “the use of some COVID-19 vaccines is morally acceptable under certain circumstances,” but also said they objected to mandated use and that Coloradoans get vaccinated against the coronavirus.

In South Dakota, Bishop Donald E. DeGrood of Sioux Falls and Bishop Peter M. Muhldorff of Rapid City, said in an Aug. 10 statement that people have a right to follow their conscience regarding the vaccines. “We must not be forced to act contrary to our conscience, i.e., to be compelled to do something we believe to be wrong,” they said.

The five bishops of Wisconsin echoed that stance on Aug. 20, but also said, “Pastors should not feel compelled to issue documentation recognizing this conscientious objection [to mandatory vaccination] and are not recommended to do so.”

Meanwhile, Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, and Bishop John B. Huonder of Rottenburg-St. Urban-St. Gallen in Switzerland, said in an Aug. 8 statement that people have a right to follow their conscience regarding the vaccines. “We must not be forced to act contrary to our conscience, i.e., to be compelled to do something we believe to be wrong,” they said.

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Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chávez, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Guadalajara, Mexico; Cardinal Óscar Ojeaqui, auxiliary bishop of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes of Mexico; and Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago in an Aug. 17 letter advised priests to “politely decline and explain” that signing such a letter “would mean that you would be endorsing something that is not in keeping with Catholic teaching.”

Parishioners surely can determine their own actions, but it would be important to clarify that they cannot use the teaching of the Church to justify such decisions, which in their essence, are a rejection of the Church’s authentic moral teaching regarding COVID vaccines,” the cardinal’s letter said.