Pope Releases Environment Encyclical

by News and analysis from NCC staff and wire reports

Vatican City - Vatican observers are claiming the nearly 200-page Laudato Si (“The Care for Our Common Home”) is more than an ecological encyclical. Instead, they say, Pope Francis has given the Church and the world a document that addresses the full range of Catholic social teaching on economics, politics, culture, employment, technology, migration, poverty, peace, architecture, urban planning, education, human rights, and the environment.

The secular headlines predictably focused on the Holy Father’s acceptance that a “very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system” (no. 23). This conforms to his explicit hope for Laudato Si, which is to support the establishment of “enforceable international agreements (that) are urgently needed” (no. 173).

Specifically the Holy Father laments that “with regard to climate change, the advances have been regrettably few,” noting that “reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage, and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most” (no. 169).

Laudato Si, therefore, explicitly is aimed at a comprehensive, global climate-change treaty. That is very significant, as its endorsement of climate policies meshes with the priorities of the global progressive elite.

Thus when Pope Francis arrives in Washington, DC, President Barack Obama will claim no American presidential administration has had policies more in line with the priorities of the Holy See. Of course this ignores the Holy Father’s observation that natural ecology cannot be separated from human ecology. Therefore authentic care (see Environment Encyclical, p. 7)

Andrew Pacheco Raised to the Transitional Diaconate

by NCC Staff

As reported in last month’s issue of North Coast Catholic, Bishop Robert F. Vasa ordained Mr. Andrew Pacheco to the transitional diaconate on June 5.

A transitional deacon is different from a permanent deacon because he will eventually receive the sacrament of holy orders. That is, he will become a priest.

God willing, now Dcn. Pacheco is expected to enter the priesthood next summer.

Born and raised in Ukiah, Deacon’s road to the clerical state began at a young age. His parent David and Beth Paccheco raised their children with a strong Catholic foundation.

But the biggest influence on his vocation were his maternal grandparents Edward and Barbara Graves. They regularly took the Paccheco siblings to daily Mass. Furthermore, Dcn. Andrew started serving as an altar boy at age six. Additionally, his grandparents said the Rosary with their grandchildren.

Healdsburg’s Parochial School Hires New Principal

by NCC Staff

In June, St. John the Baptist School in Healdsburg hired a replacement for Principal Dr. Colleen Bruckman, who resigned for personal reasons before the end of the 2014-15 term.

Her replacement is James Brandt, a San Diego native. For the past seven years he has taught at St. Joseph Academy in San Marcos a K-12 school not unlike Napa’s Kolbe Academy and Trinity Prep.

Brandt’s journey to Healdsburg is an interesting one. After graduating from the University of Notre Dame on a naval ROTC scholarship in the late 1980s, he received his commission as an officer in the United States Navy and spent the next 15 years in service to the nation.

The last three of those he spent teaching calculus at the US Naval Academy, and it was during this time that he strongly discerned a vocation to the priesthood. However to fully test that vocation, he knew he needed to enter the seminary.

And so after finishing the fall 2004 semester at the Academy, Brandt entered the Catholic University of America (CUA) as a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Washington.

He chose this See because its ordinary at the time, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, is very supportive of our armed forces and encouraged Brandt’s desire to become a naval chaplain.

Brandt left just after the 2006-07 term, however. He (see New Principal, p. 8)

Supreme Court Legalizes Same Sex Unions

CNA/EWTN and NCC staff

Washington, DC—On June 26, just two days after faith leaders pleaded with the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) to not overturn the social order by corrupting the foundation of society—marriage—the Court’s Justices did just on a 5-4 vote.

In a wide-reaching decision, the SCOTUS has declared that same-sex “marriage” is a constitutional right and that states must recognize same-sex unions contracted as marriages in other states.

The Cap ruled that states must acknowledge same-sex “marriages” under the Fourteenth Amendment and recognize such unions contracted in other states.

The decision in Obergefell v. Hodges dealt with claims that Ohio’s marriage law discriminated by not recognizing same-sex unions contracted as marriages in other states. (see Supreme Court, p. 9)
Is the Eucharist Boring?

In 2004, Francis Cardinal Arinze, then-prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments issued an instruction on the Eucharist titled Redemptionis Sacramentum ("The Sacrament of Redemption").

If you have never heard of it, you are not alone. It can often happen that documents such as this fail to come to the attention of the People of God and thus are never seen. Maybe they are not glitzy enough for the media. Who knows.

In any event, this instruction is significant because it responded to a specific request by Pope St. John Paul II in his encyclical letter of April 17, 2003, Ecclesia de Eucharistia.

That request was this: "Precisely to bring out more clearly this deeper meaning of liturgical norms, I have asked the competent offices of the Roman Curia to prepare a more specific document on this important subject. [...]" (No. 52).

These two documents—the encyclical and the subsequent instruction—are both entirely consistent with the intent of the Second Vatican Council, which stated, in its very first document, Sacrosanctum Concilium ("On the Sacred Liturgy"), "In liturgy full public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and by His members. From this it follows that every liturgical celebration—because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body the Church—is a sacred action surpassing all others" (no. 7).

One of the reasons for the annual Corpus Christi celebration and procession like we had in June at the cathedral is precisely to reinforce for us that the Mass is a "sacred action surpassing all others" and that the Most Holy Eucharist is a gift of inestimable value. In these sacred and other, even more solemn occasions, we are reminded of the "otherness" of the Eucharist and of our need to stand in His Presence with a spirit inspired "wonder and awe." Without these solemn reminders we all run the risk of allowing our participation at the Most Holy Eucharist to become something routine and, sadly, even haphazard.

A reading or re-reading of the encyclical and the instruction noted above is a good, even necessary exercise as a type of self-examination to determine if our dress, demeanor, and deportment in the Presence of the Most Holy Eucharist are, in fact, consistent with the faith which we profess in regard to this great and awesome mystery.

Next month I will make reference to Pope emeritus Benedict XVI’s 2007 post-synodal apostolic exhortation Sacramentum Caritatis ("The Sacrament of Charity") to continue this eucharistic emphasis.

¿Es la Eucaristía Aburrido?

Por el año 2004, el Cardenal Francis Arinze, siendo entonces prefecto de la Congregación para el Culto Divino y Disciplina de los Sacramentos, publicó la Instrucción Redemptoris Sacramentum sobre la necesidad de reforzar en el culto católico la eucaristía. En caso de no haber oído antes de este documento, no sería usted la única persona. Sucede con frecuencia que un documento como éste no é logra atrair la atención del Pueblo de Dios y así nunca se le ve. Quizá sea porque no somos capaces de valorar y apreciar lo que es tan importante. A nadie le está permitido infravalorar el Misterio confiado a nuestras manos: éste es demasiado grande para que alguien pueda permitirse tratarlo a su arbitrio personal, lo que no respetaría ni su carácter sagrado ni su dimensión universal (No.52).

Ambos documentos, la encíclica así como la sucesiva instrucción—son totalmente consistentes con la intención del Concilio Vaticano Segundo, lo cual declara en su primerísimo documento Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitución Sobre la Sagrada Liturgia), donde dice: …Y así el Cuerpo Místico de Jesucristo, es decir, la Cabeza y sus miembros, ejerce el culto público íntegro. En consecuencia, toda celebración litúrgica, por ser obra de Cristo sacerdote y de su Cuerpo, que es la Iglesia, es acción sagrada por excelencia, cuya eficacia, con el mismo título y en el mismo grado, no la iguala ninguna otra acción de la Iglesia. (No. 7).

Uno de los motivos por los cuales se celebra anualmente la fiesta de Corpus Christi con su procesión, como lo acabamos de celebrar este mes de junio en la catedral, se debe precisamente a la necesidad de reforzar la misa que es "un acto sagrado que supera todos los demás y que la Santísima Eucaristía es un don inestimable."

En estas sagradas ocasiones, así como otras de mayor estima, se nos recuerda cómo la Eucaristía es el "Totalmente Otro" así como nuestra necesidad de estar de pie en Su Presencia con un espíritu inspirado por "el Temor de Dios."

Sin estos solemnés recordatorios corremos el riesgo de dejar que nuestra participación en la Sagrada Eucaristía se convierta en una rutina común y corriente, y tristemente en algo caprichoso.

La primera lectura de esta encíclica, así como lecturas subsecuentes y la instrucción arriba citadas, es un buen ejercicio, todavía más, puede ser un examen de si mismo, para discernir respecto a nuestro vestuario, conducta y porte en Presencia de la Santísima Eucaristía, sean a fin de cuentas, de acuerdo con la fe que decimos profesar, en relación con este misterio tan grande e imponente.

El mes próximo hare referencia al Papa Emerito Benedicto XVI en su exhortación apostólica post-sinodal Sacramentum Caritatis para poder continuar ésta reflexión catequética.

Pope’s Worship Chief’s Recent Comments Cause Controversy

from various sources

New York City—In both a recent column in the Vatican newspaper and in a message sent to a June 7 conference in Manhattan, the Pope’s liturgical minister has made comments that were applauded by some and questioned by others.

Calling the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium, a liturgical “Magnum Carta,” Robert Cardinal Sarah, Pope Francis’ prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, called for a more faithful implementation of its principles. He also lamented misinterpretations of its teaching on “active participation,” and he suggested an appendix to the Roman Missal that might better reflect the continuity of the ordinary and extraordinary (i.e., pre-1969) forms of the celebration of the Mass.

Furthermore because Vatican II never called for eliminating all Latin, Sarah called for more use of that language on Sundays.

Most controversially, however, he suggested returning to the ad orientem form of Catholic worship in which the priest and people face in the same direction, toward God. This is the same way Christians worshipped for at least 1,500 years, if not longer. Following Vatican II, however, this was replaced with the priest facing the people versus populum.

“The liturgy is essentially the action of Christ,” he wrote in the June 12 edition of L’Osservatore Romano, the Vatican’s newspaper. “…The participatio actus [i.e., the actual/active participation of the laity called for by the Council] should not therefore be understood as the need to do something. On this point the teaching of the Council has often been distorted. It is instead to let Christ take us and associate us with His sacrifice.”

Regarding “active participation,” Cardinal Sarah criticized the “contemporary Western mentality” in which the faithful are to be “constantly busy” and in which the Mass is to be rendered “convivial.”

On the contrary, “sacred awe” and “joyful fear require our silence in the presence of the divine majesty. It is often forgotten that sacred silence is one of the means set forth (see Comments Controversy, p. 6)

IN MEMORIAM

Fr. Gerard Krapf, CPPS
July 1, 1971
Fr. Norman van Sile
July 2, 1984
Fr. Ted Oswald
July 4, 2010
Fr. Bernard Ganger, CPPS
July 5, 1977
Fr. Sixtus Cavagnaro, OFM
July 8, 1992
Msgr. Walter J. Tappe, VG, PA
July 28, 1997
Pope Francis on Transgender Issues: Accept the Body God Gave You

Vatican City (CNA/EWTN News)—Pope Francis’ new encyclical on the environment calls for men and women to acknowledge their bodies as a gift from God which should not be manipulated. “The acceptance of our bodies as God’s gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father and our common home,” the Pope wrote, “whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation.”

Pope Francis said “our body itself establishes us in a direct relationship with the environment and with other living beings,” and the acceptance of one’s body helps one to accept and honor the entire world as a gift.

“Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology.”

He lamented that contemporary culture has introduced doubt and skepticism over sexual complementarity: “For example, I ask myself if the so-called gender theory is not, at the same time, an expression of frustration and resignation that seeks to cancel out sexual difference because it no longer knows how to confront it … the removal of difference in fact creates a problem, not a solution.”

Pope Francis’ jab at gender theory—which gives a basis for transgender identification—in his encyclical came in the context of a discussion on the “ecology of daily life,” during which he also discussed integral improvement in the quality of human life; creativity in responding to one’s environment; the brutality arising from poverty; urban planning; lack of housing; public transportation; and rural life.

Bruce Jenner and the Shadow Council

by Fr. Robert Barron

Two news items in early June that put me in mind of St. Irenaeus and the battle he waged nineteen centuries ago against the Gnostic heresy. The first was the emergence of Bruce Jenner as a “woman” named Caitlyn, and the second was a “shadow council” that recently took place in Rome and apparently called for the victory of a theology of “love” over John Paul II’s Theology of the Body.

I realize this requires a bit of unpacking. Let me begin with Irenaeus. Toward the end of the second century, Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyon, wrote Adversus Haereses (Against the Heresies), and the principle heresy that he identified therein was Gnosticism.

Gnosticism was, and is, a multi-headed beast, but one of its major tenets is that matter is a fallen, inferior form of being, produced by a low-level deity. The soul is trapped in matter, and the whole point of the spiritual life is to acquire the gnosis (knowledge) requisite to facilitate an escape of the soul from the body. On the gnostic interpretation, the Yahweh of the Old Testament, who foolishly pronounced the material world good, is none other than the compromised god described in gnostic cosmology, and Jesus is the prophet who came with the saving knowledge of how to rise above the material realm. What Irenaeus intuited—and his intuition represented one of the decisive moments in the history of the Church—is that this point of view is a direct reprise of gnostic Christian Gnosticism, which insists essentially upon the goodness of matter. Scan through Irenaeus’ voluminous writings, and you will find the word “body” over and over again. Creation, Incarnation, Resurrection, the theology of the Church, sacraments, redemption, the Eucharist, etc. all involve, he argued, bodiliness, materiality. For Irenaeus, redemption is decidedly not tantamount to the escape of the soul from the body; rather, it is the salvation and perfection of the body.

Now you might think that this is all a bit of ancient history, but think again. As I hinted above, the gnostic heresy is a remarkably durable, reappearing itself across the centuries. Its most distinctive mark is precisely the denigration of matter and the tendency to set the spirit and the body in an antagonistic relationship. All of which brings me back to Bruce Jenner and to the “shadow council” in Rome. In justifying his transfor-
A Predictable Outcome to the Battle, but Not the War

Years ago I worked in the Legislature. The topic of same sex unions was just becoming somewhat prominent, except back then, proponents told us they weren’t seeking same sex “marriage”. No, they just wanted civil unions for purposes of medical visitation and certain legal rights afforded married couples and family members. Many of us knew what advocates really wanted was unfettered acceptance and would use any means necessary to get it and wouldn’t rest until they succeeded. We were right.

In any event, my immensely good Evangelical chief-of-staff and I were discussing the situation while preparing an article that would argue for keeping the legal definition as it had stood for centuries (or had until June 26).

In the article I wanted to note marriage’s purpose in God’s eyes was twofold: the procreation and education of children and the union between the spouses.

My supervisor disagreed. The procreation was great and should only happen between a husband and wife, but the key to marriage, he argued, was found in Genesis 2:18: “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make for him a suitable partner.”

I countered the key was found in Genesis 1:27-28: “…in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them, and said to them, ‘Be fruitful [i.e., fertile] and multiply.’” This is the first commandment God gives in the Bible. Interestingly, it is also the first commandment He gives Noah after the Flood (cf. Genesis 9:1).

Why is any of this important? Because my supervisor’s position is effectively the societal dominant one, and it demonstrates why we lost this battle on June 26, and why that outcome was inevitable. And it was a huge loss. Not just of one side versus another but of an historical understanding that stretches back to mankind’s beginning and even those pagan cultures that accepted homosexuality.

For instance, even ancient Greece and Rome never, ever put homosexual relations on par with marriage. Why, if they so accepted homosexuality?

Because even the pagans understood marriage’s primary purpose was to produce children, neither of them. It functions not necessarily for the partners’ happiness. Rather it provides the best school in which to raise children as good citizens. Indeed look at Roman marriages. Some spouses barely tolerated one another. It wasn’t about them, though. Marriage’s purpose was and is to serve society’s common good.

Consider this: Studies show mothers devote special attention to their children’s physical and emotional needs, whereas fathers devote their primary efforts to character traits. Rutgers University’s David Popenoe once wrote, “Both dimensions are critical for an efficient, balanced, and human child-rearing regime.”

It was that understanding that children first come first that we definitively lost on June 26, not some legal battle. Instead, thanks to the Court majority’s puerile and poorly formed understanding of marriage, marriage’s legal purpose is what is good for the spouses. Children are now an afterthought.

This didn’t happen overnight. In 1930, the Anglicans/Episcopalians became the first Christian Communion to allow contraception. The last major confession to follow suit, the Presbyterians, did so in 1962. The opening of the first contraceptive clinic in 1935 by Margaret Sanger—founder of Planned Parenthood—helped cement the weakening of society’s historic public opposition to contraception. The Full became widely available in 1960 and had sold 1.2 million prescriptions by 1962. The final slap of mortar on the bricks was 1965’s Connecticut v. Griswold decision. In it the Supreme Court of the United States nationally legalized contraception by finding a right to privacy in the Constitution.

All of this helped separate sex from procreation and thus denuded and ultimately obliterated society’s timeless understanding of marriage’s purpose.

Frankly, many in the Church haven’t helped. Who’s heard of priests telling penitents that using contraception wasn’t wrong? Of marriage prep instructors expressing mocking contempt for the Church’s teaching? Of confirmation prep teachers openly scorn this beautiful, God-given doctrine? How many sermons proclaiming the Catholicism’s wisdom on this subject have any of us ever heard? How many adult education classes on the subject have taken place across the land? This is not to offend, but rather let us ignore the 800 lb. gorilla.

So if marriage is only about what makes the spouses happy, then, yes, being against same sex unions is pure discrimination.

(see Predictable Outcome, p. 12)

Letters to the Editor

Thank you for your article (“Living in the Valley of Tears,” May 2015). As the mother and single caretaker of an adult bipolar son, I appreciate your raising awareness. I quite agree with you that the Germanwings disaster does nothing to help with the stigma of mental illness. I would be very interested in anything the Santa Rosa diocese offers to help the mentally ill and those who care for them. In the meantime, I’ll try a prayer to Bl. Enrico Rebuschini.

Anonymous upon request

Editor’s note: Bl. Enrico Rebuschini (pro. “Ray-bluh-key-knee”) was an Italian priest of the early twentieth century who had bipolar disorder. Pope St. John Paul II beatified him on May 4, 1997.

During my baccalaureate studies, I worked to obtain my tutoring certificate. For three years, I learned a lot from my tutees. Most of these wonderful students carried emotional baggage.

Unlike somebody using a wheel chair or a seeing-eye dog, emotional disabilities are not evident, yet they are very real. Ven. Salvador Rivera, OCA (aka, Padre Chavita), spent half his life as a quadriplegic, and with tears in his eyes also made St. John Paul II cry when he explained to him why he could not go down to kiss his ring when they met in 1979.

Father would often explain to people that a lot of the problem is that society is predisposed to feel sorry and pity these people. Too often we are blind to the positive aspects of these conditions. For example, this wonderful Carmelite wrote poetry, volunteered with NASA to develop special clothing for astronauts, and founded a Christian fraternity of people with disabilities.

We all encounter stress, whether within ourselves or in those with whom we meet. The Christian approaches this with love and understanding. If we do not know how to approach the particular individual, including ourselves, we need to search for experts who do, often a counselor. Sometimes we will be blessed to find ordained priests and monks who have this scientific knowledge. Never can we be indifferent.

God loves us.

Harriet Ann Bauer, Arcata

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St. Arsenius the Great, hermit: July 19

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St. Arsenius the Great, hermit: July 19
Our Tools for Evangelization Have Never Been Greater, So Why Do We Stink At It?

by Matt Archbold (courtesy of National Catholic Register)

So there were 12 guys in Israel with nothing but the sandals on their feet. They dispersed and did nothing short of change the world. How did they do it? Evangelistic zeal. These guys really believed what they were selling. St. Ignatius of Loyola, SJ, was injured in battle and read a book about the saints and went out and changed the world. How? Evangelistic zeal.

Today we have the internet, iPhones, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and various other apps, devices, and instruments to help us spread the Word throughout the world.

One might have expected that such a technological revo-
lution would have instigated a resurgence in the Faith. But
where is Catholicism growing? Places like Africa and China
where access to technology is severely limited either due
to economics or government censorship.

Now there’s a theory out there that we’re all pretty fat and
happy in the West, and as a rule fat and happy people don’t
like to pick up their crosses. Maybe people in other parts
of the world have broader shoulders and possibly relate a
little more easily to a suffering Jesus. Maybe life is so good
for so many in the West that it’s easy to forget God.

On a random Tuesday afternoon when you have the
choice between a YouTube kitten video and some theo-
logical heavy lifting, the choice might seem easy. Until
Catholicism invents a virtual cross that doesn’t chafe so
much on the shoulders, it’s passé for many.

Political conservatives will sometimes say a liberal is just
a conservative who hasn’t been mugged yet. I’m not sure
that’s true. But sometimes maybe an agnostic is a Catholic
who hasn’t suffered. I know it’s simplistic and broad, but I
think there’s some truth to it.

There’s something else, though. Even among many who
believe, there is a sense that we lack zeal. Look, I under-
stand why. The last thing one wants to be seen as nowadays
is a zealot. That’s so true, people don’t even believe it’s OK
to believe, not really anyway. Being a Christian nowadays
can bring you government fines, never mind eye rolls and
jokes at your expense.

The problem isn’t a lack of communication avenues. It’s
a lack of faith. Millennials, who implement technology
more than other generations seem to be furthest from the
Church. As Philadelphia’s Archbishop Charles Chaput,
OEM Cap, said recently, “Very few of our active Catholic
population are Millennials.” You could figure that as they
get older, some will grow closer to the Church. Some prob-
ably will, but I don’t believe we’re convincing young people
of the truth of Christianity.

I fear that in some ways, many have tried so hard to make
Christ relatable to people that people can’t differentiate
Christ from themselves. Thus there’s no reason to change.

For many believing something is fine as long as it doesn’t
affect their life. The only belief that’s tolerated is believing
in yourself. That will change your life so much that your
life ends up being exactly the same.

I think part of our loss of mission may be that many don’t
believe in hell much anymore. Or if we do, we think it’s
empty other than Hitler and a few other assorted badasses
from history. If you think everyone’s going to heaven, why
push them to become Christians? If we all end up in the
same place, why push it? Why be a zealot? Why stand out
from the crowd?

The Church needs to often stand counter to the culture.
I think presenting the stark difference of an existence
with a loving Creator as opposed to an existence by random
crash is crucial. I sometimes think what we have to do is
not focus on how like us Christ is, but how unlike us He
is, how unlike Him we are.

We don’t even need sandalos anymore. We just need zeal.

Days after Medugorje Comment, Pope Downplays Predictable Visions

Vatican City (National Catholic Register)—Days after
declaring that a decision on the Medugorje appari-
tions was imminent, Pope Francis cautioned against
basing one’s faith solely on anything other than Christ
himself.

In his June 9 daily Mass at the Vatican’s St. Martha
Guesthouse, Pope Francis cautioned against those who
look for God “with these Christian spiritualities that are
a little etherical,” calling them “modern Gnostics.”

These people, he said, “tell you this or that. No. The last
word of God is Jesus Christ! There is no other!”

Francis observed there are those who might ask, “But
where are the seers who tell us today, ‘the letter that the
Madonna will send us at four in the afternoon...’”

He cited this type of predicted vision as an example of
those who base their faith on novelties, explaining that
these people “live from this.”

However “this isn’t Christian identity. The ultimate
word of God is named ‘Jesus,’ nothing more,” he said.

The alleged Marian apparitions of Medugorje, Bosnia-
Herzegovina, are the only apparitions said to still happen
almost daily since their first occurrence in 1981.

Out of the original six children, known as “seers,” who
began to experience phenomena that they have claimed to
be apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1981, three
claim they continue to receive visions every afternoon
because not all of the secrets intended for them have
been revealed.

Pope Francis’ reference to predictable visions comes
close days after he disclosed to journalists a decision on
the authenticity of the alleged Medugorje apparitions
could come soon.

In his daily homily Nov. 14, 2013, Francis cautioned
against a misguided “spirit of curiosity” that can also take
our vision off Christ, focusing instead on such predict-
able visions.

One might be tempted to say “But I know a visionary,
who receives letters from Our Lady, messages from Our
Lady,” he said on that occasion. Our Lady, he stressed, “is
the Mother of everyone! And she loves all of us. She is not
a postmaster, sending messages every day.”

Christian Identity

In his June 9 remarks, the Pope also cautioned against
(see Predictable Visions, p. 23)
New UN Plan Could Enable Massive Expansion of Abortion

New York City (CNA/EWTN News)—A massive, well-funded effort to increase access to abortion worldwide is being pushed at the United Nations. According to one congressman it could silence faith-based organizations which oppose abortions out of conscience.

At issue is proposed language in the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals that will eventually be voted on and adopted by the UN General Assembly in September, and will go into effect in 2016.

If the current proposed language is adopted, it could result in global, “unfettered access to abortion,” according to United States Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), co-chair of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus.

The language establishes targets for global development, among them to “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services” by 2030.

The other target in question tries to “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.”

This language—“sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights”—is interpreted to include abortion by most UN agencies and Western donor countries, said a former diplomat at the UN who participated in numerous negotiations involving sexual and reproductive health language. Such language is usually part of an agenda in which developed countries use financial incentives to pressure poor, pro-life countries to liberalize their abortion policies.

In its Vision 2020 manifesto, “Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights – a Crucial Agenda for the post-2015 Framework,” the federation states that “some aspects of the sexual and reproductive health and rights agenda are inadequately resourced and sorely neglected, including access to safe and legal abortion, access by adolescents, and access for the poorest and most marginalized groups.”

According to the International Planned Parenthood Federation, abortion is indeed a part of these reproductive rights mentioned.

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Also, the World Health Organization, which is the leading international health agency of the United Nations, has already made specific abortion recommendations for countries’ health systems.

In the executive summary of its report “Safe Abortion: Technical and policy guidance for health systems,” the WHO states that “[o]f the full extent of the law, safe abortion services should be readily available and affordable to all women.”

“This means services should be available at primary-care level, with referral systems in place for all required higher-level care,” the report added.

by the Council to encourage participation.”

Cardinal Sarah also recalled the Council’s teaching that the faithful should “be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them,” and said that the liturgy ‘must stop being a place of disobedience to the requirements of the Church.’

“A more pro-life approach, “he continued, “where we come first, where what is most important is right in front of us.”

He then quoted Pope Francis, who said, “Much remains to be done for a correct and complete assimilation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy on the part of the baptized and by ecclesial communities. I refer in particular to a strong and organic invitation and liturgical formation of the lay faithful as well as the clergy and consecrated persons.”

St. Lawrence of Brindisi: July 12

[Editor’s note: Most churches are oriented toward the East since is where the Second Coming will occur.]
Peter Cardinal Turkson

The Vatican’s presenters of the encyclical said the document’s purpose goes beyond political debates, aiming for something more essential: the well-being of all creation. At the encyclical’s June 18 launch, whose Latin title is taken from the first line of St. Francis’ “Canticle of the Creature,” Peter Cardinal Turkson acknowledged a critique that the Church is taking sides on scientifically still-debatable topics such as global warming, pollution, species extinction, and global inequality’s impact on natural resources.

“The aim of the encyclical is not to intervene in this debate, which is the responsibility of scientists, and even less to establish exactly in which ways the climate changes are a consequence of human action” he said.

Instead, the document’s goal is to promote the well-being of all creation and “to develop an integral ecology, which in its diverse dimensions comprehends our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to our surroundings,” the Cardinal said, quoting the encyclical. “Science is the best tool by which we can listen to the cry of the earth,” Cardinal Turkson observed, noting that regardless of the various positions, studies tell us “today the earth, our sister, [is] mistreated and abused.”

A true integral ecology seeks to address all of the various aspects of our lives, including the human person itself, the environment in which we live, in the economy and politics, and in various cultures of the world, particularly those most at risk.

Cardinal Turkson is president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. He was joined in presenting the encyclical by Orthodox Bishop John Zizioulas of Pergamon, who was there representing Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I, whom Francis’ frequently quotes in the encyclical.

Also present was Prof. John Schellnhuber, founder of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and a new appointee to the Pontifical Academy for the Sciences. Dr. Carolyn Woo, CEO and president of Catholic Relief Services.

The Vatican announced the Pope’s plans to write *Laudato Si* in early 2014, and at Pope Francis’ request, Cardinal Turkson participated in the drafting process.

The Cardinal stressed the importance of an integral approach to the topic of ecology which links caring for the environment and caring for the human person.

“You cannot believe in and love God without respecting or caring for what He has created, without caring for the work of His hands,” he said. He noted that “work of God’s hands” includes two things: the human person and the world in which they live.

“The two things we’re talking about are so closely related, the one doesn’t have sense without the other. The garden doesn’t have sense without the man to be brought into the garden, and man doesn’t make sense if he wasn’t the one to till and keep the land,” the Cardinal said.

“What the encyclical’s concern is has been “just that: To promote the well-being not of one over the other, but to promote the well-being of the two jointly. That’s the point of the encyclical.”

Pope Francis’ concern for the common good—a term he uses 30 times in the encyclical—is what leads him to find answers to the question, “What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us?”

In response to a question regarding American Catholic presidential candidates who have said that they are willing to leave to those who come after us?”

“Can and must have an impact on important and urgent decisions to be made in this area.”

Deal HUD, a well-known American conservative commentator said he had read the whole thing and it had left him “deeply moved” because, he observed, it is about “so much more than” global warming. Instead, he called the encyclical an “essay on Christian spirituality, a homiletic synthesis of poetics, philosophy, theology, science, politics, ethics, and biblical exegesis. In fact, the label ‘climate change’ demeans its message, trivializes it, and misunderstands it.” He urged Catholics to “calm [their] anxieties about the encyclical’s actual content. Yes, it contains much that will stir controversy about environmental matters, but these are offset by assertions such as Part 61: ‘On many concrete questions, the Church has no reason to offer a definitive opinion; she knows that honest debate must be encouraged among experts, while respecting divergent views.’

Despite many claiming they helped to draft Pope Francis’ new encyclical, the final text cannot be attributed to any ‘hidden’ advisors, says Bishop Mario Toso of Faenza-Modigliana, Italy, a former Vatican official.

The proof, he says, is shown by the fact that the encyclical stands on the shoulders of previous magisterial teachings. Despite having been so many contributions, Bishop Toso maintained that the “ground framework of the encyclical is given by the continuity of the tradition of Catholic social teaching and by the work of the perhaps more invisible and less outspoken hands of people who work within the Vatican and who know quite well the social teaching of the Church.”

"Only then, people can talk about ecological issues standing on a theological, anthropological, and ethical point of view," Bishop Toso maintained.

The Pope’s ecology

Two examples indicate how Francis’ environmentalism is as much about preference for the poor as it is about protection of nature.

Francis speaks of access to potable water as an issue of “primary” importance, though it is one rarely thought about in rich countries (no. 28). If the political impact of *Laudato Si* concerns climate treaties for 2030 and not clean water for next year, it will not reflect the Pope’s priorities. A second illuminating example is that of urban living. Many sprawling cities, surrounded by slums in the poor world, have become nearly unliveable, as residents literally choke on pollution. The poor are often excluded from green spaces that have been privatized by the wealthy (no. 45). That’s a different way to think about the harmony between nature and human relationships—and leads to surprising conclusions.

For example, the poor in the world’s financial centers, New York and London, have ready access to vast parks on an equal basis with the rich, while in Beijing the rich pay to breathe different air than the poor do.

Controversy amongst controversy

Chapter 5, on practical policy choices, will likely engender the greatest debate. While Francis writes “there are certain environmental issues where it is not easy to achieve a broad consensus” and “I would state once more that the Church does not presume to settle scientific questions or to replace politics” (no. 188), he does for example come against carbon trading schemes (no. 171), which is a rather specific political position.

Even more boldly, the Holy Father writes, “The time has come to accept decreased [economic] growth in some parts of the world, in order to provide resources for other places to experience healthy growth” (no. 193). The number of political voices that share that view, is to be generous, miniscule, which is why Francis insists that “a strategy for real change is not for relinquishing Rockefeller’s old technology, but for it is not enough to include a few superficial ecological considerations while failing to question the logic which underlies present-day culture” (no. 197).

The angry others, including:

• Those who disagree with its specific policy proposals. Such ideas are unusual for encyclicals, which usually offer broad suggestions or guidelines rather than particular policy goals.

• Critics of market economies

• Those who think evangelization starts with finding areas of common ground with the culture rather than holding to areas of conflict.

• Certain theologians who want the environment to take more precedence in Catholic teaching.

It will anger others, including:

• Those who will be charged with reconciling *Laudato Si* with St. John Paul’s Centesimus Annus. That difficulty should not be exaggerated, as social encyclicals can seem at odds with preceding ones, as for example the differences between Leo XIII and Pius XI. There are points of overlap, too.

Still, at first glance, John Paul’s assessment that “on the level of individual nations and of international relations, the free market is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs” (no. 34) is difficult to reconcile with Francis writing that “we need to reject a magical conception of the market, which would suggest that problems can be solved simply by an increase in the profits of companies or individuals.” Is it realistic to hope that those who are obsessed with maximizing profits will stop to reflect on the environmental damage that they will leave behind for future generations?” (no. 190).

This reconciliation can be done, but it remains a theological task to classify these statements of the Magisterium. That among many other discussions will occupy the Church as she receives a major contribution to her social doctrine.
Denver Archbishop Aquila Restores Sacraments to Original Order

Denver (CNA/EWTN News) — In an unprecedented change for an American archdiocese, Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila of Denver has restored the sacraments of initiation – baptism, confirmation, and First Communion – to their original order.

“In an increasingly secular world, the reality is this: The souls of our children are the battleground. As the shepherd of the Archdiocese of Denver, I must do everything I can to help those who form children win that battle,” he explained in a pastoral letter.

“The world needs saints. Even as our society becomes more distant from faith and more forgetful of God, it still hungered for joyful witnesses who have been transformed by Christ,” he explained. “At the same time, new generations of Catholics need grace to sustain them in a non-Christian environment.”

In response to those needs, Archbishop Aquila said he’s chosen to restore the sacraments to the original order.

While the majority of dioceses and archdioceses have children baptized in infancy, receive the First Communion in first or second grade, and Confirmation sometime in middle or high school, the original order placed Confirmation and First Communion in the same ceremony.

“This will make available every sacramental grace the Church has to offer to children who have reached the age of reason,” he explained.

When he made the change in his then-Dioecese of Fargo in 2002, he said he was convinced by the “theological and pastoral reasons” that it was the right decision, but the feedback from parents after it was implemented further confirmed the change.

In his pastoral letter, Archbishop Aquila detailed a five-year plan that will help parishes in northern Colorado implement the changes by 2020.

It is his hope that after the change, confirmation will no longer be the “sacrament of farewell” as Pope Francis regretfully called it, but rather “a profound encounter with each person of the Holy Trinity.”

As a result of the change, youth groups will need to adapt from sacramental preparation to “building community, fostering deeper relationships with each person of the Holy Trinity, and preparing them to be witnesses to the poor, those in need, and those who do not know Jesus Christ.”

This model, which is based on Jesus’ preparation of the Twelve Apostles, is already present in many parishes of the archdiocese and is “bearing great fruits.”

The Denver archdiocese has set up a web page with more information as well as answers to frequently asked questions.

Malcolm X would have been a Christian. That’s what I want to see from an African-American community. I want the parish and school to really feel more of a bond, because we are a parish school, and I want us to be known not only for excellence in academics but as a place where children are learning in Catholic environment.”

The shooting at Emanuel AME Church is “a tragic and violent event,” the bishop said. “Christian citizens, not just a private school. “To say we’re [simply] private is to really lessen what we really are. It’s to hide something as if we’re ashamed to call ourselves Catholics. We need to be bold in our proclamation that this is a Catholic school, and first and foremost is our faith as Catholics, and that’s intertwined in our academics.”

“Perhaps that is going to be my greatest challenge, for us to claim that identity, and to have an eighth grader who leaves St. John the Baptist knowing the fundamentals, knowing the Ten Commandments, having a solid understanding of the Faith, being able to talk about his or her faith, being able to have that relationship with Our Lord and Savior so that they’re not ashamed, so that they’re not going to be swayed because they know the truth. And so perhaps that’s going to be my greatest challenge.”

He also wants to see a greater emphasis on lived and not just taught catechism.

“One great thing at my last school is we worked on virtues. Virtue is that disposition of the mind and body, something you practice. And I think that when we focus on our works of charity, on what being a neighbor means, on living our faith, then I think it resonates more with the students. That’s why they’re going to be teaching themselves Christian. That’s what I want to see from an eighth grader that [graduates]. OK, maybe they know the Ten Commandments, but just because you can recite them doesn’t mean you know how to live them.”

Ultimately, he says, his “prayer is that the Lord uses me … to encourage, to support, to nurture in whatever way I can to ensure we are creating an environment, we are sustaining an environment that is Catholic in nature and in which young men and women are learning about their faith, learning the academics that are going to help them succeed in whatever vocation they choose, and they’re doing so with a real knowledge of the truth.”

What does the SCOTUS ruling on same sex unions mean for the Church?

For the present, nothing has changed. However, many believe homosexual rights activists will ultimately come after churches in much the same way they have private businesses (e.g., bakers, florists, and photographers) and even one Protestant minister who performs marriage ceremonies. NCC has featured him and his wife’s story twice over the last year. August’s issue will carry more information about such proposals, since there are already bills in Congress that would “chop churches’ tax exempt status, and one couple has sued their denomination to have a religious marriage.”

We will do our best to keep you informed of all developments as they present themselves.

Charleston, South Carolina, (CNA/EWTN News) — A mass shooting at an historic African-American church in Charleston, South Carolina drew prayers and sympathy from the state’s Catholics, aghast at the horror of the crime which had racial motivations.

“The inside of any church is a sanctuary. When a person enters a church, he or she has the right to worship, pray, and learn in a safe and secure environment,” Bishop Robert Guglielmone of Charleston said June 18. “For anyone to murder nine individuals is upsetting, but to kill them inside of a church during a Bible study class is devastating to any faith community.”

Bishop Guglielmone offered his deepest sympathies on behalf of all Catholics in South Carolina to the families of the victims and the church members of Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

“I pray that everyone affected by this horror will feel the comforting presence of our Lord surrounding them during this difficult time,” he said.

Bishop Michael Burbridge of Raleigh tweeted, “We pray for those killed in the violent church shooting in Charleston. We also pray for their families and all those who mourn their death.”

A white gunman fatally shot three men and six women at the historic black church June 17 after an evening prayer meeting and Bible study. Three people survived.

The shooter sat in the church for almost an hour before he stood up and opened fire.

Local authorities have not publicly identified the victims. Church members, friends, and family told the Charleston Post and Courier that the dead include Pastor Clementa Pinckney, 41, who was also a state senator.

Sylvia Johnson, a cousin of Pinckney, told NBC News that an eyewitness said the gunman sat next to the pastor during the Bible study.

The gunman reportedly told one woman who survived that he was letting her live to tell everyone what had happened, Dot Scott, president of the Charleston NAACP, told the Charleston Post and Courier.

James Johnson, who had become friends with Pinckney through civil rights activism, said the feeling after the shooting was “very numb; it’s sad.”

“… No one expects to go to church to worship their God and be shot dead,” said Johnson, a chapter president of the National Action Network civil rights organization.

The alleged shooter, 21-year-old Dylann Roof, was later arrested in North Carolina.

He had been jailed twice previously on a trespassing charge and a separate controlled substance charge. His Facebook page shows him wearing a jacket with the apartheid-era South African flag and the flag of Rhodesia, USA Today reports.

Local law enforcement and federal authorities are investigating the shooting as a hate crime.

According to Sylvia Johnson, the gunman told the church members, “I have to do it. You rape our women, and you’re taking over our country.”

Hundreds of people gathered at another Charleston African Methodist Episcopal church for a June 18 prayer vigil.

African Methodist Episcopal Bishop Julius Harrison McAllister was among the speakers.

“What crime did they commit? They were guilty of believing because they were in a holy place, no such thing could occur,” he said.

Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church is the oldest African Methodist Episcopal church in the South.

The church community dates back to before 1816. A founding member, Denmark Vesey, led a slave rebellion in 1822 that resulted in the burning of the church and drove its members underground. The church reorganized in 1865, and hosted a speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. in April 1962.

After Mass Shooting Horror, S.C. Catholics Mourn with Charleston Church

by Catholic News Agency

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Several other states faced similar cases on the constitutionality of same-sex marriage laws.

Backers of marriage as a union of one man and one woman argued marriage is intricately connected to the procreation of children and cannot be redefined. Some also said the matter should be left to the people and the states and not decided in court when so much disagreement on the matter persists.

Backers of same sex unions asserted a fundamental right to marry whomever one loves, saying failure to redefine marriage amounts to discrimination.

Same-sex unions were not firmly established in any US state until 2004, after a Massachusetts court ruled that the state must give marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

In response to that ruling, some had called for a federal constitutional amendment to protect the definition of marriage. Voters in 30 states have passed constitutional amendments and referenda strengthening the legal definition of marriage as a union of one man and one woman. Many of these efforts have been overturned in state or federal court challenges.

In 2013, the Supreme Court dismissed an appeal from supporters of California’s defense of-mariage amendment, Proposition 8, which California officials had refused to defend in court. The Supreme Court said that the appeal did not have legal standing and allowed a lower state court’s overruling of the proposition to take effect.

The Supreme Court itself has declined to review several recent appeals seeking to defend state marriage laws against lower court decisions. Also in 2013, a 5-4 ruling from the Supreme Court struck down aspects of the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). The Court claimed that a provision defining marriage as a union of one man and one woman for federal purposes violated the US Constitution’s equal protection guarantees. The ruling said the federal government must recognize same sex unions in individual states if the states choose to recognize them.

Congress had overwhelmingly passed DOMA, which President Bill Clinton signed into law after a Hawaii court ruling briefly recognized such unions.

Increasing requirements for recognition of same-sex unions as marriages, combined with state anti-discrimination laws, have caused growing conflict with religious freedom.

Parents in some school districts have faced difficulty in exempting their children from classes voicing approval of same-sex relationships, while small businesses with moral reservations about participating in same-sex ceremonies have faced discrimination lawsuits. Catholic-run adoption agencies have been forced to close because the law would require them to place children with same-sex couples against their religious beliefs.

All of this will only become worse since those who oppose same sex unions will now have no legal ground on which to stand.

Indeed, the consequences for freedom of conscience and religious freedom were a topic of the Court’s deliberations in Obergefell v. Hodges. US Solicitor General Donald Verilli at one point asked the high court’s approval of a legal right to same-sex “marriage” could mean problems for the tax-exempt status of colleges with objections to recognizing the unions.

The question many have asked is that if two men or two women can marry one another, what is the legal rationale for keeping illegal polygamy or polyandry? The Obergefell decision gave no indication of any answer.

Los Angeles (The Huffington Post) – A seemingly ground-breaking and widely publicized study reported in Science magazine this past December may be a fake.

The study appeared to show that openly gay activists in California had persuaded conservative voters to change their minds in a lasting way by engaging the voters in “heartfelt, reciprocal, and vulnerable conversations” about being gay during door-to-door advocacy campaigns. It was co-authored by Michael J. LaCour, a PhD candidate in political science at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Donald P. Green, a professor at Columbia University.

For the gay rights movement, this was good news. It suggested the country’s shift on gay rights was, at least in part, the movement’s doing, and it provided a template for advocacy going forward. Gay rights advocates in Ireland reportedly based their strategy before a national vote on same-sex marriage this week on LaCour and Green’s results.

But according to a report issued Tuesday by two University of California, Berkeley, graduate students and a Yale professor, there are enough questions about the data to warrant retracting the study. Retraction Watch broke the story Wednesday about what students David Broockman (soon to be an assistant professor at Stanford) and Joshua Kalla and Yale’s Professor Peter Aronow found.

After California’s gay marriage ban passed in 2008 (i.e., Proposition 8), activists at the center had more than 12,000 one-on-one conversations in Los Angeles neighborhoods with people who overwhelmingly supported the ban. LaCour’s idea was to see if those conversations produced any lasting change. He purportedly designed a randomized experiment to replicate those conversations, with a series of follow-up surveys online to test how the anti-gay voters felt about gay rights and gay marriage over time. Those who were contacted by the openly gay canvassers showed substantially more positive attitudes toward gay marriage as much as nine months later.

At least, that’s what the published study said in December. But now it appears those critical follow-up surveys may not have been conducted as described.

After the LaCour-Green study was published, Broockman and Kalla were impressed by its findings and wanted to extend the research. In January 2015, they found some patterns in the data that seemed to be too perfect – statistically speaking, there was less variance in the results than there should have been. Some social scientists had noticed this when the study was first published.

As Broockman and Kalla continued their work, they wrote in their report, they uncovered more irregularities. When the pair noticed that their own study had a much lower response rate (the proportion of people contacted who actually respond to a survey), they asked Qualtrics, the survey firm that allegedly gathered data for LaCour, how it had achieved such a high response rate. They said the firm replied that it had no record of the project.

This is what happened next according to their report and Green’s letter to Science: The statistical irregularities continued to mount, and the pair recruited Aronow to help with their analysis. Broockman and Kalla then contacted Green. Green said that he had joined the study after the data had been collected and thought that the irregularities Broockman and Kalla had uncovered were, indeed, highly suspicious. Green reached out to LaCour’s adviser at UCLA, Professor Lynn Vavreck, and the two of them decided that Vavreck would confront LaCour and ask him to provide his data. Finally, LaCour claimed he had accidentally deleted the file with the necessary information, but again Qualtrics said it could not verify that the data had been deleted or that the study took place. It seemed increasingly clear to Green that no follow-up surveys had ever been conducted and that LaCour may have taken data from existing studies and manipulated the numbers to achieve the results he wanted. Green wrote in an email.

In a statement Wednesday, Marcia McNutt, editor-in-chief at Science Journals, said, “At this time, our Editorial staff is assessing the report. Given the fact that the [co-author] Dr. Green has requested retraction, Science will move swiftly and take any necessary action at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime, Science is publishing an Editorial Expression of Concern to alert our readers to the fact that serious questions have been raised about the validity of findings in this study.”

Green said Wednesday that he is more determined than ever to find out whether the types of conversations conducted by the Los Angeles advocates could indeed produce lasting change in anti-gay voters.

An actual experiment was conducted, a very nicely designed and elegant experiment, and the irony is that the experiment was conducted by someone who would have presumably been the first person to say that the outcomes were never measured,” Green said. “I am determined to do this study again, this time for real.”

This is an abbreviated version of a story that appeared in The Huffington Post on May 20.
CDF’s Cardinal Müller Warns Against Adapting the Church to Pagan Lifestyles

by Edward Pentin

Vatican City (National Catholic Register)—Cardinal Gerhard Müller has spoken out firmly against trying to adapt the Church’s teaching to today’s often pagan lifestyles, saying such an approach introduces subjectivism and arbitrariness.

In an interview with the Catholic newspaper Die Tagespost on June 6, the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith warned that placing “any so-called lived realities” on the same level as Scripture and Tradition is “nothing more than the introduction of subjectivism and arbitrariness, wrapped up in sentimental and smug religious terminology.”

The cardinal’s comments have been widely seen as a criticism of a recent “Shadow Council” when bishops and religious terminology. “Nothing more than the introduction of subjectivism and arbitrariness,” the Austrian site Kath.net reported.

But Cardinal Müller stressed that these “lived realities” can sometimes be very pagan and that the Faith cannot be the result of a compromise between acceptable Christian ideas, abstract principles, and the practice of a pagan lifestyle. He added Rome will strengthen bishops’ freedom and responsibility, but this will be threatened by “nostalgias for national churches and by the haggling over social acceptance.”

The German Cardinal also said the Pope invited each bishop to the October synod as a “witness and teacher of the revealed faith.”

Referring to the recent controversial closed-door meeting in Rome, Cardinal Müller said it is right to exchange information on any point or major issue. But he added that one cannot organize the truth. If this principle were to be adopted and taken as true by the Church, leading her to take her cue from public opinion, then the Church would be “shaken to her foundations,” he said.

The Catholic Church is mother and teacher of all churches, he said, one that teaches and is not taught. “She does not need anybody—as superior and as adapted to our times he might think he is—to teach her a notion of the right faith, because in her, the apostolic tradition has been faithfully safeguarded and always will be preserved.”

Diocesan Women Find Lives Changed by Weekend

by Mary Peterson

From June 11-14, 10 women from throughout the diocese lived what is fundamental to being a Christian during a Cursillo retreat at the Angela Center in Santa Rosa, Fr. John Boettcher and Dcn. Joe Olsen served as spiritual advisors for the group, along with a team of seven lay women.

These women retreated from their regular lives to give God’s Holy Spirit time to speak to their hearts. The weekend was laced with morning and evening prayer, the Holy Mass, and the Rosary, in addition to talks presented by members of the team.

The women were urged to give their idealism, self-surrender, and the spirit of charity so that the message of being passionate about the things of God could be relayed to them through a retreat and its series of talks.

On Saturday morning, Bishop Robert F. Vasa took time out of his busy schedule to drop by and encourage the candidates in their relationship with God.

This was the first Catholic Cursillo weekend in the diocese. Catholic Cursillo originated in 1944, in Malorca, Spain, and is now an international movement. The newly formed local Catholic Cursillo is affiliated with the regional and national Catholic Cursillo. The method of Cursillo has been tried and tested for over 50 years.

Women’s Catholic Cursillo Retreat

St. Arethas (al-Haarith) martyred with over 4,000 in Saudi Arabia July 27

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Red Eggs and Good Luck,
by Angela Lam
(177 pp., She Writes Press, Berkeley, 2015)

by Brian O’Neel

“Dear Brian, please review my book,” said the e-mail from Angela Lam.

Great. Another book review request. NCC gets dozens of these each year, mostly from authors who, frankly, can’t write.

But this book had won an award. Then again, the award was for the genre of memoir. Another groan. Some memoirs can be really good. Many, however, are simply gross exercises in self-indulgence.

The author of this memoir, however, is a resident of the diocese. This made it hard to say no. OK, I wrote back: Send it in.

Boy, talk about the Holy Spirit moving in strange and mysterious ways.

I’ll be honest, though: At first I thought my initial reluctance was well-founded. This is not a happy story about someone growing up in a Leave It to Beaver-type household. The dad is basically greedy and a crook. The mother is long-suffering. And the author and her sisters? Well, you wouldn’t have found their antics on The Brady Bunch, that’s for sure.

But isn’t that life? Who lives in a world of Leave It to Beaver or The Brady Bunch? Furthermore, the more story progressed, the more I got sucked into it. Rather, the more Lam—who is an unbelievably, undeniably talented writer—is not a plaster saint family whose faith is at the center of everything its members do. They’re probably more like most families where faith is a refuge in times of trouble rather than something that exerts a daily influence.

Do yourself a favor. Read this work. Get it for your book club (are you paying attention, mom?). Give it away as Christmas presents. If nothing else, get it from the library. Just don’t get it from an online seller. Brick- and-mortar stories help make our communities. They are assessments I’d made when I had first started reading.

At first the man comes off as the consummate schmuck. But that’s just the surface picture. Move beyond that, though, and while you’ll never condone his actions, you will sympathize with the man. At least that was my experience.

Lam being a Catholic, and since she requested a review from her local Catholic paper, I expected more of a faith component. But this book had won an award.

But this book had won an award. On May 31 five children received their First Holy Communion at Assumption Church in Ferndale followed by a reception at the Parish Hall. Communicants were Lane Tomassini, Clara Christensen, David Leonardo, Kasey Luster, and Lawrence Thomas Eggel. The celebrant was pastor Fr. Mario Laguros, and the children were accompanied by Susan Regli, the parish’s director of Christian Children’s Doctrine classes.

The Brady Bunch

Beaver

or

Explores the FUTURE you Deserve

Washington, DC

(CNA)—The United States Postal Service has released a postage stamp bearing the image of Catholic author Flannery O’Connor (1925-64).

Famous for her Southern Gothic fiction style, O’Connor’s best-known works include her first novel Wise Blood, and many short stories such as “A Good Man is Hard to Find.” A collection of her works, The Complete Stories of Flannery O’Connor, won the 1972 National Book Award for fiction and was named the Best of the National Book Awards, 1950-2008 by a public vote.

She wasn’t just Catholic by birth or by convenience. Her faith animated her life. For instance, she wrote in her college diary, “Dear God please help me to be an artist, please let it lead to You.”

She also had probably one of the best lines ever about Communion. She once recounted her attendance at a party, and how at one point “the conversation turned on the Eucharist, which I, being the Catholic, was obviously supposed to defend [Editor’s note: O’Connor lived in the Deep South, where Catholics were few and far between]. [Lapsed Catholic] Mrs. Broadwater said when she was a child and received the Host, she thought of it as the Holy Ghost, He being the ‘most portable’ person of the Trinity; now she thought of it as a symbol and implied that it was a pretty good one. I then said, in a very shaky voice, ‘Well, if it’s a symbol, to hell with it.’ That was the point: all the defense I was capable of but I realize now that this is all I will ever be able to say about it, outside of a story, except that it is the center of existence for me; all the rest of life is expendable.”

The Flannery O’Connor stamp is a “forever” stamp for 3-ounce packages and became available June 5.
Holy Family Catholic Church
The Foundation for a Strong Community

Dedicated to the advancement of our religion through education, community outreach, and other beneficial activities to the community.

Mass Times:
- Saturday: 5:15 PM English
- Sunday: 7:00 PM Spanish, 9:00 AM English, 11:00 AM Bi-lingual
- Monday - Wednesday: 8:00 AM English

We need your time, talents and treasure to build God’s newest church in the valley!

Pastor/Administrator: Fr. Frederick K.A. Kutubebi
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www.holyfamilycatholicchurch-amcan.org

Child & Youth Protection
If you or someone you know has been harmed by sexual misconduct by clergy, a Church employee, or volunteer, please contact:

Julie Sparacio, Director
Child and Youth Protection
707-566-3309
jsparacio@srdiocese.org

dre@srdiocese.org | (707) 566-3366 | Fax (707) 542-9702 | www.santarosacatholic.org
You can send your child or grandchild to visit Ronald Reagan’s ranch to learn about the 20th Century’s greatest president. What better way to celebrate freedom than by walking in President Reagan’s footsteps and learning about the ideas he championed?

At a Reagan Ranch High School Conference, the student in your life will expand his or her knowledge of economics, American history, personal responsibility, the triumph of freedom, and President Reagan’s lasting accomplishments through a series of innovative lectures, discussions, and briefings.

For dates and information, and to register a student for this invaluable, historical experience, please contact Young America’s Foundation’s conference director at 800-USA-1776.
Obituaries

Mildred Lucille Giacomini
Mrs. Giacomini, 84, of Point Arena passed away on Sunday, May 24, 2015, at her home with her family present. Born in Minnesota on April 7, 1931, Mildred was a homemaker who was an excellent mother, cook, wife, pie maker, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Her family will remember her going to all her son’s ballgames and cheering the loudest, baking huckleberry pies, and taking care of big Lester. Mildred made her home in Point Arena for 66 years. A graveside service took place on May 28 at St. Aloysius Catholic Cemetery in Point Arena.

Fern Kelly
Mrs. Kelly died April 14, 2015, age 85. A member of Sacred Heart Church in Eureka, she was born Fern Williamson in Visalia. She married her UC, Berkeley sweetheart Hugh Kelly, a surveyor. Their marriage took place at Carmel Mission, and they raised their family in Eureka. Described as an elegant, warm, caring, sincere friend, lady, and consummate host who determined to always do what was right no matter the cost. Hugh died in 2011 and Fern’s death came after a four-year battle with breast cancer.

Richard Aloysius Christen
Mr. Christen died after a five-month battle with cancer. He lived all of his 73 years in his family’s ranch house abutting its dairy in Grizzly Bluff. He ran the dairy for 43 years after his father died, caring for his mother until her death, and retiring in 2005. He was proud of his 100 percent Swiss ancestry and that he was a member of a very large, old local family. He enjoyed travel to places of interest and had a passion for local and world history. He loved to dance and after his marriage in 2000, he and his wife traveled to dancing events. He was a member of the Ferndale Museum, the Humboldt Swiss Club, Friendship Circle Senior Dance Club, and a Civil War re-enactment group. He was preceded in death by his parents Tony and Helen Christen and three brothers Alvin, Harold, and Joe. He is survived by his oldest brother Francis Christen and his wife Anne. Mr. Christens’ obsequies Mass took place June 19 at Assumption Church in Ferndale.

St. Apollinaris Church, Napa
Maria Damian Chavez: died May 29, 2015; Rosary June 3

Star of the Valley Church, Santa Rosa
Nancy Bello: died June 8, 2015; Memorial Mass June 23, 2015
Marie Cullen: June 3, 2015, funeral date unknown
Nancy Lindberg: death date unknown, funeral date unknown
Antone "Tony" Joseph Abram: died May 25; Funeral Mass, June 9
William Pulskamp (brother of Msgr. Pulskamp)

St. John the Baptist Church, Napa
Francisco Martinez: died June 17; Funeral Mass June 19
Thelma Leigh Gerosa: age 94; Funeral Mass June 18
Anthony Michael Sanza: age 35; graveside service June 17

St. Mary of the Angels Church, Ukiah
Sandra A. Gonzalez: died, May 16, 2015; Funeral Mass May 23, 2015
Louis Thorne: died, May 29, 2015; Funeral Mass June 1, 2015

From Catholic Charities
by Len Marabell

It sounds way too simple, but the solution to homelessness is housing. Data across the country clearly demonstrate that housing leads to the resolution of many issues that cause homelessness. Having a stable home helps provide self-confidence, the vision of a better future, better health, and a commitment to becoming independent, and mitigates the need for unhealthy behaviors and coping mechanisms.

Catholic Charities has several programs funded by Sonoma County to address homelessness via housing. These programs make funds available to spend on security deposits, rents, and utilities so the most vulnerable of our homeless population may be housed. It is the beginning path that leads from poverty to stability and independence.

Finding willing landlords is a challenge. In fact our housing programs offer a good deal for landlords. Catholic Charities screens applicants for them, provides reliable, timely rents, and offers continuing case management to ensure that our renters are on the right path and that the property is being respected.

Most importantly we can pay fair market rent so landlords don’t lose any money on this partnership. While the need for apartments is great, we have been making gradual progress and finding units for our clients. We employ professional housing locators to find rentals. If you know of rental opportunities, please contact Socorro Vasquez at 707-542-5426 or email svazquez@srrcharities.org.

The need doesn’t stop there. Our new tenants basically arrive empty-handed. There is great need for furniture, for kitchen utensils, for the practical items we all take for granted. Whenever possible we take items that are donated to our thrift store, ReStyle Marketplace, and deliver them directly to tenants free of charge.

But too often our new tenants don’t have the basics that make an apartment a home. We especially need beds, linens, dressers, and more to make the transition to housing a seamless one. Please contact Jennielynn Holmes at 707-542-5426 or jholmes@srrcharities.org if you have items to donate. We will pick up large items! Be assured our clients have first priority to all items donated to Catholic Charities without any cost.

Pope Francis urges us “to brotherly love, to humble and generous service, to justice and mercy toward the poor.” The above are two great ways to accomplish these things. ✧

Catholic Cemeteries, Historical Legacies

Our Catholic Cemeteries are places where opportunities for sharing faith and prayerful reflection are woven with the local history of those who have built our Church and community. As we create our own individual and family legacy, we are creating a historical legacy for generations to come. We share witness of our faith in our final resting place as we have shared our faith in how we live our lives.

Come explore the historical legacies of faith in our cemeteries at Calvary Santa Rosa and Petaluma, Saint Francis in Sonoma, and Holy Cross in Saint Helena.

Phone: 707.546.6290
www.catholiccemeteries-drso.org * www.facebook.com/catholiccemeteriesSR
Another one bites the dust
Napa—Former homosexual film actor and Catholic “revert” Joseph Sciambra has decided to close his St. Joseph Thrift Shop in Napa.
In business for 12 years, Sciambra admits his business never made much money, “but in the beginning it was fun and a lot of times I was okay with just breaking even. Over the past few years, sometimes I was not breaking even.”

Then in 2013, he went on The Howard Stern Show to talk about his experiences as an ex-gay film star and current faithful Catholic speaker. That drew many to contact him not for support but to criticize him for being a faithful Christian and to leave lewd messages, which Joseph says were “pretty much a constant.”

There were also threatening calls and one contact from a very large man who promised a visit to him this summer “were pretty much a constant.”

Cathedral help
The St. Eugene Cathedral Thrift Shop needs donations. Contributions are appreciated, as are nice, clean clothes with no stains or rips. The shop accepts donations on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:30am-2:00pm. Those with items to donate can also arrange for an appointment by calling 707-542-6984 and leaving a message with Sue or Maria.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Star of the Valley Church would like to remind all that the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration every Wednesdays from 8:30–9:30am and that visiting Him under the exposed Host gives many graces to His adorers.

“The best and the surest and most effective way of establishing everlasting peace on the face of the earth is through the great power of perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.”—Pope St. John Paul II

Arcata—St. Mary Church pastor Fr. Balaswamy Govindu has appointed Helena Avelar as head of parish music ministry.
In making the announcement, Father exhorted St. Mary’s parishioners, “Any new suggestions or ideas to make the liturgical music meaningful and solemn are welcome! Let us keep uniformity in selecting and singing the same hymns and specific Mass parts in all the weekend Masses and at all special liturgical celebrations in holy seasons.”
Then on June 20, the parish held a farewell reception for Fr. Gregory Villaescusa, which took place after the 5:30pm Mass. The purpose was to thank Father for his dedicated service and ministry to St. Mary as well as to extend the parishioners’ congratulations and good wishes as he becomes parochial administrator at St. Joseph Church in Crescent City and to celebrate his ordination anniversary on June 28

Coming soon… Convenience!!!
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Rohnert Park will soon have an exciting alternative to the collection plate. The parish is preparing to offer an automatic contribution option by direct debit for interested parishioners from their checking or savings accounts. The parishioner would specify their preferred amount of contribution and that amount would come out of parishioner’s bank account on the first Monday of every month.

More Mass in Eureka
Eureka—The joint parish of St. Bernard and Sacred Heart Churches in Eureka has added a 7pm Sunday evening Mass at St. Joseph Mission church (located at the corner of C and Henderson in Eureka) during the summer months. This additional liturgy will continue through the first Sunday in September. Its purpose is to assist area residents those who go away for the weekend.

National
Abortion ban tossed out
Little Rock (Northwest Arkansas Gazette)—In late May, a federal appeals court upheld an Arkansas federal judge’s ruling last year saying a new state ban on abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy was unconstitutional.
A three-judge panel of the Eighth United States Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with United States District Judge Susan Webber Wright’s decision that Act 301 of 2013, also known as the Arkansas Human Heartbeat Protection Act, violated more than 40 years of US Supreme Court precedent by outlawing abortions before viability.
Viability—the point at which a fetus is reasonably expected to be able to live on its own outside the womb—has generally been considered 24 or 25 weeks of pregnancy. Arkansas considered viability to begin at 25 weeks until the Legislature passed the 2013 law that attempted to further restrict abortions.
The ban, which would have allowed abortions at or after 12 weeks of pregnancy only in cases of rape, incest or “a highly lethal fetal disorder,” was enacted in March 2013 after both houses of the Legislature overrode the veto of then—Gov. Mike Beebe (D).
President George W. Bush nominated all three judges on the panel appointed by President Bush.
The panel’s nine-page ruling in the Arkansas case, written by Smith, addresses viability at some length. It noted that “the only factual record presented in this case” was the plaintiffs’ presentation of a declaration by Dr. Janet Cathey of Little Rock, who said that at 12 weeks of pregnancy, “a fetus cannot in any circumstance survive outside the uterus. Thus a fetus at 12 weeks is not and cannot be viable.”
The panel noted, as did Wright, that the state “offered no competing evidence challenging Dr. Cathey’s testimony.”
“Because the State made no attempt to refute the plaintiffs’ assertions of fact, the district court’s summary judgment order must be affirmed,” Smith wrote. He went on to say that “as an intermediate court of appeals, this court is bound by the Supreme Court’s decisions” in two previous cases, a 1992 case called Planned Parenthood of South-Eastern Pennsylvania v. Casey, and Gonzales v. Carhart, decided in 2007.
“However, undeniable, medical and technological advances along with mankind’s ever increasing knowledge of prenatal life since the Court decided Roe v. Wade [in 1973] and Casey make application of Casey’s viability standard more difficult,” Smith wrote. He said that makes the parties’ obligation to provide the court with adequate scientific records “more critical.”
Abortion dropping … due to Millennials?
Washington, DC (CNA/EWTN News)—Abortion rates have declined by 12 percent nationwide since 2010, and pro-life groups say changing attitudes among young adults could be the cause.
“We’re seeing the attitudes shift,” said Kristan Hawkins, president of the group Students for Life of America, which conducts pro-life outreach on college campuses. “People are talking about abortion differently.”
Abortion rates have declined in almost every state since 2010, with only two states seeing significant increases since then, says By The Associated Press.
The biggest declines took in Hawaii—a 39 percent decrease in 2013. In New Mexico, Rhode Island, Nevada, and Connecticut, all with over a 20 percent drop.
The declines occurred both in states have passed pro-life laws and in states that have not, AP noted. This is evidence of a “comprehensive trend,” said Chuck Donovan, president of the Charlotte Lozier Institute, the research arm of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List.
Although many factors are probably behind the shift in numbers, the “bottom explanation is a shift in public opinion,” Donovan told CNA.
“More children are being born and probably raised in families with a pro-life disposition,” he said.

Woman who self-aborted has conviction overturned
From a story on Slate
Boise—An Idaho woman and mother has had her conviction overturned. Her crime? Giving herself an abortion.
The breach of the law came with a five year prison term. Jennie McCormack and her lawyer argued she had to give herself an abortion in 2010 because the closest abortion clinic was 138 miles away in Salt Lake City and would have cost $2,000.
Thus she ordered abortion pills online. On May 29, the Ninth United States Circuit Court of Appeals not only upheld a lower court’s dismissal of the charge against her, but it overturned three other laws: 1) that barred abortions of fetuses at 20 weeks post-fertilization; 2) another that required all second-trimester abortions to occur in hospitals in the presence of trained personnel and modern medical equipment; and 3) one that placed required clinics to follow the most basic forms of safety regulations.
In early June A Georgia woman was arrested for taking pills to abort her pregnancy. She aborted the baby because she and her boyfriend—the child’s father—broke up. While the charges for aborting her child were dropped, those stemming from ordering the death inducing drugs in the mail are still pending.

Court rules Texas abortion clinics must meet safety standards
New Orleans (CNA/EWTN News)—Pro-life advocates welcomed a federal appellate court’s Tuesday decision upholding a Texas law that increased safety regulations for abortion clinics and abortionists.
“Texas women and their preborn children will no longer be subjected to the grotesque reality inside Texas abortion facilities,” Emily Horne, senior legislative associate with Texas Right to Life, said June 9.
“Texas’ Attorney General Ken Paxton, who defended the law against legal challenges, also praised the ruling. “Abortion practitioners should have no right to operate their businesses from sub-standard facilities and with doctors who lack admitting privileges at a hospital,” he said.
The New Orleans-based Fifth United States Circuit Court of Appeals allowed the law to be applied across most of Texas. It recognized as legitimate the Legislature’s stated
Seeking abortion.”

Because some abortion clinics cannot afford upgrades to meet the stronger safety standards, the law could mean that as many as thirteen clinics will close. That would leave eight abortion providers in the state, The New York Times reports.

The law requires all abortion clinics to follow ambulatory surgical facility standards for their building, equipment, and staffing.

Some backers of the law cited the case of Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell, who in 2013 was convicted of murder and manslaughter as a result of negligent practices. Surgical facility standards for Gosnell’s clinic, such as wider hallways for paramedic access, could have saved the life of one young woman.

The federal appellate court largely upheld the Texas law’s requirement that doctors who perform abortions have admitting privileges at a hospital within 30 miles of the abortion clinic. The same Texas law bars abortions after 20 weeks on the ground that an unborn baby can feel pain at that age. This provision has not faced legal challenge.

Occultist parlor trick raises concerns

Philadelphia—Perhaps no pontiff since Pope St. Pius X [1903-14] has spoken more about Satan and the danger of demonic influence than Pope Francis. One therefore has to wonder what he would think about a new phenomenon that has taken social media by storm.

According to Britain’s Daily Mirror, “A Catholic priest has issued an urgent warning about the dangers of ‘summoning a demon’ by performing the weird Charlie Charlie Challenge."

“In an open letter to pupils at a well-known Catholic school, Fr. Stephen McCarthy appears to have told pupils there was no way of knowing what would happen if they decided to invite a Mexican ghooul into their home.

“The letter was shared on Twitter by a pupil at the Sts. John Neumann and Maria Goretti Catholic High School in Philadelphia.

“The letter said: ‘There is a dangerous game going around on social media which openly encourages impressive young people to summon demons.

“I want to remind you all there is no such thing as ‘immonently playing with demons.”

“Please be sure to NOT participate and encourage others to avoid participation as well.

“The problem with opening yourself up to demonic activity is that it opens a window of possibilities which is not easily closed.”

“It went on to advise anyone looking to enjoy communing with ‘spiritual entities’ should consider taking part in a Catholic Mass.

“The Charlie, Charlie Challenge erupted on social media” in late May.

“The dubious rite involves placing two pencils on a piece of paper in the shape of a cross, before writing the words yes and no inside the four squares formed by the pencils.

“Brave (or gullible) participants must then repeat the words ‘Charlie, Charlie are you here.’

“If the pencil moves and points to yes, Charlie is in the house and you can draw upon his demonic life experience to ask him for guidance in the form of yes/no questions.

Popular singer advocates for the mentally ill

Los Angeles (AP)—When chart topping pop singer Demi Lovato was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, she was actually relieved.

“Growing up felt very, very depressed,” she said.

“Even though I was playing concerts and living out my dream, I couldn’t tell you why I was upset.”

After a family intervention, she sought treatment and learned she has a mental illness.

“I remember smiling and thinking great, OK, so there’s not anything wrong with me as a person;” she said in a recent interview. “It’s actually just a condition that I have and I can do something to fix it. I don’t have to be like this forever.”

Lovato is sharing her story and encouraging others to do the same through Be Vocal: Speak Up For Mental Health, an initiative launched recently by a pharmaceutical company, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and other mental-health advocacy groups. Its aim is to improve treatment options at all levels and erase the stigma around mental illnesses.

“It’s not something that anyone should be ashamed of,” Lovato said.

“The more people talk about it, the more people can come out and get the help they need.”

Be Vocal is as much about sufferers voicing their treat- ment needs as it is about families and communities speak- ing up for better resources to meet those needs, she said.

Lovato’s improved mental state is reflected in her work.

“I’d say my music is a lot happier now!” she said with a laugh.

The 23-year-old entertainer said she’ll continue to advocate for mental health, to make depression and other mental illnesses as easy to discuss as diabetes or the flu.

International

Liberal Scottish Parliament rejects assisted suicide

Edinburgh (CNA/EWTN News)—A controversial assisted suicide bill was defeated on May 27 by the Scottish Parlia- ment 82-36 in a free vote in the capital of Edinburgh, following rising dissent against the legislation.

“Today our parliamentarians took a step towards build- ing a society that has the dignity of the human person - and especially the most vulnerable - at its very heart, and for that we are grateful!” Archbishop Leo Cushley of the Arch- diocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh stated in response to the defeated Scottish assisted suicide bill.

“We believe human life must be fully protected by the law at every stage,” asserted the Catholic Bishops’ Confer- ence of Scotland, adding that “it is not appropriate for any person to make judgments about the ‘quality’ of another’s life as this bill would require.”

3D technology takes pilgrims “back in time”

Stuttgart, Germany (CNA/EWTN News)—For fans of Church history and architecture, 3D imaging may be the second-best thing to time travel, allowing them to experi- ence a medieval church as it existed hundreds of years ago.

Users of a soon-to-be launched website and app will be able to harness modern technology to see architecture that existed centuries ago.

The technology was presented at a recent international conference in Germany. On display was a 3D model of the cathedral of Sessa Aurunca, a town north of Naples.

“Our main goal was to make the beauty and the heritage of the Church in Italy known, on a hyper-modern and multi-media-platform,” said scientific director of the endeavor.

“Our project consists of a full 3D model of the Church from the inside and outside, and a reconstruction of the same edifice as it would have been in the Middle Ages,” he added.

Prosperi and his team combined research on medieval churches throughout all of Italy to collect data, which was later used to reconstruct the church’s structure before it was refurbished in the seventeenth century in Baroque style.

American woman missing on the Camino trail

Compostela, Spain (The Huffington Post)—One of the world’s oldest Christian pilgrimage routes has become the site of a desperate search for a missing American woman.

Forty-one-year-old Denise Thiem of Arizona traveled to Spain to walk El Camino Santiago earlier this year. The ancient pilgrimage route has seen a surge in popularity in recent years, attracting hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world.

Thiem’s family lost contact with her in early April, while she was walking along a portion of the trail called the Camino Frances, The Guardian (UK) reports. She was last seen in Astorga and hasn’t used her credit cards or email since then.

Spanish National Police are involved in the hunt for Thiem, and her friends and family are also fundraising and recruiting volunteers for a search effort in Astorga.

More practicing Muslims in France than Catholics

Paris (CNA/EWTN News)—New research suggests there are more practicing Muslims in France than practicing Catho- lics.

While 64 percent of French people describe themselves as Catholic, only 2.9 percent of the population actually practice the Catholic faith. That compares to 3.8 percent of the population who practice the Muslim faith. The research was carried out by the French Institute of Public Opinion on behalf of the Catholic newspaper La Croix.

More worrying for Islamic authorities in France is the finding that only 41 percent of the country’s 6 million Muslims actually describe themselves as “practicing,” although 77 percent are happy to label themselves “believ- ers.” Seventy-percent also claim to observe the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Most French Muslims hail from the country’s former colonies in northern and sub-Saharan Africa.

There is also further evidence that mosques are being erected at a much faster rate than Catholic churches. Mohammed Moussaoui, president of the Muslim Council of France, last month estimated that 150 new mosques are currently under construction across the country.

By contrast, the Catholic Church in France has built only 20 new churches during the past decade, and has formally closed more than 60 churches. Many of these are now destined to become mosques, according to La Croix.

Research in 2009 by the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research suggested that nearly 500 new mosques were built between 2001 and 2006, taking the present total to over 2,000. Many of these new buildings, however, were erected to re-accommodate local Islamic communities who had previously been using temporary accommodation – the so-called “Islam of the basements.”

One hundred arrested in Pakistan over torture, murder of Christian couple

Lahore (CNA/EWTN News)—In Pakistan’s Punjab prov- ince, 106 people have been charged with the November 4, 2014, murder of a Christian couple, who were attacked by a lynching mob and burned alive after being accused of blasphemy.

Pakistan’s anti-terrorism court charged that three Muslim clerics were involved in persistent provocative speech against the couple, while local media reported the clerics stirred up over 400 people against Shahzad Masih and his wife Shama, who was pregnant with the couple’s fourth child.

The Christian couple were killed and their bodies burned by a mob after they were accused of desecrating the Qur’an. The couple lived in Kot Radha Kishan, a city located nearly 40 miles southwest of Lahore.

Another 32 alleged participants in the lynching are still...
The declared martyrs were:
- Sr. Klara Ludwika Szczęsna
- Sr. Lazarina Siostry Materialne
- Fr. Antonio Colona (1873-1952), an Italian priest who founded the Handmaids of Reparation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus;
- Fr. Ottorino Zanoni (1915-72), an Italian priest who founded the Society of St. Cajetan;
- Fr. Marcello Labor (1890-1954), a Jew, a medical doctor, author, and founder of the who conversion to Catholicism with his wife (1929), was widowed (1934), and ordained to the diocesan priesthood in Italy (1940);
- Sr. Rachele Lalia (1839-1914), foundress of the Dominicae Consacratae Congregation.

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- Sr. Rachele Lalia (1839-1914), foundress of the Dominicae Consacratae Congregation.

Klara Ludwika Szczęsna, ten other priests (all from the Spanish Civil War.

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Christ the King Church Celebrates 45 Years

Site purchased: October 25, 1967
Dedicated: April 12, 1970

On June 7, Christ the King Parish celebrated 45 years of service. The parish site of eight acres was purchased October 25, 1967. The new church was dedicated April 12, 1970 by Bishop Mark J. Hurley, which the first Mass was said in the new 4,017 sq. ft. church on November 30, 1969. A First Communion class of 16 children took place on May 5, 1968.

Later on, the parish education center was dedicated by Bishop John T. Steinbock on September 23, 1990. Each third Friday a Fish Fry was held to fund the new hall. Major repairs of all the buildings took place from 2008-2013.

In 2008, several new ministries were established: RCIA; religious education; Finance Committee; parish council; liturgical ministries; Building-Maintenance Committee; St. Vincent de Paul Society; Social and Cleaning Committees.

A single stain glass window was donated to the church in 2010. There are 180 families registered.

Pastors of the King:
Fr. Ignacio P. C. Fontana (1967-1969)
Fr. Thomas Keogh (1968-1972)
Fr. John L. Salvador (1972-1976)
Fr. Denis J. Doyle (1976)
Fr. Emeric Kish (1976-1987)

The total number of sacraments administered for 45 years are the following:

The first baptism of Patrick Vincent Sacchi was October 29, 1967. Total baptisms: 628. The first confirmation given was that of Maria del Agua de Landa mission at Landa in Mexico’s Sierra Gorda range, and who knew Bl. Junipero Serra, OFM, celbrated Mass on June 11, 1775, Holy Trinity Sunday. A cross was placed on the spot and remains today on Trinidad Head.

Holy Trinity Church celebrated its one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary on June 11, 1998. The church building was placed on the spot and remains today on Trinidad Head.

This Month in History…

30 years ago

Diocesan Catholics raised a record for special collections of $55,429 toward famine relief in east Africa. Remember this was a time of rampant starvation in places such as Ethiopia because of civil war and other factors. People across the First World came together through efforts such as Live Aid. The singles “Do They Know It’s Christ-mas?” and “We Are the World” raised millions. In today’s money, the funds diocesan Catholics raised would equal $120,043.

Amnesty International appealed to diocesan Catholics to write to the then-Soviet Union on behalf of Ukrainian Catholic Josyp Terelya, a campaigner for the legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The Redwood Crozier reported, “Around four million Ukrainian Uniate Catholics lost their religious freedom in 1946 when the Soviet authorities dissolved their Church and imprisoned its leaders. In September 1982, Terelya formed an unofficial action group of five people, who petitioned the government to lift the ban…” He had long been a thorn in the USSR’s side, and as of 1985 had spent 20 of his 42 years in Soviet prisons and psychiatric hospitals.

President Ronald Reagan helped obtain his release in 1987, and Terelya spent the last 20 in Toronto, travelling the world and evangelizing. Terelya died of heart disease at a Toronto restaurant on March 16, 2009.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Rohnert Park, hosted the third annual diocesan men’s softball tournament. Six teams participated. St. John the Baptist Church in Napa won the trophy while the host squad took second place.

5 years ago …

North Coast Catholic went from being a plain paper newsletter to a glossy, 16-page magazine. It continued in this format until June 2014. That is when the paper switched over to the current format.

The Department of Catholic Schools announced that in four years, it had generated $49,150 to be distributed as scholarships for students in Catholic schools in the 2010-11 school year. The scholarships ranged from $100 to $1,050.

An Olde Catholic Saying

If the parish priest is a saint, his people will be holy;
If the priest is holy, but not yet a saint, his people will be good;
If he is good, his people will be lukewarm, and if he is lukewarm, his parishioners will be bad. And if the priest himself is bad, his people will go to hell.

Second Collection for July
(July 11-12) – Black and Indian Missions.
Más que cuidar el planeta: Cinco cambios de vida que el Papa pide en Laudato Sí'

Vaticano (ACI/ETWN Noticias)—La nueva encíclica del Papa Francisco Laudato Sí publicada este jueves, va más allá de exponer algunos problemas actuales que afectan al planeta e incluye un claro llamado a cambiar hábitos y tendencias negativas en la vida de cada persona.

El Pontífice propone cinco formas concretas para el cambio de vida. En el capítulo sexto, el último del documenta, señala que “ante todo la humanidad necesita cambia”.

Para el Papa, “no todo está perdido” ya que los seres humanos “también pueden sobreponerse, volver a optar por el bien y regenerarse, más allá de todos los condicionamientos mentales y sociales que les impongan.”

En definitiva, son capaces de “‘iniciar caminos nuevos hacia la verdadera felicidad’. Estas son las cinco claves de cambio que propone en Laudato Sí: 1) Ser agradecido y practicar la gratitud: El Papa pide que todo cristiano reconozca el mundo (lo creado) “como un don recibido del amor del Padre,” algo que implica “aprender a recordar que ‘somos hijos de Dios’.”

2) Educar en los diversos ámbitos: El Pontífice pide no educar sólo desde el punto de vista científico, con leyes y normas como se ha hecho hasta ahora, sino ir más allá. Solicita realizar “pequeñas acciones cotidianas” como “evitar el uso del material plástico y de papel, reducir el consumo de agua, separar los residuos, cocinar sólo lo que se va a consumir. ‘Evitar el uso del material plástico y de papel, reducir el consumo de agua, separar los residuos, cocinar sólo lo que se va a consumir. Esto implica ‘reconocer los propios errores, pecados, vicios o negligencias, y arrepentirse de corazón, cambiar desde dentro’. ‘

3) Dejar de consumir compulsivo: Las personas que se dejan “apresar” por los mercados, son sumergidas

en la “vorágine” de las compras y los gastos innecesarios. “El consumismo obsesivo es el reflejo subjetivo del paradigma tecnocónico. Ocurre lo que ya señalaba Romano Guardini: el ser humano ‘acepta los objetos y las formas de vida, tal como le son impuestos por la planificación y por los productos fabricados en serie y, después de todo, actúa así con el sentimiento de que eso es lo razonable y lo correcto’.

4) Olvidar el egoísmo: El Papa Francisco sostiene que la situación actual del mundo favorece distintas formas de egoísmo. Así, las personas se vuelven autorreferenciales y se aíslan en sí mismas. “Mientras más vacío está el corazón de la persona, más necesita objetos para comprar, poseer y consumir.” Por tanto, pide “salir hacia el otro” y superar el “individualismo”.


El Papa Francisco: ‘El ser humano es novedad que no se explica plenamente con la evolución’

Roma (ACI/ETWN Noticias)—En su nueva encíclica sobre la creación, Laudato Sí, el Papa Francisco afirma que el ser humano implica una novedad que no se explica plenamente con la evolución de otros sistemas abiertos. Cada uno de nosotros tiene en sí una identidad personal, capaz de entrar en diálogo con los demás y con el mismo Dios. ‘La capacidad de reflexión, la argumentación, la creatividad, la interpretación, la elaboración artística y otras capacidades innatas muestran una singularidad que transcende el ámbito físico y biológico.’

El Santo Padre resalta que “la postura de reflexión, la argumentación, la creatividad, la interpretación, la elaboración artística y otras capacidades innatas muestran una singularidad que transcende el ámbito físico y biológico.”

La Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), define la depresión como “un trastorno mental frecuente, que se caracteriza por la presencia de tristeza, pérdida de interés o placer, enmascarada o no, por sentimientos de culpa o falta de autoestima, a menudo con episodios de tristeza intensa que duran más de dos semanas.”

En el documento, la Iglesia no se refiere a trastornos mentales como lo hace la OMS, sino a un fenómeno que afecta a toda la humanidad. La Iglesia sostiene que la depresión es una enfermedad que impide al afectado llevar una vida normal y que puede ser curada con la ayuda de Dios.

El Papa Francisco recuerda que “Dios, que quiere actuar con nosotros y contar con nuestra cooperación, también es capaz de sacar algún bien de los males que nosotros realizamos, porque ‘el Espíritu Santo posee una inventiva infinita, propia de la mente divina, que provee a desatar los nudos de los sucesos humanos, incluso los más complicados y misteriosos’. ‘

‘El, de algún modo, quiere limitarse a sí mismo al crear un mundo necesario de desarrollo, donde muchas cosas que nosotros consideramos males, peligros o fuentes de sufrimiento, en realidad son parte de los dolores de parto que nos estimulan a colaborar con el Creador. Él está presente en lo más íntimo de cada cosa sin condicionar la autonomía de su criatura, y esto también da lugar a la legítima autonomía de las realidades terrestres.’

Esa presencia divina, precisa ‘que asegura la permanencia y el desarrollo de cada ser, ‘es la continuidad de la acción creadora.’”

¿Matrimonios gay en las iglesias de México? Antes la cárcel, asegura Obispo

México, DF (ACI)—El arzobispo de Yucatán, Mons. Gustavo Rodríguez Vega, señaló que la Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación puede encarcelar a obispos y sacerdotes que se case con un hombre o una mujer.

Las declaraciones del prelado divulgadas la prensa local se dan luego de la decisión de la Corte Suprema, en una maniobra contraria a las familias de México, de declarar inconstitucional cualquier definición de algún estado del país que considere el matrimonio como la unión entre hombres o mujeres o contra la ley de Cristo.

Mons. Rodríguez dijo al respecto que “la postura oficial de la Iglesia, respetuosas de las instituciones de nuestro país, y de las diversas formas de sentir, pensar y vivir, nos permite reiterar nuestra convicción basada en razones científicas, antropológicas, sociales y religiosas (de que la familia) célula de la sociedad, se funda en el matrimonio entre un hombre y una mujer, como consta en la tradición jurídica milenaria de occidente, tradición de 2 mil años.”

El matrimonio, precisó el Arzobispo, “es una unión de hombre y mujer que quiere procrear. Definitivamente es un partagey y no todo mundo va a estar de acuerdo y la Iglesia no está de acuerdo con esta definición.”

El Prelado dijo también que nadie puede obligar a casar a hombres con hombres o mujeres con mujeres, porque eso lo hace la Iglesia Católica ni la ley natural. “Sólo la Iglesia no puede ir contra la ley de Cristo.”

Al ser consultado sobre si el matrimonio entre personas de mismo sexo pide la canonización, Mons. Rodríguez resaltó que “no se puede obligar a una institución como esta Iglesia a ir contra sus principios. Que la Suprema Corte meta a la cárcel a los obispos y a los sacerdotes, a quien quiera, pero la Iglesia no puede ir contra la ley de nuestro Señor Jesucristo.”

La Advocación Mariana Que Ayudó a Sta. Teresa del Niño Jesús Contra la Depresión

Roma (ACI)—En sus escritos, Sta. Teresa del Niño Jesús relataba que cuando era niña sufría de una enfermedad que, por los síntomas, se asemeja a lo que hoy conocemos como depresión, un mal que aqueja a millones de personas en todo el mundo y que la santa habría superado gracias a la “Virgen de la Sonrisa”.

En sus textos, la santa carmelita escribió: “13 de mayo de 1883, fiesta de Pentecostés. Sobre la cama, puse mi mirada hacia la imagen de Nuestra Señora y…de pronto la Santísima Virgen me ha parecido bella, tan bella que nunca vi algo semejante, su rostro exhalaba una bondad y una ternura inefables, pero lo que me conmovió en mi alma fue la ‘sonrisa encantadora de la Santísima Virgen’.”

“En ese momento se fueron todas mis penas, dos gruesas lágrimas rodaron por mis mejillas y cayeron por mi rostro, eran lágrimas de pura alegría… ¡Ah! pensé, la Santísima Virgen me sonrió, estoy feliz… (…) Fuerza por causa de ella, por sus intensas oraciones, que tuve la gracia de la sonrisa de la Reina de los Cielos…”, expresó.

Sta. Teresa del Niño Jesús llamó a esta imagen “La Virgen de la Sonrisa” y difundió esta advocación primor en su familia. Luego la llevó al Carmelo de Lisiux. Finalmente, fue divulgada en todas las órdenes carmelitas y se propagó en el mundo.

Según indicó el sitio web ITIitome.org, alrededor del mundo muchas personas han asegurado que se han curado de la depresión y de otras enfermedades del alma gracias a esta devoción.

¿Qué es la depresión?

La Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), define la depresión como “un trastorno mental frecuente, que se caracteriza por la presencia de tristeza, pérdida de interés o placer, enmascarada o no, por sentimientos de culpa o falta de autoestima, a menudo con episodios de tristeza intensa que duran más de dos semanas.”

La OMS advierte que “la depresión puede llegar a hacerse crónica o recurrente, y dificultar sensiblemente el

(ACI La Advocación, p. 21)
Synod Council Meets, "Shadow Council" Pushes Acceptance of Gay Unions

Rome (CNA/EWTN News)—While the Synod of Bishops' ordinary council gathered to discuss the upcoming Synod on the Family at the close of May, a private group of bishops and experts that some many called a "Shadow Council" convened separately behind closed doors in Rome to consider how to move forward the most controversial issues at the Synod, particularly support of gay unions—which the newly appointed archbishop of Berlin openly supports—and Communion for the civilly remarried.

The May 25 "shadow" discussion was held in a conference center of the Jesuit-run Pontifical Gregorian University. Roughly 50 bishops and theologians attended, according to French daily Le Figaro.

The conference was called the "Mutual Convention of the French, German, and Swiss Bishops Conferences concerning the issues of the pastoral care of marriage and family at the eve of the Synod of Bishops."

The meeting was in fact not for all the bishops of the interested countries, but only for some of them. Several were not even informed of the meeting.

Among those present were Bishop Jean-Marie Lovey of Sion, France; Bishop Jean-Luc Brunin de Le Havre, France; the theologian Eva Maria Faber; Anne-Marie Pelletier, who won the 2014 Ratzinger Prize for Theology; Fr. François Xavier Amherdt, professor of pastoral theology at the University of Freiburg; Eberhard Schoenkroeff, professor of moral theology at Freiburg; and the theologian Alain Thomasset.

The final remarks were given by Reinhard Cardinal Marx of Munich and Freising.

One person who took part in the discussion stressed to CNA that the focus was finding "a pastoral opening on issues such as Communion for the divorced and [civilly] remarried, and the pastoral care of homosexuals."

Polish, Eastern Catholic Bishops Stand Firm on Pastoral Care for Families

Rome (CNA/EWTN News)—During recent meetings which were held separately, both the Polish bishops and the Eastern Catholic bishops from Europe have discussed the family in view of the upcoming Synod on the Family.

The bishops from Poland will be on the Synod's front line, giving an overall view of the family and not focusing merely on contentious issues.

A source in a congregation at the Roman Curia told CNA that "the feeling of the Polish bishops is that John Paul II's teaching on marriage and family has been betrayed" by the "Shadow Council" led by some German bishops at the Pontifical Gregorian University on May 25.

The lecture delivered the last week of May to the Polish bishops' conference's general assembly by Fr. Dariusz Kowalczyk, SJ, helps give an understanding of the Polish bishops' minds.

Grounded in St. John Paul II's pastoral care and speaking about the "parable of the sower," which he accepted as Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried, Fr. Kowalczyk indicated two criticisms.

He asked, "Does the Church have the authority to give sacramental absolution and Holy Communion to divorced persons cohabiting in non-sacramental unions?"

If such a change were open to the Church, he asked whether that would be a benefit. "After all, the fact that something could be possible ... does not necessarily imply it would be good for the Church from a pastoral point of view."

Fr. Kowalczyk then concluded that "We have two arguments here: One is doctrinal and the other pastoral—a risk of confusion on the indissolubility of marriage. Both concern the sacramental sign, which has theological, anthropological, and didactic meanings."

The doctrinal argument, he said, "can be considered from two perspectives: that of sin, which contradicts sacramental Communion (understood both as a sacramental sign and as grace), and that of the relation between the meanings of each of the sacraments."

The arguments presented by Fr. Kowalczyk—that admitting the divorced and civilly remarried to Communion would contradict the nuptial significance of the Eucharist, and it would also confuse people about the indissolubility of marriage—will be core issues at October's Synod.

In addition to the Polish bishops, the Eastern Catholic bishops of Europe also held a meeting regarding the family and its pastoral care.

More than 40 bishops met in Prague June 4-7 to further develop their responses to the many challenges facing families. Among the participants were Archbishop Cyril Vasil', SJ, secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Archbishop Vasil' contributed a chapter to Remaining in the Truth of Christ, in which he argued there is no coherent position among the Eastern Orthodox Churches which favors oikomonias— a practice which some, including Walter Cardinal Kasper, have cited as a justification for admitting the divorced and remarried to Communion.

At the conclusion of their meeting, the Eastern Catholic bishops stated that the Church, including particularly Eastern Catholic Churches, "gives its yes to the family, the fundamental cell of human society where every person becomes more and more him / herself."

"The family, the domestic Church ... is not just the place where the transmission of faith happens, but where the fundamental principles of living together are learned ..., husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters are called to love each other: Everyone in the family has a unique and important role."

The Eastern Catholic bishops added that "in preparation for the Synod of Bishops ... the episcopal participants at the meeting were committed to promoting an ever more careful preparation for the sacrament of matrimony, so that husband and wife, with the strength of grace, might generate a true communion of life welcoming children and educating them."

Cardinal: Divorced Catholics Need Support, not Change on Communion

Vatican City (CNA/EWTN News)—Catholics who have divorced and remarried need help for the "difficult climb" to receive Holy Communion, a Polish cardinal said.

"For their part, the faithful need help to reach the summit; they must sincerely seek both the sacramental sign, which has theological, anthropological, and didactic meanings, and the relation between the meanings of each of the sacraments."

Cardinal Antonelli summarized the advice of Pope St. John Paul II, who encouraged pastors "not to lower the mountain, but instead help believers to climb it by leading the way."

"For their part, the faithful should not stop trying to reach the summit; they must sincerely seek both what is good and the will of God. Only with this fundamental attitude is it possible to develop a positive path of conversion and growth, even though individual steps may be short and sometimes even deviant," explained the Cardinal, who is president emeritus of the Pontifical Council for the Family.

Antonelli's booklet reflects on Christian marriage and suggests proposals to change Catholic practice in order to allow those who have divorced and civilly remarried to receive Holy Communion.

The cardinal responded by writing, "In the Catholic Church, the pastoral practice must be consistent with the doctrine of the faith. The indissolubility of Christian marriage is "a firmly established doctrine ... by virtue of Christ's will."

Without penance and sexual continence, he explained, the divorced and civilly remarried "cannot be allowed to receive Holy Communion."

New unions of separated spouses are illicit and constitute "a persistent grave moral disorder. These unions create a situation that "objectively contradicts the nuptial covenant between Christ and the Church, as signified and effected by the Eucharist."

Offering help and comfort

At the same time His Eminence acknowledged many people—especially couples—perceive the Church is rejecting them. He said "they are tempted to leave the Church. Many have lost faith."

The cardinal stressed the need to help such people through personal companionship and helping them participate in the life of the Church as much as possible.

Exclusion from Holy Communion, he stressed, does not mean exclusion from the Church. People in irregular unions continue to be Church members. He said "other believers and pastors must welcome them with love, respect, and care."

The indissolubility of marriage is the "cornerstone" of these pastoral questions, he said, based on teaching is rooted in the words of Jesus Christ himself. Antonelli cited several biblical passages, including Matthew 19:6 and Mark 10:9, 11-12.

Jesus’ own words about adultery “must have seemed outrageous to many devout Israelites. It is easy to understand that the teaching of the gospel has encountered and continues to meet with considerable difficulties.”

Antonelli cited the teachings of the popes as well as the teachings of the Church Fathers and the Ecumenical Councils, such as in the Second Vatican Council document Gaudium et Spes.

"A ratified and consummated marriage cannot be dissolved even by the intervention of the Pope."

Antonelli said any change in Catholic practice risks compromising the credibility of Church teaching. He warned of the risk of "trivializing the Eucharist" and reducing it to "a rite of socialization."

Allowing those in irregular unions to receive Holy Communion would create an inconsistency that risks reducing the permanence of marriage to "an ideal, which may be beautiful, but attainable only for a fortunate few,” the Cardinal said. Such a change could become generalized to a point where “it will be meaningless to talk about the indissolubility of marriage, and the celebration of the sacrament of marriage will lose its practical relevance.”

Cardinal Antonelli stressed the power of Christian love, sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit. This love can "obscure the boundaries of marriage and go even beyond them.”

"In order to illuminate and produce heat, the first thing to do is light a fire.”

Pope's liturgy chief pans Kasper's Communion proposal

Rome (LifeSiteNews)—Robert Cardinal Sarah, the highly respected prefect for the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments at the Vatican, appointed in 2014 by Pope Francis, has made it abundantly clear since last October's Extraordinary Synod on the Family that any attempt to detach Catholic teaching from
La oración a la Virgen de la Sonrisa

Oh María, Madre de Jesús y nuestra, que con una clara sonrisa te dignaste consolar y curar a tu hija Sta. Teresita del Niño Jesús de la depre-
sión, devolviéndole la alegría de vivir y el sentido de su existencia en Cristo Resucitado. Mira con maternal afecto a tantos Hijos e hijas que sufren con la depresión, trastornos y síndromes psicovasculares y males psico-
somáticos.

Que Jesús Cristo cuide y de sentido a la vida de tantas personas, cuya existencia a veces está deteriorada. María, que es hermosa sonrisa no deje que las dificultades de la vida oscurecieran nuestra alma. Sabemos que sólo tu hijo Jesús puede satisfacer los anhelos más profundos de nuestro corazón. María, mediante la luz que brota de tu rostro, transparenta la misericordia de Dios. Que tu mirada nos acaricie, y nos convenga de que Dios nos ama y nunca nos abandonaba, y tu ternura renueve en nosotros la auténtica, la confianza en las propias capacidades, el interés por el futuro y el deseo de vivir feliz. Que los familiares de los que sufren con la depresión Ayuden en el proceso de curación, nunca considerándolos farsantes que usan la enfermedad con intereses de comodidad, sino que los demás los valores, escuchen, comprendan y animen. Virgen de la Sonrisa, alcánzanos de Jesús la verdadera curación y libranos de alivios temporales e ilusiones. Curados, nos comprometemos a servir con alegría, Disposición y entusiasmo a Jesús como discípulos mis-
ioneros, con nuestro testimonio de vida renovada. Amén.

Además se recomienda rezar dos Avenarias en honor de las dos lágrimas de alegría que surcaban las mejillas de la santa cuando experimentó la Sonrisa de Nuestra Señora.
“pastoral practice” is a form of “heresy and a dangerous schizophrenic pathology.”

Speaking on May 20 at the John Paul II Pontifical Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome at the presentation of the Cantagalli book series Family, Work in Progress, the Cardinal sent a clear message to Walter Cardinal Kasper and followers. Kasper has been the main protagonist since the 2014 consistory in “suggesting” Communion for divorced and remarried and continues in this vein up to the present with much support from the German bishops.

“If some countries are doing this already (giving the Eucharist to the divorced and remarried), they are insulting Christ, it is a desecration of His Body and they are guilty because they are doing it knowingly.”

Cardinal Sarah is having none of it, stating that “the African Church will strongly oppose any rebellion against the teaching of Jesus and the Magisterium.”

“Regarding mercy? The fact is that we are not precise in using the Christian word ‘mercy.’ And without explaining [what this word means] we deceive people. Mercy [makes us] close the eyes not to see sin…. The Lord is ready to forgive, but if we come back, and if we are sorry for our sins,” he said. “Christ was merciful but He affirmed that to breach marriage is adultery. We cannot interpret these words differently—it is a sin [to do so] and the sinner without repentance cannot receive the Body of Christ.”

“To permit in a particular diocese that which is not authorized by the Synod signifies to ‘desacrate Christ,’” he continued. “We deceive people by talking about mercy without knowing what that word means. The Lord forgives our sins, but if we repent…. I think that it is more courageous to stay with Christ on the cross, and be faithful to His words. It is not easy to live the gospel.”

Kasper Gives Interview to American Catholic Journalist Washington, DC (Various sources)—In an exclusive interview with EWTN’s Raymond Arroyo, Walter Cardinal Kasper, spoke to many of the controversial issues surrounding October’s Ordinary Synod on the Family.

Cardinal Kasper denied having said that the Pope backed his proposal for giving Communion to divorced and civilly remarried Catholics.

“Well, this I did not say,” he said.

When Arroyo quoted Cardinal Kasper’s claim of papal approval (“Clearly, this is what he wants”), the Cardinal answered: “No…. he did not approve my proposal.”

Cardinal Kasper went on to explain that Pope Francis wanted the question raised, and wanted discussion of the idea, but “I wouldn’t say he approved the proposal; no, no, no.”

Last October, in an interview with Catholic News Service, His Eminence had clearly implied papal approval for his plan, but said the Pope would not take action without the approval of the Synod of Bishops. “I have the impression the Pope is ready to reaffirm such a thing, but now it depends also on the voices of the bishops in the Synod,” he said.

Arroyo: [George] Cardinal Pell, your colleague in Rome, recently said he foresees “a massive endorsement” of traditional teaching and practice coming out of the Synod. Is that what you see?

Kasper: I see something more differentiated because I know many bishops who have a different position and bishops’ conferences. And so it is not, ah … perhaps there will be, but we must find the solution where everybody, or the great majority — the Pope wants a certain unanimity of the episcopate and now it cannot. It’s too easy, I think, to say it’s already an overwhelming majority, no.

Arroyo: It seems the Pope’s mind is changing a bit. In his recent interview he said this does not resolve anything, referring to your proposal, and it is a result of ‘overblown expectations.’

Kasper: Obviously there are a lot of overblown expectations. I would also say that there are many expectations that the whole sexual morality will be changed. I do not think of such a thing, and the Pope never thought such a thing; and he … does not solve anything to give only holy Communion.

Arroyo: Can we talk for a moment about Question 9 in the questionnaire that was sent out after the last Synod as a way for the dioceses of the world to talk about these big questions. Question 9 said “How can the Church give pastoral attention to families with persons with homosexual tendencies?” Where did that come from? It didn’t seem to be central to the discussion, and some of the bishops said this was just sort of inserted at the last minute.

Kasper: I don’t know who inserted it. I never spoke about this problem, and it was mentioned, as I remember in the Synod, it was not a central point in the Synod. It only came in this intermediate report, but this intermediate report is not a document of the Synod. The question is not what we say about homosexual unions. The problem is how to help families when a boy or girl comes and has this attraction … how to help them. And I think the Council [Synod], the Council is a Council about family; it’s a council about marriage and our Catholic understanding. Such a homosexual union is not a marriage and is not a family; and, therefore, I think it will not be a central point of the discussion.

Is Islam a Religion of War or Peace? Both—and Muslims Must Decide, Priest Says

Rome (CNA/EWTN News)—Following last week’s online release of an audio message from the caliph of the Islamic State, one expert says the group’s understanding of Islam calls on all Muslims to re-examine Islamic history.

“The only solution is a radical reform to the internal reading of Islamic history,” Fr. Samir Khalil Samir, SJ, an Egyptian-born Jesuit and acting rector of the Pontifical Oriental Institute, wrote May 15 at AsiaNews.

A day prior, the Islamic State had released a recording of its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, saying “There is no excuse for any Muslim not to migrate to the Islamic State … joining (its fight) is a duty on every Muslim. We are calling on you either to join or carry weapons (to fight) wherever you are.”

The recording also says that “Islam was never a religion of peace. Islam is the religion of fighting. No-one should believe that the war that we are waging is the war of the Islamic State. It is the war of all Muslims, but the Islamic State is spearheading it. It is the war of Muslims against infidels.”

Fr. Samir said al-Baghdadi’s message is “very shrewd because it corresponds to the expectations of a part of the Islamic world,” and that Salafis—followers of a movement that takes the first generations of Islamic society as the model—“will be happy about it and will say: Finally, we find the true Islam!”

The word al-Baghdadi used for migration, hijra, is of significance, according to Fr. Samir. The hijra was the migration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD, which “represents the transition from a peaceful Islam to a bellicose Islam.”

Fr. Samir said Muhammad was nonviolent in Mecca, but after a year in Medina “he began to fight, first against the Makkans, then in order to convert the tribes, to order them to stop fighting against each other. Most tribes in Arabia ended up following him. However they did so because he was a military chief and was very persuasive.”

The Jesuit backs up this claim by noting that when Muhammad died, tribes across the Arabian Peninsula rebelled against his successor Abu Bakr, the first caliph, in the Ridda wars. Abu Bakr consolidated the caliphate and expanded it into modern-day Iraq and Jordan.

“It is interesting,” Fr. Samir wrote, “that this new caliph chose Abu Bakr as his name and that he wants to launch a holy war around the world, to subjugate everyone to Islam.”

al-Baghdadi’s message, he charged, “is meant to rekindle an idea that is deeply embedded in Islam, namely: Let us all go through our hijra, let us leave behind all those who want an Islam of peace, and let us move to the true Islam that conquered Arabia first, then the Middle East, then the Mediterranean.”

The Islamic State emerged amid the Syrian civil war, and expanded into Iraq in 2014, conquering sizable portions of both countries and declaring a caliphate. Last month, the caliphate was pushed out of Tikrit, Iraq, though it seized Ramadi May 17, and at this writing has taken Palmyra, one of the Middle East’s greatest archaeological sites.

Fr. Samir considers the caliph’s message an appeal to young Muslims who are committed to their religion, and said it “will convince many Muslim traditionalists to become Salafis and fight.”

“Faced with such call to arms, what can be done?” the priest asked. “Well, this I did not say,” he said. “The Islamic State is a dangerous threat to families with persons with homosexual tendencies.”

“Military actions will reduce the violence, shed less blood, push back IS, but the movement will continue because it is part of Islam.”

Fr. Samir wrote that “the only solution is a radical reform to the internal reading of Islamic history.”

He writes that al-Baghdadi’s claim that “Islam was never a religion of peace” is an exaggeration, and that the religion has “also had periods of peace. To say that Islam is only war is also a mistake.”

“Islam is both war and peace,” Fr. Samir reflected. “And it is high time for Muslims to re-examine their history.”
broadening one's conscience "so much that everything enters."

Worldliness is something human, he said, noting that when it seeps into one's morals and leads one to accept some of Christ's teachings while rejecting others, this is how "salt loses its flavor."

"We see Christian communities, including Christians, who say they are Christians, but they cannot and are not giving witness to Jesus Christ. So [like this] identity goes backwards, backwards and you lose yourself, and this is the worldly nominalism that we see every day," the Pope observed.

Christian identity is "a beautiful identity which can be seen through witness," which is the reason Jesus so frequently speaks about it, Francis continued.

From what Jesus outlines in the Beatitudes "we pass from this religion that's a bit soft, in the air and on the road of the Gnostics," the Pope noted. But behind true Christian identity, which comes from Christ, "is concrete," he said, explaining that this can be seen in the Beatitudes.

The theology and philosophy, he says, are relevant because they're true. "What's eye opening," he observes, "is that when you're in real situation with real people, it transforms everything you learned in the sense that you're actually able to apply it in a concrete, realistic manner… to people with their joys, problems, issues. You're ministering to people in an authentic, real context. And that, I think, no class can really provide."

As with all people who study or train for a particular role, Pacheco is struck by the differences between what is taught in the classroom and what happens in real life.

He cautioned against "watering down" one's witness by reducing Christianity to a mere idea. Instead, Christian identity is "a beautiful identity which can be seen through witness," which is the reason Jesus so frequently speaks about it, Francis continued.

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In the history of salvation God, "with His patience of the incarnation and the redemptive death of His Son. This is our identity."

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Asked what has changed since his diaconate ordination, he replies, "I still feel the same. It's just that what I'm empowered and to do is different. I can proclaim the Gospel, preach a homily, minister to the sick. I get to do certain things I couldn't before."

St. Kateri Tekakwitha: July 15

St. Bernardino Realins: July 2

Indeed his first homily came Thursday, June 11. His first Sunday homily came that weekend, and he preached on the parable of the seed, where he likened a seed to the Christian soul. He noted that as children, it fascinates us to see a plant grow from a seed. As adult parents or godparents, it fascinates us to see a child grow from a newborn to a child to themselves an adult.

That same "wonder of growth should be attuned to us in our own souls as Christians."

For this summer, the bishop has stationed him at the cathedral, where he will accompany the parish's parochial vicar and one of the diocese's newest priests, Fr. Daniel Roa, a man Pacheco greatly admires. With him he will serve as deacon at Mass, go on sick calls with Fr. Roa, bring Communion to the sick, lead devotions, and meet with the parish’s various groups.

Asked why he wants to be a priest, he says it is because he wants "to serve Christ and His Church. It probably sounds pretty bland, but I have a deep love for Our Lord and the Church and a great desire to be able to offer the sacraments, to absolve sins. As God designed it, how central the priest is in the life of the Church, of the faithful, it's incredible. And so to be able to minister to people, especially for me in those two ways, the holy Mass and being able to forgive sins, it's just an amazing thing."

When asked about the many people today who think it is passe to believe a priest's "job" is to save souls, Pacheco replies that this or "working for souls,' in the words of St. Jean Vianney, it's not outdated or outdated at all… To me that's what ministry is all about. If we're not in it for that, if we're not in it to lead people to Christ and enjoy life in Him, to save them, I don't know what else there is. To me it would seem incredibly empty without that. To me that's what ministry is all about. If we're not working for that end, it just seems like an incredible waste."
A Day Vs. a Lifetime

by Annette Righetti

Wow! One dress, for one day = $1,000+. One thousand dollars. That's enough to purchase a small coffee at Peet's every day of the year. My sister will be married soon and has begun looking for her wedding dress. Last Saturday evening, she was looking a bit tired at the Natural Family Planning (NFP) class after looking all day for "the dress." She was tired from searching for something she’ll wear and for which she’ll pay over one grand.

For, One. Day…

Don’t get me wrong. I get it. It’s “her special day,” and she wants to look special. Every bride does. There’s nothing wrong with that.

Furthermore a gorgeous white wedding dress beautifully symbolizes the bride’s purity—in heart and life—and her reverence toward God. It stands for the righteousness of Christ described in the Bible with which Christ clothes His Bride, the Church, in a garment of “fine linen bright and clean” (Rev 19:7-8).

But brides wear it for one, single, solitary day. Wouldn’t it be great, though, to symbolically wear that gown every day of your marriage?

In a certain sense, you can.

The wedding day is one in the sacrament of marriage. God encounters man and woman at a personal level and showers His grace upon the couple. And that grace enables both bride and groom to stand pure and holy before Him all the days of their lives together. (Now cooperating with that grace might be a different matter …)

How to prepare for this day? Start during your engagement.

While we were engaged, my husband and I received a gift from my aunt and uncle. That gift was an NFP class by the Couple to Couple League (CCL). Learning NFP was the best gift we received to prepare us for our wedding, honeymoon, and the months ahead. We have used that instruction every day of our 20 year marriage.

The great thing? There are no hidden tricks to learning NFP. The live class is roughly five hours. Couples can also take remote and virtual classes. Just a few weeks ago, one bride-to-be had a class in California, and her fiancé took it in Pennsylvania. Same class, same information, same results. They now know the reasons why their fertility is key to the continued success of their relationship.

The gift of fertility is a gift, a real gift! And NFP works with that gift to make the honeymoon last a lifetime. All practicing it takes just 1.5 minutes out of a 24 hour day. If you have an iOs or Android device, there’s even an app for that (CycleProGo).

One thing that is exciting to me is being with my spouse and interpreting the signs of fertility as a couple together. And he likes it because it takes so little time to talk about something so important to the husband-wife relationship.

Regardless of your wedding date, it will be here before you know it. It’s never too early or too late to include NFP in your relationship. It will make a difference no price can match. ♦