The phenomenon is well-documented. When young Catholics go away to college, a troublingly high percentage of them stop practicing their faith. And many who stop going to Mass in college never return.

Initiatives like FOCUS, and Newman Centers across the country, are all geared toward helping young Catholics stem the tide—to grow as Catholics in college, rather than wither.

Last Easter, three young men in Colorado were part of a different trend. They didn’t leave Catholicism in college. Instead, they became Catholics.

Jake Keller, a civil engineering major; Ian Horton, a finance major; and Anthony Ascolese, a natural resource management major, will be upcoming sophomores at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Keller and Ascolese began their freshman year in 2018 with little religious formation at all. Horton, who had been a committed atheist until age 17, entered the University of Colorado at Boulder as a newly converted Protestant. He transferred to CSU during his second semester.

Ascolese told CNA that he grew up occasionally

Cardinal Müller: Amazon Synod is a ‘pretext for changing the Church’

ROME, July 15 (LifeSiteNews) — In a forceful new interview, Cardinal Gerhard Müller has said the upcoming synod of bishops on the Amazon is “a pretext for changing the Church.” “The fact that it is being held in Rome is intended to underlie the beginning of a new church,” he added.

In the July 11 interview with La Nuova Bussola Quotidiana (see full text below), the former prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has also seconded Cardinal Walter Brandmuller’s critique of the Amazon Synod’s working document as “heretical.”

Why Should Catholics Care About the Hong Kong Protests?

A CNA Explainer

Hong Kong, China, Aug 28 (CNA) - The people of Hong Kong are no strangers to political protest.

Large-scale demonstrations have rocked the island territory since early June, when an estimated 1 million marchers took to the streets, chanting and singing.

The protests began as a response to a controversial bill, put forth in February by the government of chief executive Carrie Lam, which would have allowed the Chinese government to extradite alleged criminals from Hong Kong to stand trial on the mainland.

Protestors vehemently opposed the bill, sparking the first major protest on June 6. Though Lam suspended the bill June 15 and even apologized, protestors feared

From then on, I recognized that I appreciated Catholicism more than Protestantism because it was far more beautiful, interesting, and, most importantly, that is when I realized it was true.

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Ascolese told CNA that he grew up occasionally
Lead Us Not Into Temptation

Last month I wrote about my gratitude for your generosity to the Diocesan Capital Campaign and this month I need to revisit the events of July as they relate to the loss of Parish Funds as a result of theft. Insurers, and others involved in fraud investigation, know that there are many ways in which loved and trusted employees, including priests, can steal from non-profit organizations, in this case, Parishes. We reported to all of the Parishes on the weekend of July 20-21 the fact that theft by a priest had been occurring in the Diocese for at least the past 15 years. This is an admission of horrible distress and sadness. In retrospect it is possible for many of us to call to mind incidents and anomalies which were unusual and yet which did not quite rise to the level of ‘proof’ of theft. Perhaps we can even chastise ourselves by saying, “We should have known”. It is easy to look back and to say, “We should have known” but the truth is that we had reason for suspicion but not a strong enough level of suspicion to make an accusation of actual theft.

Something which, unfortunately, is not well known is that the Diocese has mandated certain procedures surrounding Collections and accounting which are designed to assure that theft, such as that we have recently discovered, is made extremely difficult. These are found in the Parish Financial Management Handbook which has been given to every Parish and which is posted on the Diocesan website under the Finance Office of the Diocese. The policy concerning collections starts with sequentially numbered Security Bags which are kept in the Parish Offices. Each weekend a sufficient number of bags is to be set out for the weekend Collections. Ideally, these are labelled in the Office identifying the Mass time and whether it is the First or Second Collection. The numbers of these Bags are recorded and the Bags brought to the Church for the Ushers. Immediately upon completion of the Collection the money and envelopes are placed in the appropriate Bag which is then immediately securely sealed before it is brought forward in the Offertory Procession. The Ushers are asked to sign the Bag signifying that they are the ones who secured the Bag. Immediately after Mass, or sometimes even at the time of the Offertory two ushers bring the sealed Bag to a secure location, ideally a safe with a double key and a drop box capacity. The goal is to assure that no single person, alone is ever allowed to have un supervised access to these secured Bags or their contents. This protects the Ushers from accusations of theft and it assures no unauthorized access to the proceeds of the collection. At the end of the weekend, the safe should contain all of the Bags used for that weekend’s collections. If it should happen that one of the collections was inadvertently forgotten then the Ushers need to note this fact on the empty Bag and turn that Bag in to the secure safe.

When it comes time for the collections to be counted, or preferably three persons together go to the secure safe and bring the proceeds of the weekend collection to the room where the designated counters are assembled. The first order of business is to assure that all of the Bags distributed by the Office before the weekend are available for counting after the weekend. The sequential numbers are then compared with the Office list and nothing else is done until it is certain that all of the Bags delivered to the Church have been returned. Next the counters are to assure that none of the Tamper-Resistant Bags have, in fact, been tampered with. They are not Tamper ‘proof’; it is easy to tamper with them, they are simply resistant to such tampering. For instance, if someone pokes a pen sized hole in the Bag it is easy to then draw out individual bills without enlarging the hole. Someone could claim that the holes were made to help air escape so that the Bags could be flattened. Unfortunately, it is also possible that such holes allow money to escape as well. The Ushers are responsible for properly flattening the Bags as they seal them so that they can be stored more easily. These steps are all important as are the other accounting steps outlined in the Parish Financial Management Handbook.

The following of these policies does not presume that volunteers are inclined to steal from the Church but if there is any temptation to do so then we help eliminate the temptation. As I noted in my announcement in July: ‘Only those you trust can steal from you. This is a part of the Lord’s Prayer: Lead us not into temptation.’

From the Bishop

Bishop Robert F. Vasa is the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Santa Rosa.
Minneapolis, Minn., Aug 28 (CNA) - Bishop Andrew Cozzens became a bishop as his local Church was in the midst of a crisis.

"There was this kind of fire that was burning on the front page of the paper everyday," Cozzens told CNA, "and then I got this call."

The call was his appointment as an auxiliary bishop in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Cozzens was appointed to that role just days after a whistleblower leveled charges of misconduct and cover-up against Archbishop John Nienstedt, who eventually resigned from his post amid scandal.

The archdiocese was in a state of chaos, and, Cozzens said, Catholics were in a great deal of pain.

"I was named a bishop at a very unique time, and it was so unique that it was clear to me God had planned it," Cozzens told CNA.

He told CNA that he knew, from the time he was appointed, "that the Lord was calling me to be a part of healing, I didn't have any idea what that meant when I heard that word in prayer."

"Since the beginning," he said, "I have felt like that's why God made me a bishop and that's what he wants me to do, and so I need to help do that."

If God chose Bishop Cozzens to be a part of the Church's healing ministry, meeting Gina Barthel was a big part of how that healing ministry would begin.

He remembers when she emailed him, in early 2014. It was just months after he'd become a bishop.

Barthel wrote to Cozzens that she had been a victim of clergy sexual abuse, and that she wanted to tell him her story. He accepted. They met in his office. Bishop Cozzens hadn't met with many victims of abuse before. But when Gina told her story, he was disturbed. And he wanted to help her find the healing she sought.

"What was most disturbing about her story was the clear abuse of the office of spiritual direction. And since I'm a spiritual director, and have been a spiritual director, I understand how sacred that space is, and so the fact that it was clearly abused was for me the disturbing part," Cozzens told CNA.

"Basically I knew that it would be very difficult for her to trust anyone, especially a priest or a bishop, so I was grateful that she was willing to share with me. And that was always the goal from the beginning, was to provide her an example of someone she could trust, and let her know that I was available to help her in any way that I could, to help her find healing, but obviously you can't force those kinds of things."

Gina Barthel told CNA that she's found healing - and found Christ—through the Church, and with the help of Cozzens. But, she says, it wasn't easy.

In 2005, nine years before she contacted Cozzens, Barthel was a novice in a religious community. She hoped to profess vows as a religious sister. In the course of spiritual direction, she told a priest, Fr. Jim Montanaro, OMV, that she had been sexually abused, and how that had impacted her spiritual and emotional life.

"I was named a bishop at a very unique time, and it was so unique that it was clear to me God had planned it," Cozzens told CNA.

The relationship continued until, after a few months, Barthel told Montanaro that he had no interest at all living in New York City, suddenly capitalizing with major depressive episodes. And then he would tell her that God's using you to heal Papito. Like, 'that's really special,' she said.

Looking back, Barthel says she can see that Montanaro was using her insecurities to manipulate her. But at the time, she says, she felt confused, and she trusted the priest.

"And I remember asking, 'Well, do I need to go to confession? Maybe I should go to confession.' And he always said no. 'No, we don't need to go to confession. This is part of God's will. This isn't just okay, and it's just not good, and just not great, it's holy.'"

The relationship continued until, after a few months, Barthel told Montanaro that it had to end.

She told CNA she realized things were wrong when the priest admitted he hadn't told his own spiritual director about the sexual relationship.

"He said, 'Some things are meant to be kept a secret between you and God.' The minute he said that, my whole world started crashing down," Barthel said.

She told a priest she trusted about the relationship. That priest called Montanaro and confronted him. Barthel said that Montanaro admitted the whole thing, but seemed to see nothing wrong with the relationship. The priest next called Montanaro's superiors, and Montanaro was removed from ministry.

A spokesman for the St. Ignatius Province of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary told CNA that the province "first became aware of her allegations relating to Fr. Montanaro in November of 2007, when a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis notified the rector of the retreat house where Fr. Montanaro resided at the time."

"The then-Provincial of the St. Ignatius Province met with Fr. Montanaro on the day he heard of the allegations. Following that meeting, Fr. Montanaro was immediately removed from public ministry and was to cease all contact with that individual."

"In January of 2008, the Provincial revoked Fr. Montanaro's priestly faculties, and Montanaro subsequently sought, and obtained, dismissal from the Oblates, followed by laicization from sacred orders from Rome, which was granted in 2010. Montanaro has had no role or ministry with the St. Ignatius Province since then," (see Healing and Trust, page 21)
(Amazon Synod, cont. from page 1)

 Cardinal Müller said the “cosmovision” it proposes is “pan-naturalistic” and “similar to Marxism.” He also said “we must absolutely reject” expressions such as “ecological conversion,” insisting “there is only conversion to the Lord.”

Regarding the working document’s emphasis on “Mother Earth,” the former head of the CDF said: “Our mother is a person, not the Earth. And our mother in faith is Mary.”

The cardinal called the document’s push for an “inculturated liturgy” a move “to change not only what is ecclesiastical right, but also what is divine right.”

Asked if he is concerned about being labeled an “enemy of the Pope” for levelling such criticism, Cardinal Müller says: “It is only a working document that has no magisterial value, so only the ignorant can say that those who criticize it are an enemy of the Pope.”

“Unfortunately,” the cardinal adds, “this is their trick to avoid any critical dialogue; if you try to raise an objection you are immediately labeled as an enemy of the Pope.”

Seduced by the illusion that “everything must be new” the working document, they “despire” tradition and treat Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI as “outdated,” the cardinal insists.

But “they do not see that instead they are destroying the Church. They are like blind men falling into a pit.”

Here below is an English translation of the full interview with Cardinal Gerhard Müller, with the kind permission of La Nuova Bussola.

LA NUOVA BUSSOLA: Your Eminence, you say “they want to change the Church,” but what are the clear signs of this intent?

CARDINÁL MÜLLER: The approach of Instrumentum Laboris is an ideological vision that has nothing to do directly with the theological approach to the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ, who is the Incarnate Word, true God and true man. They want to save the world according to their own idea, perhaps according to Jesus Christ, perhaps according to the Incarnate Word, true God and true man. They want to change the Church, “but what are the other objectives?”

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“The heretic knows Catholic doctrine and considers it ‘outdated’ (n. 25).”

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incredibly more worthy than the life of any animal. Today there is a reversal of this principle: if a lion is killed in Africa it becomes a world tragedy, but here children are killed in the womb of their mother and everything is fine. Stalin also held that the centrality of human dignity should be removed; in this way, he could call many men to build a channel and allow them to die for the good of future generations. These ideologies ensure that some men dominate over all others. But God is anthropocentric, the Incarnation is anthropocentric. The rejection of anthropocentrism comes only from a hatred of oneself and of others. Man in Christ as a son of the Father is theocentric and never cosmo-centric. Love for God above all else and love for one’s neighbour, this is the gravitational field of human existence.

Another magic word in the Instrumentum Laboris is inculturation, which is often associated with the Incarnation.

Using the Incarnation almost as a synonym for inculturation is the first mystification. The Incarnation is a unique, unrepeatable event. It is the Word who becomes flesh in Jesus Christ. God did not become incarnate in the Jewish religion; he did not become incarnate in Judaism. Jesus Christ is unique. This is a fundamental point, because the sacraments depend on the Incarnation, they are the presence of the Incarnate Word. One cannot abuse certain terms that are central to Christianity. The Church expresses herself in the forms of particular cultures through symbols in catechesis and the liturgy. But the sacramental signs (word and sign) effect the supernatural grace of Christ, who is present. Thus one should not despise the liturgy as “a museum piece” or “the property of a select few” (II n. 124). The “substance of the sacraments” is more important than secondary rites (language, music, etc.) and cannot be changed by ecclesiastical authority (Council of Trent, 21 sess. 1562:DH 1728).

Let us return to inculturation: it is clear from the synodal document that all the beliefs of indigenous peoples, their rites and customs must be adopted. There is also a reference to how early Christianity was inculturated in the Greek world. And it is said that, as it was done then, it must be done today with the Amazonian people.

But the Catholic Church has never accepted Greek and Roman myths. On the contrary, it rejected a civilization that despised men through slavery. The Church argues that the pagan myths may be a substitute for the theological and valid forever. As if the example of the Protestants were not enough to dispel this illusion. They do not see that instead they are destroying the Church, they are like blind men falling into a pit. The Church must develop according to the principles of Catholic theology and not of sociology or naturalism and positivism (cf. Dei Verbum, 8-10). “Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word (Dei Verbum, 24).

Translation from the Italian by Diane Montagna of LifeSiteNews.

Entrance Day for Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa

Santa Rosa, CA, August 9th After bidding farewell to their families, our new Candidates knocked on the door of Regina Pacis Convent, asking to be admitted as Aspirants to the life of a Marian Sister of Santa Rosa. The “knock” is the external sign of the internal desire. “I desire to follow Christ more closely,” she says in her heart, “Through discernment, I believe this community is where God is calling me—to learn to be a Spouse of Christ and to be a saint.” And thus, she knocks upon the convent door as an expression of her soul’s response to Almighty God.

“Come, follow me.” These are the words our Lord has tenderly spoken to these new Candidates. As each Candidate steps through the convent door, she unites with the Apostles who, out of love for Him, left everything to follow Him.

Immediately the Candidates are led to the chapel, so that Jesus and Mary may be the first to embrace them. This embrace takes form in the most beautiful way: the Candidate kisses each wound of Christ. She again says in her heart, “May I be your hands and serve your Church, may I be your feet and follow in your footsteps, and may my mind always behold Your passion.” From this point forward she is called to conform herself more closely to her future Crucified Spouse.

The now Aspirants receive candles which are placed at the feet of the Blessed Mother, entrusting from the very first moment their new journey. The Aspirants receive their first blessing from the Reverend Mother and then proceed outside to finally embrace their eagerly awaiting new Sisters.

We entrust our new Sisters to the Immaculate and Pure Heart of Mary, that she may teach and guide them in the Marian way of life.
I made a mistake. Last month I let publish a letter to the editor that really wasn’t fit for publication in the NCC (or anywhere for that matter). It is one of many such letters from various sources that come into the general communications mailbox through the Diocesan website, or directly to me as the communications director. I usually file them in an appropriately named file, unless of course the authorities need to be called because of the threatening nature of the language. This time I inadvertently added this letter to the other letters to the editor in the process, and it ended up getting printed. I certainly have learned a lot in my three years as editor of the North Coast Catholic, and one of the most valuable lessons is to pay close attention before, during, and after publishing anything, especially when someone points out the potentially serious negative consequences of doing so, and to readily admit when I made a blunder. An admission I make here and now!

Mostly, these letters in question, which never see the light of day because they are not actually constructive, are written by people who are sadly, mentally unstable, and although I am certainly not a psychologist, I think I can safely say there are emotional issues at the least, and mental (and perhaps spiritual) issues at the most, which are operative in the individual who is the author of this one. The letter itself was really much too long to be allowed in the letter to the editor section which is limited to 150 words or so, just enough to make a point. But most importantly, it directly attacked both the Holy Father, and even Pope St. John Paul II. Such ad-hominem attacks are certainly not the types of ‘proofs’ that ought to be allowed in any civil discourse about opposing ideas. These types of attacks are a ‘fallacious argumentative strategy whereby genuine discussion of the topic at hand is avoided by instead attacking the character, motive, or other attribute of the person making the argument’.

The good news is that because of my error in publishing the letter, I received three very well written and respectful letters from our readers who strongly disagreed with the NCC having published the letter. “Thank God!” I said to myself, “someone is awake out there!” I would be quite sad, and a bit frightened if there was no response, and yet I am conscious that 3 letters out of 9,000 printed papers is not the highest of ratios in terms of “engagement”.

The letter was addressing serious concern about the upcoming Synod for the Amazon, and though there are many legitimate concerns about this, or any other gathering where the Church discusses the Faith and practice handed down for 2000 years, this letter went about claiming that Pope Francis introduced pagan elements into the liturgy which ended up causing the worship of demons, etc. The important takeaway here is the fact that the Church is under attack from the spirit of confusion. There are reports from here or there that may seem credible, or incredible, but the end of every conversation between a Catholic and anyone else about matters of the Church should end up with both finding a firmer footing on the rock of truth which is the Deposit of Faith. The real question in all of these discussions is “what does the Church teach?” Thankfully we have a place to go for the answer: Scripture, Tradition, and the Teaching Magisterium. The Catechism is the book that spells it out. If these statements are hard to agree with, then through God’s kindness you may have recourse to many knowledgeable priests and deacons in your local parishes who can help you sort it all out.

Speaking of Deacons, one of the letters to the editor this month from Deacon Harry Martin, to me, was the best example of the manner in which we should be talking with our brothers and sisters regarding questions in the Church. As we journey together in fellowship on our way towards the truth, let us be mindful that we will indeed be accountable to Our Lord for the manner in which we dialogue with others.

Another important lesson here is the idea that we need to own our mistakes, and we need to own our beliefs, but not just when the consequences are within our comfort zone. If I have enough power, I can choose to make a decision that could silence you or even take you out of the game. But that doesn’t mean I am in the right for doing so; I just have more power. I could be dead wrong, and simply be too prideful, angry, or blind to admit it, so I make a move to silence what could be the voice of truth because it is irritating to my guilty conscience. Any reaction from you could cause me some trouble for a time, but since I have more power it really doesn’t matter in the end, because I am convinced I will eventually get my way precisely because I have more power. I am not risking much at all, and there is no integrity in my actions.

On the other hand, if I say or do something that shows I am completely detached form my worldly position or reputation and that puts everything at risk, even my life and livelihood, I am showing that at a minimum, I truly believe in what I am saying or doing and have taken complete responsibility for my actions. When Catholics prayerfully protest outside an abortion clinic, they are risking ridicule, and possible physical harm, like Dr. Ron Konopaski, when he was sent to the hospital some months back when a man who disagreed with his position tried to take away his sign and physically accosted Dr. Konopaski.

If someone sends a letter to the editor anonymously, they are not willing to stand up for what they believe; they are afraid of ridicule, reputational downgrades, or just too much work to defend their position, so they don’t sign their name to what they have written. With the advance of world-wide communication through the internet, many have slowly lost what moral moorings they had, and are adrift in a world where it seems like their actions and words have no consequences. Yet in terms of morality, all actions and thoughts have eternal consequences for the individual actor, as well as those whom the actor affects by their decisions.

As Catholics, in particular, as vocal Catholics who are in leadership positions, our actions reflect back on the Church. If I am a Deacon who is a real estate broker, my clients, like it or not, will make conclusions about the entire Catholic Church based on my interactions with my client. So if I use my intelligence and gift of deception to steal a property from an old lady, especially if it becomes public, it reflects back on the Church. Regardless, we will ultimately give a full and complete account face to face when we meet God. Better to admit when you are wrong, and place yourself into the infinite sea of Mercy which is the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. In our conversations about the upcoming Synod, or any matter relating to faith, let us be channels of the peace and presence of God. “Blessed are those who show Mercy, for mercy will be theirs.”

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

By Julie Sparacio

As the new school year begins, it’s that time of year when compliance becomes a big push. I have been compiling my information for our annual diocesan audit. This audit verifies our diocesan compliance with the requirements of the Charter for the Protection of Children and young People, signed by the US Bishops in June of 2002 and updated in June 2018. This particular audit period covers last year—from July 2018, to June 2019 Thirty-five of our diocesan institutions—parishes, schools and other entities were 100% compliant. That means that every person who was employed, and every volunteer who has contact with children was compliant with our diocesan Safe Environment policies. On the other hand, 23 entities are not 100% compliant. Obviously, we have room for improvement. 

I am pleased at how many entities are 100% compliant but disturbed by how many are not. While most of those that are not 100% compliant have only a handful of people who still need to complete one or both of the requirements, they should still be done. Here’s the thing—Safe Environment requirements must be completed BEFORE anyone begins working or volunteering anywhere in the diocese. While we have expanded our requirements from what is called for in the Charter by requiring all employees rather than those that have contact with children, the all employee requirement has been in place since 2005. Our current training has been required since 2017. So how is it possible that there are people who have not completed the training or background check and are working or volunteering? There are 73 employees who have not done the training, 11 who have not been fingerprinted. There are 36 volunteers who have not been fingerprinted, 34 who have not completed the training. When you are talking about over 1000 employees and over 3100 volunteers, maybe those numbers don’t sound so disturbing. But when you add that these policies and expectations have been in place for 16 years, you have to ask how come there is any location that is not 100%? 

I don’t have any answers when it comes to the why, really. People come and go and it can be hard to get volunteers. Sometimes a person is needed immediately, so maybe things slide. But when you consider the kinds of things that some of the people who have worked or volunteered in our diocese have been arrested for, it should make you pause. I have received arrest notifications for violence, drug dealing, sexual assault, sexual abuse of children, and others. I understand that those people are the exception and not the rule, but unless you run a background check, how are you going to know? And if we give an exception to this person, then that person, then soon, in slips the wolf. So, there can not be and never should be exceptions.

When it comes to the training, every person who works in the diocese, whether a paid employee or volunteer, must consider themselves a mandated reporter of child abuse, per diocesan policy. How can you report what you do not know? Many people object to the training, because they have taken other trainings before. You would be amazed, when in that situation, how recent training comes in handy, while old training flies out the window! So, we ask people to complete periodic training, to keep the information fresh in their brains. Right now, we are on a three-year cycle, asking people to retrain when a new training comes out every three years.

We have come so far and truthfully, are doing amazing. And we are so, so close to having 100%. Will you do your part? I am telling you now, so there will not be a chance that you don’t know, all employees and volunteers must be background checked through Live Scan fingerprints and complete a training. If you plan to get a job or volunteer in the diocese, you know you have to do that before you can start. You know. The diocesan website has links to both the training and the Live Scan Request forms. Go to www.srdioceste.org. On the left side, click on Child and Youth Protection Still on the left, click on the link for Live Scan Requirements and you will see links to forms, based on what category of employee or volunteer you are.

You can also click on Safe Environment Training and that will take you directly to the website for the training. Our training is called Safe Haven—It’s Up to You.

We must protect all of the children in our care. Our Church must be the safest place for children. In order for that to happen, the fence of protection we build must be solid, with no gaps, no exceptions. Please do your part. I can’t wait for the day when I can honestly report that our diocese is 100% compliant. That’s when we will all know, that as one family, we are wholly committed to doing what ever it takes, to keep children safe from child abuse.

Exorcists to Jesuit Head: Satan is Real

Vatican City, Aug 23 (CNA) - An international organization of Catholic exorcists said Thursday that the existence of Satan as a real and personal being is a truth of Christian doctrine.

“The real existence of the devil, as a personal subject who thinks and acts and has made the choice of rebellion against God, is a truth of faith that has always been part of Christian doctrine,” the International Association of Exorcists said.

The organization’s release came in response to recent remarks on the devil from Jesuit superior general Fr. Arturo Sosa, SJ, which the organization called “grave and confusing.”

The exorcists said they released their statement to provide “doctrinal clarification.”

Sosa made headlines earlier this week when he told Italian magazine Tempi that “the devil exists as a symbolic reality, not as a personal reality.”

“The devil ‘exists as the personification of evil in different structures, but not in persons, because is not a person, is a way of acting evil. He is not a person like a human person. It is a way of evil to be present in human life,’” Sosa said.

Sosa’s remarks are “outside the ordinary and extraordinary-solem magisterium” of the Church, the exorcists said.

The International Association of Exorcists is an “association of the faithful” formally approved by the Vatican’s Congregation for Clergy in 2014. Among its founders was well-known exorcist Fr. Gabriele Amorth, who died in 2016.

Sosa, 70, was elected the Society of Jesus’ superior general in 2016. A Venezuelan, he has a pontifical licentiate in philosophy and a doctorate in political science. He served as a Jesuit provincial superior in Venezuela from 1996 to 2004, and in 2014 began an administrative role at the general curia of the Jesuits in Rome.

Sosa has offered controversial comments about Satan in the past. In 2017, he told El Mundo that “we have formed symbolic figures such as the Devil to express evil.”

After his 2017 remark generated controversy, a spokesman for Sosa told the Catholic Herald that “like all Catholics, Father Sosa professes and teaches what the Church professes and teaches. He does not hold a set of beliefs separate from what is contained in the doctrine of the Catholic Church.”
[Growing up,] they have always invited me to [Catholic] stuff, and [they] invited me to the intramural fields that are on campus,” Ascolese said. “I saw this big flag that said ‘Ram Catholic,’ and I was like, ‘Oh no, here they go again,’ he told CNA.

Initially, Ascolese said, he felt uncomfortable at Catholic events. “I would just feel really out of place because I didn’t have much of a knowledge of God or anything like those traditional stories... So anytime I was there, like a Bible study or Mass, I felt really out of place.”

But he was joined at some of those events by other non-Catholics, among them Horton and Keller. That helped overcome the awkwardness. Ascolese said the community was friendly and he soon realized that “religious people” could be “ordinary people.”

As he spent time in a Catholic circle, he grew more comfortable with the faith. “I just kept growing and learning and hanging out with everyone and really falling in love with Mass. Everything about the Church was really coming together, and God was doing so much work through that,” he said.

Eventually, Ascolese attended a campus ministry retreat: “Ram Awakening.” There students participated in the sacraments, praise and worship sessions, and had religious discussions. “One of the turning points, he said, was receiving letters of encouragement from his family and strangers during the retreat.

“The amount of love I felt from them, even just reading a piece of paper. You can really see how genuine and loving every letter was, even though I didn’t know any of the people staffing it. It shows how happy, joyful, and loving they were for me being there. It was really amazing,” he said.

“I think three days after that, I went over to the Church and met with Jessica Harris who leads RCIA at St John XX III Catholic Church,” Keller said a similar story. He told CNA that he and his family and attended non-denominational services a few times each year.

At Colorado State University, Keller was invited to attend some religious events by some Catholic friends from high school. He said the events began as an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, but the faith soon became his point of interest.

“I started to become more in touch with God, praying a lot more, and believing a lot more. After joining their Bible study [and] doing a bunch of stuff with the Church, I eventually went on this retreat called Ram Awakening, we have at CSU,” he said.

“That retreat really changed me. I learned a lot about suffering and how that can make your life better,” he further added.

Keller said he especially struggled with the clergy sex abuse scandals and the Church’s stance on marriage and abortion. He said, through discussions with friends, he was better able to understand these issues.

“We talked about God, but we were also there to be there for each other and love each other. You could really see the good from that, like God was just with us during that time,” he said.

“From then on, I recognized that I appreciated Catholicism more than Protestantism because it was far more beautiful, interesting, and, most importantly, that is when I realized it was true.”

He started RCIA in Boulder, but he transferred to CSU in Fort Collins, where he is from.

“There, he said he discovered a rich and active Catholic community among the youth. He said he was further inspired to the faith by Fr. Rocco Porter, the pastor of St. John XXIII Catholic Church near the university.

Holton said he is inspired by discovering the traditions of the Church and participating in Mass, noting he has had a strong connection to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, the Latin Mass. He said he’s realized, through the impact of the saints and Catholic intellectuals, that the Church has been the most influential institution in the world’s history.

“I love to know that I’m part of the faith and the Church that Jesus himself founded. And to know that I’m participating in the original sacrifice of the Mass that’s been going on for 2000 years.”

“I love to couple the Bible with the Sacred Tradition that we have of how we do love Mary [and] how we do reverence the saints,” he said. “Not only do we have [these saints], we have 2000 years of some of the best philosophers and theologians the world has ever seen.”

The three men said that through RCIA, they were able to grow closer to Christ together, pray for each other, and discuss the intricacies of the faith. Ascolese said it is exciting to have a group of men who shared in each other’s enthusiasm and kept each other accountable.

“We talked about God, but we were also there to be there for each other and love each other. You could really see the good from that, like God was just with us during that time,” he said.

“Then I knew I wanted to become Catholic, saying prayers and working with Jake...and God was working through my prayers and that really helped me too, seeing something was working.”

Ascolese recalled the power of prayer: One night all of the men went to Qdoba in place of Bible study. Keller had not yet decided to become Catholic. But after their conversation at Qdoba, he received a text from Keller about his conversion.

“When I got to my dorm room I got a text from him saying ‘hey, can you send me [the RCIA] number.’ Which was wild to me, because I was just praying about that stuff,” Ascolese said.

All the men said they felt supported by their parish and the RCIA program but added that it has been a challenge to face ethical questions, including abortion and gay marriage, with other students on campus.

When asked about additional tools parishes should offer to support new Catholics, Horton said there should be mentorship opportunities or an apologetic course.

“I think what parishes can do to support new converts would be to have a bit of spiritual mentorship by either a priest, an RCIA leader, or a theologian,” he said.

“I am in favor of apologists,” he said. “I think it is very important in this day and age when most young people leave the Church because of questions about science and genesis.”

All three men are excited and joyful for their encounter with new faith. They said the experience has not only challenged each other to entertain intellectual properties of the faith but it also has encouraged them to embrace a life of virtue.

The change in his lifestyle has been a thrill, said Anthony, “seeing the difference of having God in your life can do for you, especially in the truest form through Catholicism. You can see so much good from it and the suffering you do get ultimately leads to good.”

Dear Editor,

In the August issue of North Coast Catholic, I was appalled to read the letter from Elijah, Patriarch of the Byzantine Catholic Patriarchate. Good Lord! Seldom have I read such a hateful, venomous screed. Here is a sample sentence: “Bergoglio’s (He refers to call him Pope Francis) anti-Church because the synod on synod drags people to hell!” Here is another: “The archheretic Bergoglio abuses the papacy and promotes a pagan spirit in the Liturgy by introducing animistic elements.” (How? Where?)

This man sounds unhinged. I know we have freedom of speech, but this truly sounds like hate speech to me. Why would NCC choose to publish such a vitriolic letter that disparages our past three popes?

— Jody Dieter
Santa Rosa, CA

P.S. What happened to the 150 word limit? Elijah’s letter was way over that.

To the Editor,
Bishop Vasa’s report on the Oscar Diaz incident and the inclusion of several forthright responses in your Letters to the Editor section demonstrated how a diocesan newspaper can responsibly serve its readers. But the letter attributed to Elijah, Patriarch of the Byzantine Catholic Patriarchate makes me question your editorial judgment. Elijah, who broke away from the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church ten years ago, has been excommunicated. His group excommunicated Pope Benedict XVI and 265 Vatican officials. It claims that over 2200 Catholic bishops worldwide are excommunicated and can no longer ordain priests. Yet you published his screeched attacking Pope Francis.

The subject seems to have little relevance to our diocese. But if its something Bishop Vasa wants us to read could you please give us some context? Simply including it as another letter to the editor does a disservice to your readers.

— Al Cattalini
Petaluma, CA
Greetings Families!

With the changing of the seasons and the beginning of a new school year it seems that our family life takes on a new rhythm. For some it slows down from the hectic-ness of summer activities. For others it speeds up with the hectic-ness of school and related activities. For those not on a school year schedule, there is still that feeling of new beginnings at this time of year, at least for us. With Carlin having been a Catholic school teacher for 12 years there is always the anticipation of what the “new year” will bring. A blank notebook and a new package of pencils are always full of potential!

In some of our previous articles we have shared some ways of how to bring being Catholic out of the church and into our homes. We have shared with you some great ideas from the book “The Catholic All Year Compendium: Liturgical Living for Real Life” by author Kendra Tierney. This book has been a great resource for us and we have some very exciting news. The Diocese of Santa Rosa Departments of Catholic Schools, Religious Education, Marriage and Family Life, and Youth and Young Adult Ministry are bringing Kendra Tierney here to the Diocese of Santa Rosa on Friday evening, September 27, 2019, to the Cardinal Newman High School Gym. Her talk is entitled “Liturgical Living for Busy Parents.”

We highly encourage any and all parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, Godparents, guardians and all who have a connection with children to attend this talk by Kendra. In reading her book, she is quite humorous and knowledgeable on all things Catholic. It is bound to be a fun evening for all, so make plans to be there! You will be able to learn some simple ways to really live your Catholic faith, every day all year round!

The secular culture has a very strong influence on our children and even on adults. How can we make some little changes in the daily lives of our family to reach the potential of how God calls us to live our Catholic faith? We are the notebook, and God wants to write in our hearts his love and mercy. Kendra has taken that to heart she will open your thoughts as how you can make your household a healthy, happy, and holy place every day of the year! Kendra is also the author of a blog (catholicyear.com) where she shares what her family does throughout the year to celebrate being Catholic. Check it out, then come to her presentation on September 27th.

One of the things Kendra encourages is learning about and sharing the lives about our many wonderful saints with our children. And there are so many saints! Do you know who is the saint of your birth date and baptismal date, of your confirmation name or your given name? Kendra shares the stories of many saints in her book and gives you ideas of how you can celebrate your families feast days along with them. It’s really quite fascinating to learn what ordinary people have done for the faith or what others have done to then because they professed to be Christian.

In this month of September an example from Catholic All Year is to celebrate Mother Mary’s birthday on September 8th with a party and a cake. But make sure her color blue is the theme for decorating and eating. And remember to call our Mother Mary on her birthday—by saying the Rosary. Actually we are calling to Mary every time we pray the rosary!

One of our favorite saint ideas comes at the end of September, on the 29th. It is the feast of the Archangels or Michaelmas (mickle-mus). It is a day we celebrate St. Michael’s victory over Satan in the war of heaven. The Tierney family celebrates with a family-made devil piñata and a wooden sword (St. Michael’s of course) to whack it with. How fun is that?

So with school, homework, soccer practice, piano lessons, new routines…how can we make those activities Catholic? First and simplest is pray. If you pray before each activity begins, the focus will be on God, not on yourself. Prayer is a good habit to practice. Once there were several of us over at a friend’s house with all our kids. It got to be snack time and a tasty treat was made. When one of the 3 year olds was given his treat, he yelled out “Say grace, say grace.” From the mouths of babes! We were all impressed. Obviously, his parents had taught him you don’t eat until you have thanked God for the food you are about to eat. How beautiful is that! It is a good reminder that we should all to pray before we eat no matter where you are: at home, in a restaurant or in the school lunch room, or in the park. Gathering together for meals is always a good time to offer a prayer of thanks.

In every new endeavor it is always good to start small and build a habit. We encourage you to start the habit of living your Catholic faith in your home all year long, especially if you have young children in your household. Coming to hear Kendra Tierney speak on September 27th is a great opportunity for you to learn just how to do that. We guarantee that it will be a fun and rewarding evening for all! We wish you all a fruitful and successful new beginning.

Speaker and author Kendra Tierney “Liturgical Living for Busy Parents” September 27th from 7 to 8 PM Cardinal Newman High School Gym

—Pax Christi, Carlin and Deacon Dave Gould Co-Directors of the Family Life Office

Virginia Governor Accepts Appointee’s Resignation Over Anti-Catholic Tweets

Richmond, Va., Aug 29 (CNA) - A Democratic Party activist with a history of anti-Catholic and other bigoted social media posts has resigned from Virginia Council of Women after her appointment prompted outcry from Catholics.

Gail Gordon Donegan, a Democratic activist and self-described “gadfly” from Alexandria, was appointed by Gov. Ralph Northam (D) to the Virginia Council on Women on August 16. The council serves as an advisory to the governor, awards scholarships, and develops programming.

On Monday, Bishops Michael Burbidge of Arlington and Barry Knestout of Richmond co-signed a letter to Northam calling Gordon Donegan’s statements “offensive to human dignity” and requesting that he rescind Gordon Donegan’s appointment.

On Tuesday, Virginia Catholics were encouraged to contact the governor to express their concerns.

In a statement released to the media Aug. 28, Gordon Donegan said she was unwilling to let her history of profane public mockery become a distraction from the work of the committee.

“Today I submitted my letter of resignation to the Governor and will no longer serve as a member of the Virginia Council of Women,” Donegan said. “I do not wish to distract from the work of the Council. I will have no further comment besides this statement.”

On Aug. 23, the Richmond Times-Dispatch published a review of her Twitter account, noting Gordon Donegan’s many anti-Catholic statements, as well as the frequent use of profanity, and jokes about sexual assault and pedophilia. Gordon Donegan’s Twitter (see Virginia Governor, page 10)
I met my beloved husband, Walter, in 1966 at the University of Missouri, where he was studying to be a chemical engineer and I was enrolled in the School of Journalism, hoping to earn a living as a magazine writer. Almost from the moment we met, Walter and I were fast friends.

After our marriage, he left engineering to become a struggling novelist, and we both freelanced from home, working, playing and raising our children side by side.

Yet for all our intimacy, Walter contained within his heart a dark secret he didn't share even with me. As a little boy growing up on a farm in Missouri, he'd been sexually abused by his sadistic older brother Bob, who frequently threatened to kill him. Only after we converted to Catholicism did this unspeakable secret from his tortured past at last come to light.

Walter first began to reveal the truth about his childhood horrors one Monday morning after Mass. It was about three years after we became Catholics. Approaching our pastor, Father Bruce, Walter said, "There's something I've never told you." Seeing Walter's sober face, Father Bruce took him immediately into the rectory. I stood alone in the church parking lot and waited, as Walter revealed secrets to Father Bruce that even I had never heard.

After 45 minutes, the two finally emerged from the rectory, and Father Bruce said to me: "Sue, here's what I want you to do: I want you to ask Walter to tell you what happened when he was 7 years old. He may not want to talk about it. If he doesn't volunteer to talk about it every two or three days, I want you to ask him about it. Just listen. Get all the details. But don't get all emotional. Remember Joe Friday. "I want you to be like that: 'Just the facts, Ma'am.'"

For the next month, as we sat side by side sipping our morning coffee, we talked daily about what happened when Walter was 7. Bob held loaded guns to Walter's head and giggled as he toyed with the little Walt, who couldn't swim, almost drowned. But the worst was that he repeatedly raped Walter in the barn and in the root cellar and threatened to kill him if he told anyone. Walter had every reason to believe Bob would carry through on this threat. The abuse was so severe that for most of Walter's life, unknowm to me, he had been suffering five or six flashbacks a day.

After 38 years of marriage, I was at last able to understand the strange anxieties and explosive anger attacks I'd witnessed, which seemed to come out of nowhere and which I'd found inexplicable in a man who was otherwise so deeply loving and sweet.

Father Bruce counseled Walter to forgive Bob (who had died years earlier) and even to pray for his immortal soul. Many non-Catholics might find such advice an outrage, as if forgiveness somehow means letting an evildoer off the hook. But trusting God, Walter listened. And in the process of praying for Bob, Walter himself was transformed: No longer a helpless victim, he became an ennobled intercessor.

On Jan. 13, 2006, Walter wrote in his personal journal:

"Sue and I had a lovely talk this morning. We talked about the problems I had with Bob. But this time we didn't talk about just what happened. We talked about how it has affected me now. I said I was still angry with God, because Bob may have had the free will to do all that to me, but God should have stopped him somehow. No matter what, that should not have been allowed to happen. God is able to bring good things out of bad, but the bad still happened. I began thinking about that, and I decided I was still angry with God, angry enough that I would not become creative. That's what I was doing. I was sabotaging my creativity. Every time I would get creative with my writing or my art, I would ruin it. That's how mad I was at God. What can I do to get rid of this permanently? I don't know. But this realization, coupled with the understanding Father Bruce gave me that I was still obeying Bob by not wanting to talk about what he did to me, has been a big relief. I now feel like I've had a harness taken off of me."

After this entry in his journal, I don't know exactly when it happened, but Walter was no longer angry at God—or at Bob. Christ had healed him. Brimming with gratitude and joy, he announced to me the violent flashbacks that had tormented him for nearly 60 years were suddenly gone.

When Christ, the timeless One, enters into time, he makes "all things new." It is to the Father through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit that we receive the peace that passes all understanding.

It is certainly necessary to expose sex scandals in the Church. Evil flourishes in darkness and must be exposed to the light. But the continual mainstream media emphasis only on sex-abuse problems within the Church tends to obscure the reality that, within her sacred walls, the Church simultaneously contains the power of God to solve those problems and to heal the crippling wounds sexually abused people like Walter suffer.

Faced with horrifying sex-abuse scandals, many Catholics understandably ask, "Where is our Lord Jesus Christ in all this?" The answer is this: He's hidden at the center of it all, taking our suffering into himself on the cross, recreating the world, and transfiguring all our pain into joy.

Sue Ellen Browder is author of Subverted: How I Helped the Sexual Revolution Hijack the Women's Movement.
Fifty years ago, if you told Catholics that “cardinals would oppose cardinals and bishops would oppose bishops” in the Catholic Church, few would believe it. Now it is all too true. Bishops and cardinals questioning teachings held since the beginning of the Church. What’s even harder to believe, it was all predicted in two separate Marian apparitions. One is the famous Fatima apparition to the three shepherd children, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, in 1917 at Fatima, Portugal and the other an apparition to Sr. Agnes Sasagawa at Akita, Japan in 1973.

We can trust both apparitions. All the popes since Pius XII have accepted the message of Our Lady of Fatima. And the message to Sr. Agnes is the same as that which was told to the three children of Fatima. This was verified by Cardinal Ratzinger, the head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, when he met with Bishop John Ito, the ordinary of St. Agnes. While Cardinal Ratzinger did not officially approve of the messages of Our Lady at Akita (it would have taken years to do so), “he did not object to the pastoral letter which Bishop Ito wrote in 1984” which stated about Akita that “It is the message of Fatima.” This is very important since Cardinal Ratzinger, the future Benedict XVI, knew the contents of the Fatima Message, including the famous Third Secret. If the Akita message was not the same as that of Fatima, the Cardinal would have objected to Bishop Ito’s publication of it as such.

Our Lady Fatima said that Catholics must pray the daily Rosary and do penance so that people will stop offending God. Our Lady told little Jacinta that “the sins of the flesh” were the most frequent sins committed by people leading them to eternal punishment. If God was offended by these sins in 1917, how much more is He offended today? In 1917, it’s fair to say that “the sins of the flesh” were considered deviant behavior, but today the situation is far worse, because those sins, including pornography, masturbation, contraception, fornication, adultery and sodomy, are considered normal behavior. And, abortion, which is often done to cover up the “sins of the flesh,” was considered rare in 1917, but just from 1980 until today the global number of babies that have been aborted is 1.5 billion. The point here is that mankind has not recognized and heeded it. So, what are the “signs of the times” for us in this second decade of the third millennium?

The day of the year, Oct. 13, mysteriously connects several events of the past and future.

First of all, on Oct. 13 1884 Pope Leo XIII received a locution after Holy Communion. He overheard in this location a dialogue between God and Satan reminiscent of the dialogue between God and Satan found in the book of Job 1:6-12. During this dialogue, Pope Leo XIII heard what he believed to be the voice of Satan challenging God by saying that he can destroy the Church if he had 100 years and the power. God permitted Satan the 100 years and the power probably to manifest His own power and glory. Following this Pope Leo XIII composed the famous prayer to St. Michael the Archangel to defeat Satan.

Satan began his assault on Oct. 13, 1917 with the Bolshevik Revolution and atheistic Communism. We can pinpoint this date because years later, Leon Trotsky opened his “Prinkipo Letter” by saying that “The still isolated October Revolution now completes its fifteenth year” and he dated this Letter Oct. 13, 1932.

However, on the same day as the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution, Oct. 13, 1917, Our Lady appeared at Fatima to warn the Church of Satan’s plan. She said that if the Church and leaders of nations did not oppose the sins of the flesh and the evils being spread by Russia, many nations would be annihilated and many souls would go to eternal punishment. To convince people that her message could be trusted, God worked a sign at Fatima, the famous “miracle of the sun.”

Then, on Oct. 13, 1973, Our Lady appeared to Sr. Agnes Sasagawa. In the 1970’s, the rejection of traditional morality was rapidly becoming the norm.

In 1973, abortion was approved as a constitutional “right” in the United States. Clearly, the warning of Fatima was being ignored by mankind. So once again Our Lady intervened to emphasize once again the necessity that God must be obeyed or there would be a punishment for the world. At this apparition the statue in the chapel, where Sr. Agnes prayed, shed tears 101 times because of the great number of souls going to eternal punishment. The message was to pray the rosary and do penance to prevent souls from going to eternal punishment.

The question is, why is the hierarchy of the Church not responding more forcefully to these clear warnings from God through our Lady especially since the number of people doing abortions and sins of the flesh is far more shrinking.

Another question: if these “Oct. 13” markers are important, then shouldn’t the end of the 100-year period given to Satan to destroy the Church have occurred on Oct. 13, 2018?

I would answer that question this way. While this is speculative, I think it’s important to note that one of those years during this 100-year period was an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. This was a Roman Catholic period of prayer held from 8 December 2015 to 20 November 2016, the Feast of Christ the King, to obtain God’s Mercy.

Pope Francis hoped that during this “extraordinary time of grace” “We will entrust the life of the Church, all humanity, and the entire cosmos to the Lordship of Christ, asking him to pour out his mercy upon us like the morning dew.” In fact, while every Holy Year of Jubilee is related to obtaining God’s Mercy in some way or another, this was the only Holy Year which was explicitly labeled as an “Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy” since Pope Boniface VIII inaugurated the Holy Years of Jubilee in the 1300’s. Clearly, “it is ‘innovative’ in that there has never before been a Jubilee Year dedicated to ‘mercy.’ So, it is unprecedented.”

This means that one of those 100 years of power granted by God to Satan was nullified by the 2015—2016 year of God’s Mercy. Satan’s power cannot fully work during a year of God’s Mercy. So Satan has one more year to make up the full 100 years of power granted to him by God.

Another way of looking at this is that the faithful were given a Year of Mercy added on to the 100 in which to repent of their sins before God will send a chastisement to stop the evil in the world. But this also means that Satan will have one more year—101 years—to try to destroy the Church before God brings his challenge to a halt.

That brings us to a new deadline for Satan’s 100 year of power—the approaching date of Oct. 13, 2019.

While there are other good explanations of the 101 times that Our Lady’s statue shed tears which do not contradict the above interpretation, the above interpretation seems to be the most probable meaning relating to Oct. 13 of why the statue of Our Lady in Akita shed tears 101 times during her apparitions to (see Chastisement, page 21).
Musicians Sign Planned Parenthood Protest of Pro-Life Laws

By Christine Rousselle

Washington D.C., Aug 27 (CNA) - Over 130 musicians have signed a Planned Parenthood-sponsored petition against recent abortion restrictions passed by several states, a move condemned by pro-life activists as “out of touch.”

“Musicians across the country are standing in solidarity with Planned Parenthood,” announced the website of the country’s largest abortion provider Aug. 26. “They’re saying access to sexual and reproductive health care is about the same type of freedom that allows them to create music and speak their truth — because no one is free unless they control their own body.”

Signatories of the petition include Ariana Grande, Carole King, Demi Lovato, the Foo Fighters, Idina Menzel, Katy Perry, Lady Gaga, Macklemore, Miley Cyrus, Nine Inch Nails, Norah Jones and T-Pain.

Pro-life advocates lined up to dispute Planned Parenthood’s claim that free access to abortion throughout pregnancy is a form of “freedom.”

“Abortion victimizes and disempowers women - our bodies should be free from violence including the violence of abortion,” said Molly Sheahan of the organization We Are Pro-Life Women.

“These artists are out of touch with the majority of women in the United States,” Sheahan told CNA. “Three quarters of Americans, including 79% of black and Hispanic women, are in favor of ending or restricting abortion. Even a significant majority of Democrats and people who identify as pro-choice are in favor of abortion restrictions.”

A February Marist poll found that the vast majority of Americans supported at least some restrictions on abortion.

Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life, said it was “heartbreaking” that people in the entertainment industry are publicly in support of “something as sad and dark as abortion.” She told CNA that the celebrities are “wildly out of touch” with most Americans, both in recognizing the reality of abortion and on the issue of taxpayer funding for Planned Parenthood.

“As powerful as Hollywood elites are, they can’t change the underlying truth that abortion takes the life of one and wounds another, and that Planned Parenthood is our nation’s largest abortion provider,” said Mancini.

Yet even with money and influence stacked against us, the pro-life movement continues to grow.”

In the first months of 2019, several states passed laws that greatly limited access to abortion. These laws range from near total-ban on the procedure in the state of Alabama, to Arkansas and Utah laws banning abortion after the 18th week of pregnancy. Other states, including Georgia, chose to ban abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat, usually between six and eight weeks of pregnancy.

None of these laws have yet gone into effect, and all are being challenged in court by pro-abortion organizations.

Six states moved to expand abortion access. Four - Illinois, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont — codified abortion into law, meaning it would still be legal in the event that the Supreme Court case Roe v. Wade were overturned.

Maine’s Gov. Janet Mills (D) passed a law that allows the state Medicaid program to cover abortion, and required insurance companies offering plans within the state to cover abortion services. Mills also signed a law permitting abortions to be performed by someone other than a physician.

In May, Nevada decriminalized abortion and repealed various restrictions on the procedure, including an age verification requirement.

Planned Parenthood recently voluntarily withdrew from the Title X family planning program after new rules were announced by the Department of Health and Human Services. The rules prohibit Title X fund recipients from referring patients for abortions or co-locating with abortion clinics. Organizations like Planned Parenthood would also have had to keep separate finances for Title X funded programs and abortion business. The organization chose to withdraw rather than comply, despite receiving approximately $60 million in Title X funding annually.

The organization still receives about half a billion dollars in federal funding from other programs.
that the proposal could be reintroduced. The next day, an estimated 2 million marchers were out on the streets.

The protests have since morphed to focus on actions by police that many have denounced as police brutality, including allegations of sexual assault by police officers. Protesters also have made calls for greater democracy in the territory and for Lam’s resignation.

The New York Times has noted that these protests have eclipsed the island’s longest protest of protests in length, as the demonstrations have been going on for 80 days—longer than the 2014 pro-democracy “Umbrella Movement,” which also saw hundreds of thousands of citizens take to the streets.

Through the protests have been largely peaceful, participants on both sides have periodically resorted to violence.

Opposing mobs of protesters have occasionally clashed, resulting in injuries, and Hong Kong’s police fired a live round of ammunition for the first time during an Aug. 26 protest. The police also used water cannons to break up protestors for the first time, after having used tear gas and rubber bullets extensively in the past, which have led to numerous injuries.

The political situation, and the implications for what could happen next, are complex, and Catholics and Protestant Christians both young and old are making their voices heard amid the protests.

What is Hong Kong’s political context?

Hong Kong is what’s known as a special administrative region, meaning it has its own government but remains under Chinese control.

Hong Kong was a British colony until 1997, when it was returned to China under a “one country, two systems” principle, allowing it its own legislature and economic system. Chief Executive Carrie Lam is herself Catholic, BBC News reports.

The territory has seen numerous protests in recent years, most significantly in 2014, wherein citizens have demanded an expansion of democracy.

The current protests are the longest and largest in the territory’s history, and are not currently showing signs of abating.

What is it like for Catholics in Hong Kong?

Life for Catholics in Hong Kong vs in mainland China is very different. The island is only about 8% Catholic, but that represents a population of over half a million.

Hong Kong has total freedom of worship and evangelization, Father Bernardo Cervellera, editor of Asia News, told EWTN News Nightly recently, because for the past 50 years it has been a “liberal society” where the decisions of the dioceses are not subject to government control.

In mainland China, by contrast, there is a long history of persecution for Christians who run afoul of the government.

The U.S. Commission on International Religion wrote in its 2018 report that last year China “advanced its so-called ‘sinicization’ of religion, a far-reaching strategy to control, govern, and manipulate all aspects of faith into a socialist mold infused with ‘Chinese characteristics.’” Christians, Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists, and Falun Gong practitioners have all been affected.

A new bishop was consecrated this week in Inner Mongolia, China, becoming the first bishop to be consecrated in the country under a new deal signed between the Vatican and Beijing. The Vatican says the deal will lead to increased freedoms for Chinese Catholics, but some critics have been skeptical.

Why are the protests so significant for Christians?

Catholic leaders in Hong Kong have expressed concern that the Communist Chinese government would use the now-suspended extradition law to further tighten its grip on free speech and free exercise of religion in Hong Kong.

“Freedom of speech will be lost. In the past, the regime kidnapped its critics, like me, illegally. With this law, they will abduct their critics legally.”

“Beijing will use this [extradition] law to control Hong Kong completely,” Lam told ucanews.com in June.

“Freedom of speech will be lost. In the past, the regime kidnapped its critics, like me, illegally. With this law, they will abduct their critics legally.”

The issue of extradition has been contentious one in the region for a number of years, as Hong Kong has no formal extradition deal with Taiwan, Macao, and mainland China, potentially creating legal loopholes in some circumstances.

Still, advocacy groups expressed worry that the law could endanger the freedom that Christians in Hong Kong currently enjoy.

“If the latest legislation was successful, those seeking refuge and freedom of conscience in Hong Kong could face extradition back to the mainland,” International Christian Concern (ICC), an advocacy group for persecuted Christians, said June 17.

Not all Christian groups oppose the legislation, however; Peter Douglas Koon, the Anglican provincial secretary-general of Hong Kong, supports the change, and the Anglican Church in Hong Kong has stated its position as being that offenders must be brought to justice by whatever means necessary, LaCroix International reports.

What have the protestors done?

Large groups of protestors, most of them young people, have used social media and private messaging apps such as Telegram to coordinate their rallies.

Most of the protests have taken place in public places, mainly on the streets. On Aug. 23, thousands of protestors formed a giant human chain across the city.

In mid-August, thousands of protestors filled the arrival and departure halls of the Hong Kong airport, disrupting service and at one point canceling 200 flights in one day.

Though the protests have been largely peaceful, participants on both sides have periodically resorted to violence.

On July 1, the 22nd anniversary of Hong Kong’s handover from Britain to China, protestors broke through into the territory’s legislature building where, per The New York Times, they painted slogans on walls and defaced symbols of Chinese authority.

In mid-July, protestors and police clashed in a shopping mall. Photographs from the scene shows umbrellas scattered everywhere.

Opposing mobs of protestors have occasionally clashed, resulting in injuries, and Hong Kong’s police fired a live round of ammunition for the first time during an Aug. 26 protest. The police also used water cannons to break up protestors for the first time, after having used tear gas and rubber bullets extensively in the past, which have led to numerous injuries. Police arrested 36.

Despite the threat of violence from police and grow-
Professing our Faith
Walking in Hope ~ Building God’s Kingdom

Parishes profit from generous donors

For five years the Diocese of Santa Rosa, in cooperation with the parishes, has been operating Professing our Faith, Walking in Hope, Building God’s Kingdom, a capital campaign inspired by Pope Francis’ call to action. This campaign was designed to provide direct financial support to parishes and funding to targeted Diocesan ministries.

Last month’s issue reported the distribution of the Diocesan share; this issue will focus on the allocation of the parish share.

The campaign was originally designed to allocate 35% of all funds generated before expenses to the parishes. Owing to the combined campaigns, restricted funds, and earthquake relief, parishes received $5,186,000, 45% of total funds.

Parishes that reached eighty percent of their campaign target in pledges received 35% of all the funds generated by that parish. 25% of this became immediately available to the parish to use as needed, while 10% was invested in the parish’s savings fund in the Catholic Community Foundation of the Diocese of Santa Rosa (CCF). The CCF enables the Diocese, parishes, schools, and other Catholic entities to invest funds in accord with Catholic investment principles.

If the pledges generated by a specific parish were heavily restricted, the parish’s return was adjusted to maintain equity among the parishes and ministries funded.

Twenty-nine parishes reached 80% of their campaign targets in pledges. Twenty-eight of these parishes are reflected in the table. The St. Helena Catholic Church community also reached their Parish target in pledges, but are not listed because the Parish chose to operate the campaign as a Parish campaign. This choice resulted in the donations received being recorded in the Parish’s financial records, not the Diocese’s.

Several parishes operated the campaign as a combined campaign to fund specific parish building, debt reduction, and renovation projects. The pie chart shows the percent allocation of total funds to those parishes that did not operate a combined campaign, those that did, and CCF parish savings.

Through its combined campaign, the Cathedral of St. Eugene underwent a major renovation. The sanctuary, dominated by the beautiful marble altar and mosaic of the Ascension, is larger, providing more space for the major Diocesan liturgies, such as the Chrism Mass. The carpets were replaced and the pews refinished, while newly installed heating and air conditioning add to the comfort of the Cathedral.

Closed since 1992 due to structural instability, the project to retrofit the old stone St. Rose Catholic Church is nearing completion. Over one hundred years old, the historic building is a landmark in the community and a monument to the faith in this Diocese.

The St. Helena Catholic community gave generously to the associated parish campaign to build a new Parish Life Center. Dedicated in 2017, the beautiful Tuscan-style building provides space for Parish ministries and functions.

The parish community at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church in Rohnert Park also benefited from the capital campaign, using the funds generated to completely pay off the debt associated with their church building.

In August of 2014, the devastating Napa earthquake did significant damage to St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and facilities. In light of the extensive damage to the church, rectory, and school, all of the funds raised for the capital campaign by St. John the Baptist parishioners went directly to the parish for repairs.

The parishes that did not operate special combined campaigns used the funds generated to meet a variety of parish needs at the discretion of the parish.
Today upheld an injunction that blocks an Indiana law

Chicago, Ill., Aug 28 (CNA) - A federal appeals court通知书 abortion law

Federal court upholds block on Indiana ‘parental notification’ abortion law

Sacred Theology in the field of bioethics from Pontifical

in Cromwell, Connecticut, and holds a Doctorate of

Tyler. Fr. Stoeppel attended Holy Apostles Seminary

Bishop Thomas K. Gorman Catholic Schools, as well

Parish & Mission Assistance Program and President of

brings significant diocesan experience to the Sem -

by sound Theology, inspired by a continued deep

tion with my current colleagues, to help form men of

role for my beloved Alma Mater. I hope, in collabora-

in Marital and Family Therapy.

and Paul. He was educated at the University of San

as pastor of a number of parishes in the Indianapolis

Metropolitan Tribunal and led a successful program

diocese of Indianapolis he served as a judge in the

of Administration. In addition, in his home Arch-

institution at this time. "

Fr. Donohoo noted. "Fr. Donohoo is uniquely prepared and

priesthood and the spiritual and human formation

a keen understanding of the challenges of diocesan

in Judith Fuller's intentions at the time he received

statement released by the Archdiocese of Seattle on

With who Bob was" and that Fuller made the choice

COURSE!” wrote Fuller on March 24. An article on

first 1 1/2 hours and he emphatically replied YES. OF

musicians and singers can come perform during the

later, he posted that a parish choir would perform as

his plans to end his own life, and affirmed his deci-

his suicide on May 10, and his own funeral.

On May 3, Fuller wrote that he had one week left to

he met with parish staff as he planned the final days

someone he learned was dying. The priest was not

Mr. Fuller's intentions. The priest was a visiting priest

second parish. The blessing was done after Mass by

who did the blessing [on May 5] did not know about

who happened to be at St. Therese that particular

second parish. The blessing was done after Mass by

he met with parish staff as he planned the final days

of another Indiana law, which required aborted babies

to be either buried or cremated. The court said states

children. "

"The Seventh Circuit clearly erred in failing to rec-

"Indiana law also sends a clear message that all

 victims of discrimination – born and unborn – are

worthy of protection," Burke said in May.

"We had hoped the Supreme Court would take this

opportunity to revisit the 7th Circuit's deeply flawed

ruling, which endorses a lethal form of discrimina-

as long as it occurs in utero." Facebook Posts Contradict Seattle Archdiocese

Claims On Parishioner's Planned Suicide

By Christine Rousselle

Seattle, Wash., Aug 28 (CNA) - The Archdiocese of Seattle issued a statement Aug. 28, subsequent to the initial publication of this story. The story has been updated to incorporate that statement.

Social media posts made by Robert Fuller, the man whose assisted suicide was profiled Aug. 26 by the Associated Press, suggest that he scheduled his funeral with his parish days before his suicide, and that a priest had “given his blessings” to the suicide plan.

In a March 16 Facebook post, Fuller claimed that he had completed the legal steps required to receive a prescription of life-ending drugs, and that he had the approval of a priest to end his own life.

“I have absolutely no reservations about what I am doing,” he wrote. “And my pastor/sponsor has given me his blessings. And he’s a Jesuit!”

Fuller did not name the priest referenced in the post, and the pastor of St. Therese parish, Fr. Maurice Mamba, is not a Jesuit. Several Jesuits assist with Sunday Masses at the parish. Examination of past parish bulletins shows that only one Jesuit, Fr. Quen-
tin Dupont regularly celebrated the Sunday Mass that Fuller normally attended; the priest celebrated that Mass eight times between December 2018 and May 5.

Dupont was the celebrant at the Mass on May 5, at which he, along with first communicants and other parishioners, extended their hands in blessing over Fuller.

In a statement released Aug. 27, and an Aug. 28 statement released after the initial publication of this story, the Archdiocese of Seattle said that Dupont was not aware of Fuller’s circumstances when he conferred the blessing.

“We looked into this and can confirm that the priest who did the blessing [on May 5] did not know about Mr. Fuller’s intentions. The priest was a visiting priest who happened to be at St. Therese that particular Sunday when the pastor was celebrating Mass at his second parish. The blessing was done after Mass by the priest whose interest was to bring comfort to someone he learned was dying. The priest was not aware of any news photographer, although he was aware people were taking pictures,” the archdiocese said Aug. 28.

One post on Fuller’s Facebook page recount that he met with parish staff as he planned the final days of his life, including a party held in the hours before his suicide on May 10, and his own funeral.

On May 3, Fuller wrote that he had one week left to live. He thanked his “faith family” at St. Therese, and invited people to join him at Mass the next day and at his “end of life celebration party” on May 10 - the day he died.

In addition to the posts regarding his funeral and his pastor’s “blessing,” other social media posts by Fuller suggest that some parish leaders knew about his plans to end his own life, and affirmed his deci-

On March 3, Fuller posted that he had arranged for one of the musicians at the parish to perform during his end of life “party” to mark his suicide. Three weeks later, he posted that a parish choir would perform as well.

“Today I asked our choir director if he and other musicians and singers can come perform during the first 1 1/2 hours and he emphatically replied YES. OF COURSE!” wrote Fuller on March 24. An article on the Seattle Housing Authority’s website confirms that the Shades of Praise choir from St. Therese performed at the party.

Parish choir director Kent Stevenson also told the AP that Fuller’s suicide “was completely in keeping with who Bob was” and that Fuller made the choice to die with “tenacity and clarity.”

The Facebook posts appear to be at odds with a statement released by the Archdiocese of Seattle on Tuesday. That statement said parish leaders had been unaware of Fuller’s intentions at the time he received a blessing during Mass on May 5.

The Aug. 28 statement, released subsequent to the (see News Briefs, page 16)
initial publication of this story, acknowledged that some at the parish did know Fuller's plans. "While it is clear that some of Mr. Fuller's friends at the parish knew of his intentions, the pastor at St. Therese initially did not," the archdiocese said.

According to the archdiocese, when Fuller eventually approached the pastor to ask to plan his own funeral, "the pastor discussed the gift of life and tried to convince him to change his mind. He made it clear that neither he nor the parish could support his plan to take his own life."

After it was clear Fuller would continue with his plans, Mamba contacted Archbishop Sartain, who agreed the hospital was under "a responsibility to pastorally care for those who mourn. With this in mind, the archbishop gave permission for the funeral with certain conditions to ensure there was no endorsement or other perceived support for the way in which Mr. Fuller ended his life," the archdiocese said.

Fuller announced the arrangements for his own funeral one week before he died, and days before the parish blessing. He scheduled the funeral for May 17. The archdiocese did not indicate when Sartain granted permission for the funeral.

"The purpose of our funeral was to pray for his soul and bring comfort and consolation to those who mourned," the archdiocese said.

The Aug. 28 archdiocesan statement did not address Fuller’s March 16 statement that he had met with a Jesuit priest to discuss his intentions, or questions related to the parish choir’s performance at his "end of life" party.

Neither Dupont nor the West Province of the Society of Jesus responded to requests for comment.

HHS Says University Hospital Forced Nurses to Assist in Abortions

By Matt Hadro
Washington D.C., Aug 28 (CNA) - The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced on Wednesday it has put the University of Vermont Medical Center (UVMMC) on notice after several nurses there reported being forced to help with abortions as a matter of conscience.

"The purpose of our funeral was to pray for his soul and bring comfort and consolation to those who mourned," the archdiocese said.

The Aug. 28 archdiocesan statement did not address Fuller’s March 16 statement that he had met with a Jesuit priest to discuss his intentions, or questions related to the parish choir’s performance at his “end of life” party.

HHS investigation, and “contested” both the investigation and the allegations, but the agency gathered “more than sufficient evidence” in the case, Severino said.

"There was a coerced abortion, that we are convinced of," he said.

The HHS is basing its Notice of Violation on the Church Amendments, which prohibit discrimination against health care employees who have conscientious objections to assisting in abortions. Unless the hospital notifies OCR within 30 days that it intends to change its policies to not discriminate any further against health care personnel who object to assisting with abortions, and makes remedies for past incidents of such discrimination, HHS will forward its notice to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the branch of HHS that provides funding for the hospital. Severino said that the hospital’s HRSA funding had been cut by $1.6 million over a three-year period.

In May, HHS issued a new rule mandating that health care providers receiving federal money first be certified that they comply with more than two dozen legislative protections for health care workers objecting to performing or participating in health care procedures against their conscience; these procedures would include abortions, sterilizations, or gender-transition surgeries.

Previously, HHS had announced a new division of Conscience and Religious Freedom within the Office of Human Rights (OHR), including a new mechanism for health care workers to contact the department directly with complaints of violations of their religious freedom or conscience.

Severino said that while the agency received an average of 1.25 conscience-related complaints per year in eight years, the agency is now receiving hundreds of such complaints per year. In the 2018 fiscal year, over 1,300 complaints in the HHS Conscience and Religious Freedom division were received, and 784 were retained.

He credited the increase to a greater awareness of conscience-based discrimination in health care, and a new willingness of the government to enforce existing law.

Violations of conscience in health care have happened and “it will continue to happen unless there is sufficient, vigorous enforcement” of the law, he said.

International

Mexican bishops call for justice following murder of priest.

Mexico City, Mexico, Aug 27 (CNA) - The bishops of Mexico offered prayers and called for justice after the murder of Fr. José Martín Guzmán Vega, a priest in Matamoros, along the country’s northern border.

Fr. Guzmán Vega was stabbed to death the night of Aug. 22 at his parish, Cristo Rey de la Paz in Matamoros, a border city near Brownsville, Texas.

“We express our solidarity and offer an embrace of faith to his relatives, friends and the lay faithful of the beloved Diocese of Matamoros,” read a statement from Mexico’s Bishops’ Conference, published Aug. 23.

“By our faith we know that death is not the end, and that love destroys death, because hope is the victory in face of despair.”

The Mexican bishops expressed their trust that the authorities will investigate to determine the facts of the murder and carry out justice.

“From our faith in the resurrection, we trust with certain hope that the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, has led him to rest in the verdant fields and pastures of eternity with Him,” they said.

The bishops pointed to the death of Fr. Guzmán Vega as an indication of violence as an ongoing problem in Mexican society.

The Catholic Multimedia Center, which keeps a record of murders and attacks against priests in Mexico, said that the attack “joins the long list of religious murdered in recent years.”

“The death of Fr. José Martín makes 27 priests killed from 2012 to 2019... so far this year, several incidents against priests and religious have been recorded, such as the case of a priest shot and wounded in Cuernavaca, Morelos state and death threats against several priests in various areas of Veracruz.”

Language Learning App Takes Latin From 'Dead' to Said

By Hannah Brockhaus
Rome, Italy, Aug 28 (CNA) - Duolingo, the popular free language learning website and app, has launched a Latin course to help its users say “salve” to Latin fluency.

“Latin has long been regarded as a ‘dead, read’ language that only exists on the pages of dusty books. Instead, we strive to consider Latin as a language of communication – a language which people can speak and, most importantly, one that people can learn by speaking,” Dr. Marco Romani told CNA via email.

Romani is the outreach manager for the Paideia Institute, an educational organization promoting study of Latin and Ancient Greek, which partnered with Duolingo in creating the web-based Latin program.

He said the course was made for beginners and “doesn’t assume any previous familiarity with Latin.”

(see News Briefs, page 17)
Anyone can complete it successfully and get to an above-average level of fluency in Latin conversation. Learning Latin conversation is what makes the Duolingo course different from more traditional means of studying the ancient language, he said, explaining that they chose to focus the course on conversation over grammar with a goal of helping learners “acquire a basic vehicular fluency.”

Most traditional Latin teachers, instead, focus on the translation of Latin texts, according to Romani. Duolingo teaches “simple conversational phrases which gradually help learners internalize the most important linguistic structures they need to improve their Latin.”

Romani pointed to the audio features of the course as one way this is accomplished. Audio is embedded throughout, allowing learners to listen to any Latin sentence they are working on, he said.

The course uses classical Latin pronunciation, however, which differs from the ecclesiastical pronunciation that most Catholics will be used to hearing at Mass or in other Church contexts.

But spoken Latin provides “a good foundation” for further study of the language, Romani said. The course teaches simple conversational phrases which gradually help learners internalize the most important linguistic structures they need to improve their Latin.

Benefits to learning Latin? There are many, he said, but one is that about 65% of English vocabulary comes from Latin, “and that figure rises if you look at polysyllabic words or at the vocabulary of technical and scientific disciplines.”

“Studying Latin boosts your mastery of your own languages,” he said.

Latin can also “transcend national boundaries,” he said and gives you access “to the immense body of literature written in Latin from antiquity up to the modern age.”

“You can gain a better appreciation of authors like Augustine, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas – which I think is important to Catholics and non-Catholics alike,” he said.

And it is not just professors and specialists who are passionate about Latin, Vaticano Radio journalist Alessandro De Carolis told CNA.

De Carolis edits Hebdomada Papae, a new weekly Latin language news bulletin on Vatican Radio.

The program, which airs every Saturday, gives a five-minute weekly recap of papal and Vatican news, completely in Latin.

Launched in June, it is produced with help from the pope’s Latin Letters Office, which is part of the Secretariat of State and is the office responsible for writing and translating Church documents into Latin. The pope’s Latinists, De Carolis said, not only read and write Latin, they also speak it among themselves.

“They keep this language that would die, they keep it pretty alive instead.”

He said Latin is a language which has renewed itself throughout the centuries. “In fact, Latin never died,” he argued, “because even today the Latinists of the pope are inspired to create new words that did not exist in classical Latin to explain modern terms.”

For example, he said, if they report some news regarding the computer, they need a Latin word for computer.” “There is this work even to create words [in Latin] for these more modern concepts.”

Hebdomada Papae airs through Vatican Radio’s Italian language audio channels but will soon be available also through the English channel. The program can also be heard on the web.

Fr. Waldemar Turek, director of the Latin Letters Office, also hosts an Italian radio program about Latin directly following Hebdomada Papae called “Animia Latina” and exploring the value and significance of Latin as the language of the Church.

As an employee of the Secretariat of State, Turek declined to give an interview for this story, citing Vatican policy.

De Carolis recalled a comment by Vatican News editorial director Andrea Tornielli, who first proposed the idea of the Latin news program, that Latin is a language “that looks toward the future.”

“Seems like a paradox,” De Carolis said, but he thinks it is true.

He believes that, “certainly tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, we will always in some way, somewhere in the world, continue to speak Latin.”

Benedict XVI Responds to Criticism of His Essay on the Church and The Sexual Abuse Crisis

By Anian Christoph Wimmer

Vatican City, Aug 27 (CNA) - Pope emeritus Benedict XVI has responded to criticism of his essay on the abuse crisis, saying many negative reactions have confirmed his belief that apostasy and alienation from the Faith are at the heart of the crisis – by not even mentioning God in their critique of his essay.

In a brief statement in reaction to such criticism published in German magazine “Herder Korrespondenz,” the former pope pointed to a “general deficit” in the reactions to his essay, saying that many critical responses missed the very point he was making.

Published in April by Catholic News Agency, the National Catholic Register, and in the original German by CNA Deutsch as well as other media, Benedict’s essay described the impact of the sexual revolution as well as – independent from it – a collapse of moral theology in the 1960’s, before suggesting how the Church should respond by recognizing that “only obedience and love for our Lord Jesus Christ can point the way.”

Reactions to the essay have been particularly strong in Germany, where insiders say the former pope, a native Bavarian, has long been subject to sustained criticism from certain quarters.

Benedict cited the example of a critical response to his essay from a German professor of history, pointing out that while the professor’s response was four pages long, “the word God does not appear [once],” even though apostasy was the central claim of the scholar’s argument.

Such a critique of his essay thus “shows the seriousness of a situation, in which the word ‘God’ in theology even seems to be marginalized.”

“As far as I can tell, in most reactions to my contribution, God does not appear at all,” the former pope wrote. “Therefore, the central issue I wanted to raise is not being discussed.”

Criticism of this kind only served to demonstrate “the seriousness of the situation,” Benedict continued, “in which the word God often appears to be on the margins, even in theology.”

Missionaries of Charity Remember Mother Teresa’s Birthday

By Anian Christoph Wimmer

Kolkata, India, Aug 26 (CNA) - Hundreds of Missionaries of Charity gathered at their headquarters on Monday to commemorate the birthday of the order’s founder, Mother Teresa.

Archbishop Thomas D’Souza of Calcutta, whose birthday falls on the same day, celebrated Mass on Aug. 26 to recognize what would be the 109th birthday of Saint Mother Teresa.

“It was a splendid celebration. The 109th anniversary of the birth of our beloved Saint Mother Teresa was a moment of thanksgiving through prayer and joy,” said Father Dominic Gomes, vicar general of the archdiocese.

“The chapel was packed with people of all social origins;” he told Asia News.

The event was held at the Mother House of the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata. After Mass, an estimated 300 nuns and novices gathered around the saint’s tomb and sang “Happy Birthday.”

Catholics normally commemorate the feast day of a saint which often corresponds with the day they died – but the Missionaries of Charity have continued to celebrate Mother Teresa’s birthday as well, even after her death in 1997. During Mother Teresa’s life, her birthday had been a major celebration at the house.

The nuns told UCA News that they celebrate Mother Teresa’s birthday in all 700 of their homes across the world. The nuns will begin a nine-day novena on Aug. 27 in preparation for the saint’s feast day on Sept. 5.

“There can be no feast day without a birthday,” one of the nuns told UCA News. “So, our birthday celebrations could be seen as preparation for the feast day.”

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhui Aug. 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia. After joining the Sisters of Loretto at age 17, she was sent to Kolkata, where she later contracted tuberculosis, and was sent to rest in Darjeeling.

On the way, she felt what she called “an order” from God to leave the convent and live among the poor.

After she left her convent, Mother Teresa began working in the slums, teaching poor children, and treating the sick in their homes. A year later, some of her former students joined her, and together they took in men, women and children who were dying in the gutters along the streets.

In 1950, the Missionaries of Charity were born as a congregation of the Diocese of Calcutta. In 1952, the government granted them a house from which to continue their mission of serving Calcutta’s poor and forgotten. Today, they operate in 176 countries, serving the “poorest of the poor.”

Mother Teresa was canonized in 2016. During his homily, Archbishop D’Souza said Christ invites everyone to service and pointed to Mother Teresa as a model of selfless love.

“Jesus invites us to love one another. The Mother served the poorest of the poor with selfless service and compassionate love, giving them to Jesus through her work,” he said, according to Asia News.
No Nos Dejes Caer en Tentación

El mes pasado les escribí sobre mi gratitud por su generosidad en la Campaña Capital Diocesana, y este mes necesito comentar los eventos del mes de Julio ya que están relacionados con la pérdida de Fondos Parroquiales como resultado de robo. Los Seguros, y otros que están envueltos en la investigación fraudulenta, saben que hay muchas maneras en las que amados y confiados empleados, incluyendo sacerdotes, pueden robar de organizaciones no lucrativas, en este caso, Parroquias. Reportamos a todas las Parroquias el fin de semana del 20-21 de Julio el hecho de que robo por sacerdotes han ocurrido en la Diócesis por al menos en los últimos 15 años. Esto es una admisión de angustia y triste. En retrospectiva es posible para algunos recordar incidentes y anomalías que fueron insuales y sin embargo no se pudo llegar al nivel de ‘prueba’ de robo. Y tal vez podríamos castigar a nosotros mismos diciendo, ‘Nos debíamos haber dado cuenta’. Es fácil recordar y decir, ‘Nos debíamos haber dado cuenta’ pero la verdad es que teníamos razón para sospechar, pero no a un nivel lo suficientemente fuerte para que la sospecha se convirtiera en una acusación real de robo.

Algo que, desafortunadamente, no es muy conocido es que la Diócesis tiene ciertos procedimientos mandatorios acerca de colectas y contabilidad que están designadas para asegurar que el robo, así como el que recientemente hemos descubierto, se haga extremadamente difícil. Esto se encuentra en el Manual de Administración Financiera Parroquial el cual ha sido dado a cada Parroquia y también está publicado en la página de internet de la Diócesis bajo la Oficina Financiera de la Diócesis. La póliza en cuanto a colectas comienza con Bolsas de Seguridad numeradas en secuencia las cuales se guardan en la Oficina Parroquial. Cada fin de semana un número suficiente de bolsas se preparan para las colectas del fin de semana. Idealmente, estas deben ser etiquetadas en la Oficina identificando la hora de la Misa e indicando si son para la Primera o Segunda colecta. El número de estas Bolsas se archiva y las Bolsas se llevan a la Iglesia para los acomodadores. Inmediatamente después de terminar la colecta el dinero y los sobres se ponen en las Bolsa indicada la cual es inmediatamente sellada antes de presentarse en la Procesión del Ofertorio. Se les pide a los acomodadores que firmen la bolsa significando quien ha sellado la Bolsa.

Inmediatamente después de Misa, y a veces en el momento del Ofertorio los acomodadores llevan la bolsa sellada a un lugar seguro, de manera ideal una caja fuerte con doble llave y capacidad de buzón. La meta es asegurar que ninguna persona sola sea permitida que tenga acceso no supervisado a estas bolsas seguras ni a su contenido. Esto proteje a los acomodadores de acusaciones de robo y asegura que no haya acceso no autorizado con el producto de la colecta. Al final del fin de semana, la caja fuerte debe contener todas las bolsas usadas las cuales de la fin de semana. Si sucede que inadvertidamente una de las colectas fue olvidada entonces los acomodadores necesitan poner una nota de lo sucedido en la Bolsa vacía y poner la Bolsa vacía en la caja fuerte.

Cuando llega el momento de contar el dinero de las colectas dos o preferiblemente tres personas juntas van a la caja fuerte y retiran el producto de las colectas del fin de semana y van al lugar designado donde estarán los que contarán el dinero. Lo primero que se debe hacer es asegurar que el número de bolsas distribuidas por la Oficina antes del fin de semana estén completas después del fin de semana. El número de secuencia de las Bolsas deben ser comparadas con la lista que tiene la Oficina y no se puede hacer nada más hasta estar seguros que todas las Bolsas entregadas en la Iglesia han sido regresadas. Lo siguiente es que los contadores se aseguren que ninguna de las Bolsas Resistentes-Manipulación hayan sido manipuladas. Las bolsas no son a ‘prueba’ de manipulación, es fácil romperlas, simplemente son resistentes. Por ejemplo, si alguien hace un orificio del tamaño de un lapicero en la Bolsa es fácil sacar billetes individuales sin hacer ese orificio más grande. Alguien podría decir que le hicieron ese pequeño orificio para que saliera aire de la Bolsa y así poder apilar la Bolsa. Desafortunadamente, también es posible que esos orificios permitan que también salga dinero. Los acomodadores son responsables de apropiadamente apilar la Bolsa al sellarla para que se puedan guardar de una manera más fácil. Estos pasos son tan importantes como lo son los otros procedimientos contables enumerados en el Manual de Administración Financiera de la Parroquia.

El procedimiento de esta póliza no es para presumir que los voluntarios tienen inclinación a robar de la Iglesia, sino que en el caso de que hubiese alguna tentación hagamos todo esto para ayudar a eliminar la tentación.

A como dije en mi anuncio de Julio: Solo en quienes tu confías son los que pueden robarte. Esta es parte de la Oración del Señor: No nos dejes caer en tentación. ♦

(Hong Kong Protests, cont. from page 13)
Noticias

Arzobispado Pide Construir la Paz Social Para Contrarrestar la Violencia en Las Calles
(ACI Prensa) - A raíz de un incidente en la ciudad de Resistencia (Argentina), donde una automovilista atropelló a cinco personas, la Comisión de Justicia y Paz de Resistencia llamó a construir la paz social por el bien común de todos.

El pasado 22 de agosto, decenas de personas realizaban una protesta en la intersección de la avenida Moreno y Santa María de Oro, frente al Centro de Referencia del Ministerio de Desarrollo Social para pedir asistencia para los comedores de las organizaciones sociales que no reciben ayuda desde hace unos días.

Fue entonces, cuando una mujer que conducía su automóvil avanzó sin frenar y atropelló a cinco mani- festantes. Unos metros más adelante, una turba frenó el auto y lo atacó destrozándolo por completo.

El hecho alentó a la comisión de Justicia y Paz de Resistencia a preguntarse “¿qué implicancia trae este tipo de conductas, muchas veces carentes de razonamiento estable y social, en el desarrollo de nuestra sociedad?”

“Podemos observar que las mismas son consecuencia de estados de ira, descontrol, falta de tolerancia, quizás de situaciones aisladas por la desesperanza o el estrés que tenemos en nuestro medio”, explicó.

En ese sentido, explicó que es necesario practica la paz social, “un valor y un deber universal que halla su fundamento en el orden nacional y moral de la sociedad y que tiene sus raíces en Dios mismo”.

“La paz social la construimos entre todos, haciendo cada uno lo que nos corresponde desde nuestro lugar: en la familia, en la escuela, en el trabajo, en la función pública, en la calle, con actos de caridad, de tolerancia y de respeto, reclamando si es necesario por las injusticias sociales o las carencias de nuestro hermanos, sin violencias y con mucho respeto”, agregó.

“También debemos al orden, cumpliendo todos y cada uno lo que es debido, respetando las normas de convivencia social y la ley, exigiendo a las autoridades públicas que la cumplan y la hagan cumplir”, precisó la comisión.

Asimismo, explicó que “todos tenemos el derecho de reclamar, siempre en paz y sin violencia”. Todos están llamados a pensar en sí mismos “pero sin olvidarnos del otro, que convivimos juntos en la casa común, este hecho nos obliga a preguntarnos que debe de ser para que lo transformemos para el bien común de todos los hombres y de todo hombre”, concluyó el comunicado.

Prenden Fuego a Imagen De Cristo y Zona Del Sagrario en Iglesia de México
CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (ACI Prensa) - Por segunda vez en menos de un año la parroquia de San José, en el estado mexicano de Veracruz, sufrió un atentado, esta vez en menos de un año la parroquia de San José, en Ciudad de México (ACI Prensa) - Por segunda vez en menos de un año la parroquia de San José, en el estado mexicano de Veracruz, sufrió un atentado, cuando desconocidos prendieron fuego a una imagen de cuatro metros de altura de Cristo crucificado, la zona del Sagrario, dos bancas, imágenes y vidrios rotos.

A pesar del fuego, ni el Sagrario ni las hostias consagradas sufrieron daños.

Según recoge Luz de Luz, periodico de la Provincia Eclesiástica de Hidalgo, el P. José Juan Conde González, párroco de San José, denunció que se trata del segundo ataque de odio contra la iglesia, porque no fue robo, no fue asalto, no fue un ataque contra mí, fue contra la estructura del templo”.

“No fue prendido fuego al Cristo y volvieron a encender la zona donde se encuentra el Sagrario. Quisieron incendiar la totalidad de bancas, el portón”, señaló.

El sacerdote descartó que se haya tratado de un intento de robo, pues en el templo “permanecen los cálices, los ornamentos y hasta las alianzas, lo que no podían robar todo está en su lugar”.

“Tampoco hay mensajes, anónimos, algo que pueda darnos pistas o algo más que nos lleve a la explicación del ataque”, señaló, tras explicar que ya ha presentado la denuncia ante las autoridades.

En comunicación con ACI Prensa, el P. Yair Ortega, vocero de la Arquidiócesis de Tulancingo, expresó el dolor de la Iglesia local por “este segundo atentado de odio a la fe ocurrido en la parroquia de Zacualpan, Veracruz. Ya anteriormente habían quemado parte del nave central de la parroquia”.

“Pedimos por la población de Veracruz que sufría este daño, que se le respete y que se respeten sus elementos sagrados”, agregó.

“Se podían robar todo está en su lugar”.

El sacerdote indicó que la evangelización del mundo, lo mejor que se podía ofrecer a la divinidad era las personas mismas. Generalmente, cuando había problemas como cambios climáticos, ocurrían una gran cantidad de sacrificios humanos a la divinidad, con el fin de lograr que cambie su mal humor, su mal genio, y deje de castigarlos con desastres naturales por alguna falta cometida”, explicó.

Según indicó la BBC, los niños sacrificados “muestran signos de ser asesinados durante el clima húmedo y fueron enterrados frente al mar”. El arqueólogo Ferenz Castillo dijo que donde se cava, se encuencn el año 1470.

El presbítero recordó que en el mundo andino se pensaba que si no se hacía el sacrificio, la divinidad enviaría un castigo. Esta creencia fue contrarrestada con el catolicismo, que “no habla de castigos, sino de actos de amor”.

“Ofrecemos a Dios nuestras intenciones y oraciones. No hacemos un sacrificio a la divinidad, sino que a manera de agradecimiento al acto de amor que Dios hizo por nosotros lo acompañamos y nos unimos a él en su pasión. No hay un intercambio comercial, pues todo se basa en relaciones de amor y confianza. Al acto de amor de Dios, nosotros respondemos de la misma manera”, explicó.

En ese sentido, el P. Fernando Janssen señaló que la llegada del cristianismo a América propició “la desaparición de ese tipo de sacrificios humanos”, muchas de cuyas víctimas fueron mujeres y niños.

Los españoles y primeros evangelizadores llegaron al Perú en septiembre de 1532, año en el que Francisco Pizarro atacó al Inca Atahualpa en Cajamarca y enfrentó el fin del imperio incaico.

“La llegada de la religión católica significó la incorporación del Perú al mundo, pues el mundo andino estaba aislado”, señaló.

Según el P. Janssen, con la evangelización se dio un proceso de interacción del país con el mundo, al igual que un enriquecimiento que le permitió adoptar otros elementos culturales, creando un mestizaje.

“No hay una dominación, sino una integración. El Perú surge precisamente de ese mestizaje, fruto de la unión de esas dos culturas”, aseveró. De acuerdo con el sacerdote, se da una verdadera y mayor cercanía de esas dos culturas” , aseveró. De acuerdo con el sacerdote, se da una verdadera y mayor cercanía de esas dos culturas” .

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El hallazgo más grande de sacrificios de infantes del mundo, lo mejor que se podía ofrecer a la divinidad era las personas mismas. Generalmente, cuando había problemas como cambios climáticos, ocurrían una gran cantidad de sacrificios humanos a la divinidad, con el fin de lograr que cambie su mal humor, su mal genio, y deje de castigarlos con desastres naturales por alguna falta cometida”, explicó.

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El poblador andino, señaló, acoge esa religiosidad y la adopta rápidamente. “La divinidad no está lejos. La religión católica les llevó a un Dios cercano, a un Dios que estaba con ellos, un Dios que los ayudaba, que era solidario, un Dios que no les pedia nada a cambio”, afirmó.

En otro momento, el P. Janssen recordó que la conser-vación del quechua, el idioma de los incas, fue propiciada por Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo a través del catecismo, quien viajaba por el país para dar a conocer a las personas la cercanía de Dios con ellos. “La religión católica brindó a los indígenas edu-cación y cultura, fomentó la lectura, la escritura, así como la posibilidad de expresarse para que otras personas conozcan lo que ellos pensaban, tal como [el cronista] Huamán Poma de Ayala, indígena que aprendió a leer y a escribir gracias a la Iglesia, que enviaba documentos al mismo rey de España”, manifiesta.

Asimismo, enfatizó que desde el principio la Iglesia defendió al indígena cuando hubo excesos durante la instauración del virreinato. “Eso impactó al mundo y a la relación con Dios los fortalece”, puntualizó. “Es un elemento fundamental en sus vidas y que los ayuda a ser mejores personas”, agregó.

“Ellos sienten que progresan del lado de la fe, y que su relación con Dios los fortalece”, puntualizó.

Estos son los Músicos que Firmaron Campaña en Favor de Planned Parenthood y el Aborto

Washington D.C. (ACI Prensa) - Más de 130 músicos internacionales firmaron una campaña patrocinada por Planned Parenthood para rechazar las recientes restricciones al aborto aprobadas en varios estados de los Estados Unidos.

Catherine Hadro, conductora de EWTN Pro Life Weekly, publicó en Twitter la lista completa de los artistas. Las firmas pertenecen a famosos como Ariana Grande, Paulina Rubio, Demi Lovato, Foo Fighters, John Legend, Katy Perry, Lady Gaga, Miley Cyrus, Nicki Minaj, Alanis Morissette y muchos más.

“Los músicos de todo el país se solidarizan con Planned Parenthood. Dicen que el acceso a la aten-ción de salud sexual y reproductiva es casi el mismo tipo de libertad que permite crear música y decir su verdad, porque nadie es libre a menos que contro- len su propio cuerpo”, anunció el sitio web del prov-eedor de abortos más grande del país el 26 de agosto.

Los grupos provistos, por su parte, negaron que el libre acceso al aborto durante el embarazo es una forma de “libertad”.

“El aborto victimiza y quita el poder a las mujeres: nuestros cuerpos deben estar libres de violencia, incluida la violencia del aborto. Estos artistas no están en contacto con la mayoría de las mujeres en los Esta-dos Unidos”, dijo Molly Sheahan de la organización We Are Pro-Life Women a CNA, agencia en inglés del Grupo ACI.-

“Las tres cuartas partes de los estadounidenses, incluido el 79% de las mujeres negras e hispánicas, están a favor de que se acabe o se restrinja el aborto. Incluso una mayoría significativa de demócratas y personas que se identifican como proabortistas están a favor de las restricciones al aborto”, acotó.

Una encuesta del mes de febrero señaló que la gran mayoría de los estadounidenses apoyaba al menos algunas restricciones al aborto.

Jeanne Mancini, presidenta de la Marcha por la Vida, dijo a CNA que era “desagradar” que la gente en la industria del entretenimiento apoyara públi-camente “algo tan triste y oscuro como el aborto”. Asimismo, afirmó que las celebridades no piensan como la mayoría de los estadounidenses, tanto en reconocer la realidad del aborto, como en el tema de la financiación por impuestos para Planned Parent-hood.

“Por poderosas que sean las élites de Hollywood, no pueden cambiar la verdad subyacente de que el aborto le quita la vida a uno y hiere a otro, y que Planned Parenthood es el proveedor de aborto más grande de nuestra nación. Sin embargo, incluso con el dinero y la influencia apilados contra nosotros, el movimiento provis-ta continúa creciendo”, dijo Mancini.

En los primeros meses de 2019, varios estados apro-baron leyes que limitaron en gran medida el acceso al aborto. Estas leyes van desde la prohibición casi total del procedimiento en el estado de Alabama, hasta las leyes de Arkansas y Utah que prohíben esta práctica después de la semana 18 de embarazo.

Otros estados, como Georgia, optaron por prohibir el aborto después de la detección de un latido fetal, generalmente entre las seis y las ocho semanas de embarazo.

Ninguna de estas leyes ha entrado aún en vigencia, pues todas están siendo impugnadas en los tribunales por organizaciones proabortistas.

Seis estados se están moviendo para ampliar el acceso al aborto. Cuatro de ellos -Illinois, Nueva York, Rhode Island y Vermont- codificaron el aborto como ley, lo que significa que aún sería legal en el caso de que sea anulada la sentencia Roe vs Wade por la Corte Suprema.

La gobernadora de Maine, Janet Mills, aprobó una ley que permite que el programa estatal de Medicaid cubra el aborto y exija a las compañías de seguros que ofrecen planes dentro del estado que cubran los servicios. Estas leyes van desde la prohibición casi total del procedimiento en el estado de Alabama, hasta las leyes de Arkansas y Utah que prohíben esta práctica después de la semana 18 de embarazo.

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the spokesman added.

The spokesman said that at the time Montanaro was removed, the Oblates “began to provide support” for Barthel.

The Oblates, Barthel told CNA, “sent me a couple of checks to help pay my rent because the trauma hit me so hard that I couldn’t work initially. They also sent me a letter offering $15,000 and a year of therapy if I signed one of those letters stating I wouldn’t do anything further.”

“I don’t know what I was more upset about: the fact that they were trying to pay me off to keep me quiet or the fact that they thought I would only need a year of therapy to recover. It’s 12 years later and I’m still in therapy.”

Barthel said it took years of healing before she was prepared to report what had happened to police. When she did, it was too late.

“When I finally built up the courage to go to the police, I missed the statute of limitations by less than a month. That was devastating because it took so much from me to even go to the police. I finally went, I told my whole story, and then I get a call back and it’s the statute of limitation by less than 30 days”

But she was even more devastated, she says, because Montanaro’s community, the Oblates of the Blessed Virgin Mary, have declined to name Montanaro as a sexual abuser.

“One of my big grievances has been why aren’t perpetrators of adults also being listed publicly?” Barthel told CNA that she has been concerned that Montanaro might groom other women.

The laicized priest now works as a photographer in Massachusetts. He has not responded to multiple attempts by CNA to contact him.

Among the photographs posted on Facebook by the studio where Montanaro works is a series in which several women have posed nude for the camera. The photo captions read “You are ravishing,” and “Next time you think of something beautiful, don’t forget to count yourself in.”

On the website of the studio, Montanaro writes “My biggest satisfaction is capturing the unique beauty of each person who entrusts that privilege to my partners and to me. We love to help people discover (or rediscover) their God-given beauty in a photo session, and fall in love with themselves all over again.”

In March, Barthel wrote to the Oblates.

“I have concern that he could use his credentials of previous pastoral work and education to get a job in any helper position where he would have access to vulnerable adults. While he is no longer able to hurt people using his position of power as a Catholic priest, that doesn’t mean he isn’t still a threat if he has access to vulnerable adults,” she wrote.

“This is a hurdle in my healing journey. I keep thinking, hoping, praying and wishing that someday when I Google his name, it’ll show up that he is a self-admitted abuser of adult women. Yet, to date, I find nothing. It floods me with grief and also adds to my anger that waxes and wanes as I continue to heal. I feel that as long as the Church stays silent on these matters, there is danger the abuse may continue. Who are we trying to protect and why?”

She requested that Montanaro’s self-admission of sexual misconduct be publicly acknowledged by the order.

She told CNA she has yet to hear back from the Oblates about her request.

The Oblates declined to respond to questions from CNA about Barthel’s request.

While Barthel is discouraged, she told CNA that she has not lost her faith.

“I love Jesus, I love the Church. And it’s not easy and my relationship with Jesus and the Church are different now, but in some ways it’s more beautiful than it was before because I’m more dependent upon Him. And I don’t know how to explain it.”

“My deepest healing has all come through adoration,” she said.

Barthel emphasized the role that Cozzens has played in her life. They’ve met together regularly, and prayed together, for years.

“I needed a safe place to allow the rage and pain to unfold,” Barthel told CNA.

“Yes, I did a lot of that in therapy, but the injustice against my soul demanded someone in the Church hierarchy to listen to me, hear my voice, acknowledge my pain and empathize with me. Bishop Cozzens has been that person for me.”

The bishop, she said, “has been the conduit God has chosen to use to bring me back into a free and even deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.”

“Eucharistic adoration is where I have received the majority of my healing,” she told CNA.

“Bishop Cozzens helped get me to a place to be able to go there and ask Jesus the hard questions and to sit and wait and listen for the answers. That’s the awesome thing about Jesus, if we ask, if we wait, He will speak to us.”

Barthel explained that Cozzens’ role in her life has been invaluable.

“When I first started meeting with him, I was terrified of praying; especially using my imagination which had always been my greatest source of delight in prayer and way of connecting to Jesus through the stories in Scripture. He never pushed, but would give me little tidbits of spiritual encouragement/advice that I could bring with me to Eucharistic adoration. This is what I needed. Someone who could walk with me and understand the danger and risk I was taking to pursue a life of prayer again.”

Cozzens told CNA that he’s learned, through his pastoral relationship with Barthel, what pastoral ministry to victims of abuse requires.

“One of the things that victims of abuse struggle with is going to Church. It’s really hard for them to go to Church. But if you’re a Catholic, you might think that you’re committing a mortal sin, but you just can’t do it because it’s so emotionally difficult for them. So to be gentle and to let them know that God understands the pain they’re going through, and the Church understands that too,” Cozzens said.

“Just to help people walk through that and let them know it’s ok that it takes time, and that God understands what they’re going through. To do that you have to be willing to go through ups and downs with people, because they go through their good moments and their bad moments. But gradually - and it takes time - but gradually the good moments outweigh the bad moments,” he added.

Barthel said she appreciated that understanding.

“Particularly in the beginning, coming back to the sacramental life of the church and prayer was excruciatingly painful, adding the regular breaking news reports of clergy abuse and cover up, there were so many times I wanted to throw the towel in and leave the Catholic Church altogether. While he never encouraged me to leave, he also never tried to convince me to stay. This gave me so much freedom and reminded me that the choice was mine. I needed that freedom and I believe it had a big part in helping me choose to remain Catholic,” she told CNA.

“I just wanted to be heard. I am hurting and I need someone to listen to me, and it needed to be somebody in the Church that I felt like cared.” “And I needed therapy,” she added. “Obviously, like I still go to therapy.”

For his part, Cozzens told CNA that many bishops, in the midst of the Church’s current sexual abuse crisis, have built pastoral relationships with the victims of abuse. But he also acknowledged that some bishops and priests, apprehensive about litigation or negative publicity, have been nervous about their engagement with victims of clerical sexual abuse.

“For me, you just have to put the person ahead of the situation...working with someone who has been hurt...they could turn on me, or be angry with me, or say bad things about me, but that’s the risk we all take if we’re going to be part of Christ’s healing. So I think...” (see Healing and Trust, page 23)
CALANDER

September 14th
Sacred Art Paint Party
You are invited to paint a fresh interpretation of Our Lady of Guadalupe with the beloved Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa. No experience is necessary. Artist, Monika Barrack, will teach you, step by step, how to paint this devotional work of art. Time: 1:30-4:30pm. Place: St. Joseph’s Cotati 150 St. Joseph Way, Cotati, CA 94931. Cost: $45.00, includes all supplies. Proceeds benefit the Marian Sisters. RSVP: Monika 707-292-6609, monikabarrack@aol.com or Cindy 707-592-9833, SAPP4Mary@gmail.com

September 14th
ON FIRE Nor Cal Jam
ON FIRE Nor Cal Jam is celebrating 10 years of Youth Ministry at 6-Flags in Vallejo. This annual school year kick-off is NOT merely a “youth rally” - the day includes dynamic and challenging speakers, Mass, Confession, Eucharistic Adoration, and a renewal of the YOUNG CHURCH (it draws 3,000 students every year). Not to mention the full amenities of the park. BE THERE! - registration link here: www.onfirenorcal.com.

September 21st
Ultreya
The Catholic Cursillo Movement of the Diocese of Santa Rosa invites all Catholics to attend an Ultreya on Saturday, September 21, from 2 to 4pm at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4595 Snyder Lane, Rohnert Park. Ultreya is an on-going, follow-up program for people who have made their Catholic Cursillo, linking them together in a Christian community that helps them support one another in living a Christ-centered life. For further information call Molly Touchette at 707-292-8389 or Olga Dorado at 707-755-0022.

September 27th
Parents Night With Kendra Tierney
“Liturgical Living For Busy Parents” Cardinal Newman High School Gym Fri., Sept. 27, 2019, 7-8pm With wisdom and humor, Kendra shares how her family celebrates Catholic seasons and feasts — from Advent and Christmas, through Lent and Easter, to Pentecost and beyond. She provides ideas for stories, activities, foods, and decorations that will help you to celebrate your Catholic faith with your family and friends without expertise or planning. She offers tips and survival tricks from her 15 years in the Catholic mommy trenches about such challenges as bringing young children to Mass and saying a family rosary.

Kendra Tierney is a wife and a mother of ten children from newborn to teenager. She’s a homeschooled and regular schooler, and an enthusiastic amateur experimenter in the domestic arts. She writes the award-winning Catholic mommy blog Catholic All Year (catholicallyear.com), is a regular contributor to Blessed Is She Ministries, and is the voice of liturgical living at Endow Ministries. She is also the author of “A Little Book About Confession for Children” (FREE workshop for parents/guardians. Credit hours available. Doors open @ 6:30pm. For more information: Diocese of Santa Rosa Department of Religious Education Phone: 707-566-3366. Email: dre@srdiocese.org. CO-SPONSORED BY: Department of Catholic Schools, Department of Youth & Young Adult Ministry, Department of Marriage & Family Life, Department of Religious Education.

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

October 5th & 6th
Annual Tri-Tip BBQ
The Knights of Columbus chapter at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Windsor will be holding its annual Tri-Tip BBQ fundraiser during the weekend of October 5th and 6th. This event supports our “Feed the Hungry” program. You may purchase tickets for tri-tip which will be prepared on Saturday, October 5th or purchase tickets for tri-tip which will be prepared on Sunday, October 6th. Saturday tickets are only valid for tri-tip prepared on Saturday and Sunday tickets are only valid for tri-tip prepared on Sunday. The pick-up time for Saturday tickets is from 6pm to 7pm on Saturday, October 5th. The pick-up time for Sunday tickets is from 10:00am to 11:00am on Sunday, October 6th. The cost of a serving of tri-tip is $25. Servings weigh between 3 and 4 pounds. The tickets will go on sale after every weekend mass beginning Saturday, September 7th. For additional information, please contact the church office 707-837-8962.

October 12th
Theology of the Body Conference
(Oakland, CA) Rethinking Relationships, Integrity and Sex. For teens, parents, young adults, teachers. Hear dynamic presentations, learn practical tips and resources, learn fascinating facts from experts. Be equipped to live effectively in today’s challenging world. Sponsored by Ethos California, an affiliate of Heartbeat International and National Institute for Life Advocates (NIFLA). 9am-3:30 pm. We will share the location of our conference in the Walnut Creek area with your reply. Seating is limited. Bagel breakfast and luncheon buffet provided. The event is FREE. Advance Registration is required. To register, call 925-449-5887. Or visit: www.ethosca.org/contact and send an email. R.S.V.P. preferred by September 7, 2019 Location details provided upon registration.

Ongoing in Santa Rosa
Catholic Charities’ Senior Transportation Program is a free service for seniors 60+ living in Santa Rosa. Our dedicated and trained volunteer drivers take seniors to medical appointments, grocery shopping and other similar errands. Medical appointments are given priority. Our program operates Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm To schedule a ride, call 707-528-2003 and leave a message with your ride request the week before you need your scheduled ride.

Ongoing
Thursdays 5:30pm
“Pray for Priests” prayer group St. Sebastian Parish Is God calling you to enrich your prayer life in the very meaningful way? If so, you are welcome to come to our parish “Pray for Priests” prayer group on Thursdays, 7-8pm in St. Sebastian’s church. Weekly attendance is not a requirement, join us when you can.

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

Humboldt State Newman Center events:
Regina - rfsnaugh1@hotmail.com
http://www.hsunewmancenter.com

To have your calendar event listed please email us! Srdiocese1@gmail.com
Healed aneurysm investigated as possible miracle for Creole nun’s beatification

In December 2017, 19 year-old Arkansas college student Christine McGee was rushed to the hospital by her mother.

Christine had fallen ill with what turned out to be an aneurysm, and it looked like she was going to die. Once at the hospital, Christine fell into a coma and became unresponsive.

Today, Christine is healed. She recently received her Master's degree from Loyola University in New Orleans, and she can drive and live independently.

Her recovery could be a miracle that progresses the sainthood cause of a Louisiana Creole religious sister, say authorities from the Diocese of Little Rock Arkansas.

While Christine was ill, her mother prayed for the intercession of Venerable Henriette DeLille, asking for healing for her daughter.

“From the time she learned about her sickness, she started to pray, and prayed to Henriette the whole time. Even though it seemed like things weren’t going to work, she held onto that belief,” Sister Doris Goudeaux, co-director of the Henriette Delille Commission Office, told the Arkansas Catholic.

Born in 1812 to a wealthy French father and a Creole woman of Spanish, French and African descent, Henriette was groomed throughout her childhood to become a part of what was then known as the placcage system.

Under the placcage system, free women of color (term used at the time for people of full or partial African descent, who were no longer or never were slaves) entered into common law marriages with wealthy white plantation owners, who often kept their legitimate families at the plantations in the country. It was a rigid system, but afforded free women of color comfortable and even luxurious lives.

Trained in French literature, music, dancing, and nursing, Henriette was prepared to become the “kept woman” of a wealthy white man throughout her childhood.

However, in her early 20s, Henriette declared that her religious convictions could not be reconciled with the placcage lifestyle for which she was being prepared.

Raised Catholic, which was typical for free people of color at the time, she had recently had a deep encounter with God, and believed that the placcage system violated Church teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

In 1836, wanting to dedicate her life to God, Henriette used the proceeds of an inheritance to found a small unrecognized order of nuns, the Sisters of the Holy Family.

During Henriette's lifetime, the Sisters taught religion and other subjects to the slaves, even though it was illegal to do so at the time, punishable by death or life imprisonment. The sisters also encouraged free women of color to marry men of their own class and to have their marriages blessed in the Church, and they established a nursing home for the poor and sick elderly, among other works.

In 1988, the Mother Superior of the order at the time requested the opening of Henriette Delille's cause for canonization. She was declared a Servant of God, and then was declared Venerable by Pope Benedict XVI on March 27, 2010.

A miracle through Henriette's intercession is needed for her beatification, the next step in the process before canonization to sainthood.

Many levels of Scouting offer a number of medals, emblems, and awards for maturation of the faith. The Pius XII Medal is only for high-school aged teens and focuses on “church-related ministries and vocations.” The program invites young people to consider the virtues, responsibilities, and commitments that come with single, married, religious, and ordained life stages. The Diocese of Santa Rosa's Catholic Committee on Scouting is dedicated to the promotion of the Catholic faith and ministry within scouting.

Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Diocese of Santa Rosa: Pope Pius XII Medal

Early in August, on a hot and beautiful summer weekend, when many teens are out and about soaking up the last moments of no-school, five young men joined together at the CYO camp in Occidental to earn their Pope Pius XII Medal.

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La varian de talleres y charlas presentadas durante el día es valiosa. Recursos de formación y enriquecimiento para ustedes y para sus comunidades de fe. La oportunidad de escuchar y ser renovados por la sabiduría ofrecida es un verdadero don y una bendición.

On Saturday, September 28th, the Diocese of Santa Rosa will present a day of prayer and fellowship for all adults in the Diocese. This year’s theme, “Encountering Jesus in the Liturgy”.

The variety of workshops and keynotes available throughout the day are excellent resources for formation and enrichment for you and for your communities faith. The opportunity to listen and be renewed by the wisdom offered truly a gift and a blessing.

Para registrarse visita el sitio web o contacta:
Carmen Perez Aanenson, Diócesis de Santa Rosa, Departamento de Educación Religiosa
dre@srdiocese.org  New Fax (707) 791-7495  www.santarosacatholic.org