

The Catholic Voice

MARCH 2022
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The Catholic Voice

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The victories of Coach John Madden



BY BISHOP
MICHAEL C.
BARBER, SJ

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ has been bishop of the Diocese of Oakland since May 2013.

Dear Friends,
Coach John Madden passed away on December 28, 2021, at the age of 85. He was a longtime member of our diocese, and over the years worshipped at our parishes in Pleasanton, Dublin and Danville. I celebrated his funeral Mass at Oakland’s Cathedral of Christ the Light, and he is buried in the mausoleum underneath. Since “everybody knew John Madden” (I say with affection) I wanted to share with you all my homily given at his Requiem Mass on January 18.

On February 14, there will be a celebration of John Madden’s long life and many accomplishments at the Oakland Coliseum. But today, at this Cathedral, we come to pray for John Madden, and to commend his soul into the arms of a loving and merciful God.

The Fox Sports documentary on John Madden shown on Christmas Day recounted his outstanding public career: football player, coach, Super Bowl victor, TV personality, multiple Emmy Award winner, Hall of Fame inductee.

That program showed who John Madden was in the sight of the public.

Today, we remember who John Madden was in the sight of Almighty God: a son, husband, brother, father, grandfather and friend.

And MORE: He was a baptized Christian, which made him a Child of God, and an heir – an inheritor – of the Kingdom of Heaven. His sins were forgiven in the sacrament of Confession; he received Christ’s own Body and Blood in the sacrament of Holy Communion; as a young

teen the bishop confirmed him and bestowed on him the power of the Holy Spirit.

Then John Madden acted in his life with the graces he received in these Catholic sacraments. The sacraments put divine life in him; and he showed it – by living out the Beatitudes we just heard read.

I'll give you just one example (there are many):

On August 12, 1978, at an exhibition game of the Raiders vs. the Patriots in the Oakland Coliseum, Pa-

trioti receiver Darryl Stingley was tackled, and hit so hard that he never walked again. His vertebrae were broken, and he was paralyzed for life from the neck down.

That night John Madden was at

Stingley's bedside in Eden Hospital in Castro Valley. No one from the Patriots team was at the hospital. In fact, the Patriots were on their team plane, taxiing for takeoff from Oakland airport. John Madden got on the phone and made the plane turn around and come back to the gate. Madden insisted their coach attend to his injured player.

For the next weeks, although the Raiders were at training camp 1½ hours north of here in Napa, John and his wife Virginia visited Darryl Stingley daily. They offered their home and the use of a car to Stingley's family. They bought clothes for Stingley's wife who had no time to pack as she rushed to a plane to fly west. After the 1978 league opener in Denver, John Madden flew home with the team to Oakland and went immediately to Stingley's bedside to visit.

Coach Madden remained a friend and made good on his promise to help Darryl for the rest of his life. "I love that man," Stingley wrote in his autobiography "Happy to be Alive" in 1983.

And we love you too, Coach Madden.

And so does the Lord. The Lord who created you, and redeemed you, and who said to you at the moment of your baptism, "You are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

In Hebrew the root word for Victory is also the root word for Eternity.

"Thanks be to God, who gives us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor 15:57)

Coach, may you share in one last victory: the Victory of Christ. For eternity. In heaven †

“

John Madden acted in his life with the graces he received in these Catholic sacraments. The sacraments put divine life in him; and he showed it - by living out the Beatitudes.”

GUIDELINES FOR LENT

"The annual observance of Lent is the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter. Through its twofold theme of repentance and preparation for Baptism, the season of Lent disposes both the catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the Pascal Mystery." (Ceremonial of Bishops, 249).

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, which is "a powerful season, a turning point that can foster change and conversion in each of us. We all need to improve, to change for the better. Lent helps us and thus we leave behind old habits and the lazy addiction to the evil that deceives and ensnares us. During the season of Lent, the Church issues two important invitations: to have a greater awareness of the redemptive work of Christ; and to live out one's Baptism with deeper commitment." (Pope Francis, General Audience, March 5, 2014)

The season of Lent is a special opportunity to grow spiritually through penitential practices, especially those of

self-denial, almsgiving, and through works of kindness and compassion. Lent is also a time to emphasize the Sacrament of Penance. Parishes are encouraged to offer the faithful various opportunities to celebrate this Sacrament, including individual Confession as well as Communal Penance Services.

Ash Wednesday: March 2, 2022

"On the Wednesday before the First Sunday of Lent the faithful, by receiving the ashes, enter upon the season appointed for spiritual purification. This sign of penance, biblical in origin (See 2 Sam 13:19; Esther 4:1; Job 42:6; 1 Mac 3:47, 4:39; Lam 2:10) and preserved among the customs of the Church until our own day, expresses the human condition as affected by sin. In this sign we outwardly profess our guilt before God and thereby, prompted by the hope that the Lord is kind and compassionate, patient and abounding in mercy, express our desire for inward conversion. This sign is also the beginning of

the journey of conversion that will reach its goal in the celebration of the reconciliation during the days leading to Easter." (Ceremonial of Bishops, 253)

Pandemic Adaptations (Two Options)

1. In the Diocese of Oakland, you may distribute ashes in the normal way, with the minister and recipient both wearing a mask. The formula found in the Roman Missal: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" or "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" may be said to each person.

2. A priest or deacon may use (moistened) cotton or a Q-tip to administer ashes, but the Bishop, in no way requires or recommends it. Cotton should be burnt after use.

The wearing of ashes is not an obligation of the faithful, so anyone who is uncomfortable should not come forward. †

- Office of Worship

See *General Guidelines and Practices for Lent* on page 30.



Faith Formation and Evangelization

Listening, finding ways to help move forward

Baptism. First Communion. Confirmation. Youth ministry. Young adult ministry. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

All these familiar sacraments, and, importantly, preparation for those sacraments are under the care of the parishes, with the assistance of the Department of Faith Formation and Evangelization.

In addition to catechesis, the department also encompasses Latino ministry, Marriage and Family, Life and Justice and Special Religious Education, known as SPRED.

**BY MICHELE
JURICH**

*Michele Jurich
is editor of The
Catholic Voice.*

Of all the ministries the Bishop's Ministries Appeal will fund, the Department of Faith Formation and Evangelization may be the one with the widest reach. With a staff of fewer than 10 people, the ministries serve every parish in the diocese.

In 2021, Father Jimmy Macalinao was named director of Faith Formation and Evangelization. He also serves as parochial vicar at St. John Vianney Parish in Walnut Creek.

After his ordination to the priesthood in 2018, Father Jimmy had served as parochial vicar at Most Holy Rosary Parish in Antioch. Prior to ordination, he served as a permanent deacon and as a teacher at St. Joseph Notre Dame High School in Alameda.

Known as a gifted teacher, Father Jimmy embraces the role Faith Formation and Evangelization serves in the diocese.

"For me, it's a blessing and honor to serve the parishes of the Diocese of the Oakland," he said. "Our mission is to collaborate with them, to partner with them, in the mission of evangelization. We partner with them to bring the mission of Jesus Christ, through the leadership of Bishop Barber."

Working with Father Jimmy in Faith Formation are Gena McGowan, coordinator for catechetical formation, and Joseph Nufable, coordinator of youth and young adult ministries.

"In a lot of the work that's done in our office, catechetical and youth ministry combined, we're dealing with a continuum of age groups," Gena said. "Together, Joe and I have been visiting as many staff as possible here in the diocese. We've offered a listening session and we intend to have more for catechetical leadership.

“Our mission is to collaborate with [the parishes of the Diocese of Oakland], to partner with them, in the mission of evangelization.”

— FATHER JIMMY MACALINAO



Jennifer Bell presented an introduction to Catechesis of the Good Shepherd to interested catechists from throughout the diocese.

“We work together to ensure everyone, kids and adults, has access to the sacraments of initiation.”

On the last Saturday of January, Faith Formation and Evangelization unveiled the newest offering to parishes. A “come and see” session was held at St. John Vianney Parish to introduce interested potential catechists from around the diocese to Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a faith formation program for preschool children, an introduction to the Catholic faith leading up to First Communion.

The diocese is subsidizing the majority of the cost for training for those who decide to embark on the year of training.

In visits to parishes, the team is doing a lot of listening, visiting parishes and hearing what’s working – and where they can be of additional service – as we approach the second year anniversary of the pandemic and easing of restrictions on public gatherings.

Father Jimmy also leads the Synod team, with Gena and Joseph taking active roles. They have been training parish leaders on how to conduct listening sessions.

The department, Father Jimmy said, follows the vision of Bishop Barber, in its work.

In following the bishop’s goals for the diocese, the team is attentive to the beautiful and meaningful Sunday liturgy. “He talks about the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and the missionary discipleship,” Father Jimmy said. “We are intentional in all the things we do in our department, whether it’s catechetical, SPRED or youth ministry.”

Through it all, he said, “we are conscious to make sure we provide avenues and opportunities for parishes and groups in the diocese to experience the personal encounter with Jesus Christ in every opportunity that we provide, whatever ministry it is.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 ►

The Bishop’s Ministries Appeal supports religious education and faith formation

Gifts to the Bishop’s Ministries Appeal help support religious education and faith formation programs for thousands of youth and adults annually.

Clergy Formation & Support

From initial formation into retirement, the diocese provides support for our priests. Additionally, your gift to the Bishop’s Ministries Appeal supports continued updating and renewal for priests and deacons who faithfully serve our people.

Pastoral Ministries & Services

Diocesan pastoral ministries and services focus on strengthening our faith, our families and building up our parish communities by engaging people in the daily life of the Church as faithful disciples of Christ.

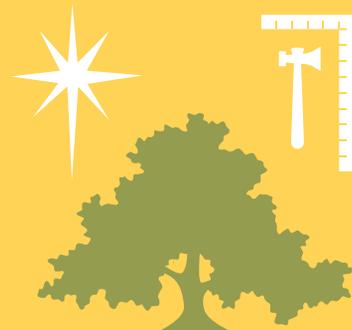
Support for Catholic Schools & Parishes in Need Each year

Our schools and parishes are faced with emergency repairs or budgetary shortfalls. The Bishop’s Ministries Appeal will again return 100% of all monies collected over and above each parish’s goal for use at the parish level for their own needs and plans for growth and new ministries to better serve its parishioners and the local community.

Priest Retirement & Care

Bishop Barber has an obligation to take care of our priests from the time they take vows through retirement. Your gift to the Bishop’s Ministries Appeal shows that you support and value those priests who have made a positive impact in your life. †

Source: Office of Mission Advancement, Diocese of Oakland



What is the team learning in the listening sessions?

“We are hearing they are very excited to come back live,” Gena said, noting that catechists also reported success with the Zoom model. Several parishes have mentioned the multimedia opportunities to engage children.

They also reported challenges.

“The number one concern is mental health, from little ones through high school,” Gena said.

Among the topics that have come up are isolation, loneliness and family dynamics.

“We are conscious to make sure we provide avenues and opportunities for parishes and groups in the diocese to experience the personal encounter with Jesus Christ.”

“It’s a tough time,” Gena said.

“As an office that’s one of the things we’re hoping to address, working collaboratively with Cristina Hernández on available social services.”

Joseph’s work with young adult ministry has involved a lot of going out and listening.

“The young adult ministries are still there,” he said. While diocesan events, such as Catholic Underground and Theology on

Tap, haven’t been available, parish-based young adult groups continue to meet.

Helping these groups continue to grow and assisting parishes that do not have active young adult ministries are in the future.

The ones that survived during the pandemic, he said, highlighted community life and provided a space for the young adults.

“From that community life I think we’ll get a better sense of how the Holy Spirit is calling those parishes to build a young adult ministry in this diocese,” he said.

“If there are young adults and they have an intentional relationship where they’re growing in their faith together, I call that young adult ministry,” he said.

Young adult ministry provides a powerful opportunity for parishes. “They’re still serving and taking on new roles in parish life, participating beyond the life change but in the mission of the church.” †



Jennifer Bell, Gena McGowan and Father Jimmy Macaliniao at the presentation on Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a program for young children. Jennifer was the presenter; the program is an initiative of the Department of Faith Formation and Evangelization, of which Gena is coordinator for catechetical formation and Father Jimmy is director.

Bishop’s Ministries Appeal: An invitation to participate in the work of the diocese

With the launch of the Bishop’s Ministries Appeal 2022, the people of the Diocese of Oakland are being asked to participate in the day-to-day work of meeting the needs of the faithful.

This emphasizes the ministries that go out into the parishes – faith formation and evangelization, CYO sports, formation of priests to serve those parishioners, care of the retired priests, and meeting the unexpected needs of schools and parishes.

We will be hearing “feed my lambs, feed my sheep” often in the next three years. All of the dioceses in the United States are launching a three-year emphasis on the Eucharist. The bishops are responding to a Pew research study that showed half of Catholics don’t believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

“‘Feed my lambs, feed my sheep’ refers primarily to Holy Communion,” Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, said. But it also extends to the ministries of catechism, schools, charities; feeding people with the word of God, feeding people with the truth of the Catholic faith, feeding people with pastoral care, he said.

The Bishop’s Ministries Appeal will train catechists preparing children for First Communion, and teenagers for Confirmation. Preparing catechists well, providing new materials and meeting the teens where they are, are critical to helping them to remain in the Church after Confirmation.

“When Christ gave the command to the apostles, ‘feed my lambs, feed my sheep,’ that command applies to each and every one of us...”

“When Christ gave the command to the apostles, ‘feed my lambs, feed my sheep,’ that command applies to each and every one of us: from parents, raising their children Catholic, bringing their kids to First Communion class, to parents who bring kids to Confirmation class, and kids who say to a friend they know is Catholic who is not practicing, ‘Come back to our youth group. Come to Mass with us.’ That’s all part of ‘feed my lambs, feed my sheep.’

“The diocese is trying to help each and every parish do Christ’s will of feeding the lambs and feeding the sheep, and help our pastors with the resources each parish might not have.” †



*“Feed my lambs,
feed my sheep”*

**2022 BISHOP’S
MINISTRIES APPEAL**

THE FACE ADVISORY BOARD CORDIALLY
INVITES YOU TO

An Evening of Scholarship

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44th Annual

FACE Gala

APRIL 23, 2022

*

BLACKHAWK AUTO MUSEUM
DANVILLE, CA

*

5:30 PM HOSTED COCKTAIL RECEPTION

*

6:30 PM DINNER AND PROGRAM

*

7:30 PM LIVE AUCTION & TUITION POPS

*

SILENT AUCTION ONLINE
APRIL 20TH-26TH

*

PLEASE RSVP BY MARCH 18TH

For more information, to purchase tickets,
or to make a donation, please visit: www.oakdiocese.org/facegala2022

Stations of the Cross Walk at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

Please join us for our Stations of the Cross Walk. Each walk will be led by our Diocesan priests in our *NEW Way of the Cross* section.

Upcoming Dates:

March 4th | March 11th | March 18th | March 25th | April 1st

ALL WALKS BEGIN AT 2:00 PM

For more information, please contact:

Mark Pereira, Outreach Manager
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Living Our Mission

CATHOLIC FUNERAL & CEMETERY SERVICES

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A MINISTRY OF THE
DIOCESE OF OAKLAND

DEAR FATHER JOE:

EVERY YEAR,
LENT
COMES AND GOES
AND I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE
I SOMEHOW MISS IT
OR BLOW IT.

HOW CAN I
MAKE LENT BE WHAT IT
IS SUPPOSED TO BE
THIS YEAR?



IN THE KNOW WITH
FATHER JOE

FATHER JOE KRUPP
is a former comedy writer
who is now a Catholic priest.
@Joeinblack

Praise God for your hunger. This is the key to the whole thing! Remember Jesus' words in Matthew: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, they shall have their fill." I also urge you to remember God's words through the Apostle Paul: "He who started this good work in you will see it to completion." (Phil 1:6)

This is a reminder that the hunger in you for holiness came/comes from God, and he will finish this!

Even with God's promises, it is important that we cooperate. It's not a matter of simply trusting God will get it done; we need to help God help us! So now, I'd like to walk us through some ideas about how to let God transform us in this Lenten season.

I'd like to begin with this marvelous quote from a holy bishop in Canada, Bishop Scott McCaig. Here is what he wrote:

"Don't just choose. Pray first. Ask the Lord where you are most vulnerable to the enemy — your greatest vice. Then identify the opposing virtue and embrace a discipline that will strengthen it. God doesn't want your chocolate ... He wants you. He wants your heart. He loves you!"

I found this to be one of the most succinct, powerful summaries of Lent that I have read.

What's the first step? Prayer.

I know, I know, I always type this, but it's so important. There is nothing that defines the Christian experience like prayer. Prayer is how the soul breathes. Prayer is how we hear the voice of God. Prayer is everything.

So, our first step is to take time and make a simple prayer to God, asking him to guide our thoughts and reveal to us where the biggest gap in our coverage is. One of the interesting things that I experienced as I pondered this revolved around fasting. Fasting is hard for me, as you might be able to tell by looking at me. I get frustrated with my eating, and I get embarrassed about how big I am.

As soon as I started thinking about Lent, that's where my thoughts took me immediately, and so I really didn't think more about it until I read Bishop McCaig's quote. My priorities might not be God's priorities, and, as important as it is for me to reject gluttony, I need to ask God what he wants me to focus on this Lent.

So, take some time today and offer God this prayer or some prayer like it:

"God, I love you. Because I love you, I want to be like you, but that is impossible without your help. As I approach this Lenten season, I am asking you to guide me. Show me where you want to work in me so that I can be holy. Let me hear your voice and respond with love."

Once you sense God leading you, either through circumstances or thoughts, follow that lead. Maybe

God wants to work on your temper. Maybe he wants to work on your gossip. Perhaps he wants you to not be so uptight about getting everything right — who knows? He will show you if you let him.

When you see where God wants you to go, then prayerfully and consistently pursue the virtue that will tame that beast. If lust is your struggle, pray for purity and commit to being pure in word, thought and deed. If greed is your struggle, pray for the grace of generosity and sacrifice until it hurts.

This is the way to live Lent well.

A couple of things to keep in mind: There really is no substitute for tenacity. When you and I commit to the fight for holiness, we need to cowboy up because it is going to be a fight. Holiness is not for those who get easily discouraged. When we ask God to help us and we commit to changing, then we need to be ready for the distinct possibility that we will strike out more times than we get on base. We need to be absolutely relentless in our pursuit and not focus so much on our performance as the inevitability of God's victory in and through us.

Another thing to keep in mind is that the work of holiness is about more than us.

Too often, we are obsessed with “those people” and what they need to change. We are painful, infinitely, minutely aware of the faults and failings of others and how those wound us.

However, we have to remember that we have no control over other people, we only have control over ourselves and, if we take a good, hard, honest look at reality, we see that we hurt others because of our faults and failings. We are, each individually, a significant part of the problem.

For our society to heal, for our Church to heal, for our families to heal, for our schools to get better, we each personally and individually need to change. We need to be radically committed to letting God heal and change us.

The more of us who commit to personal holiness, the better our Church will be, our society will be, our families will be.

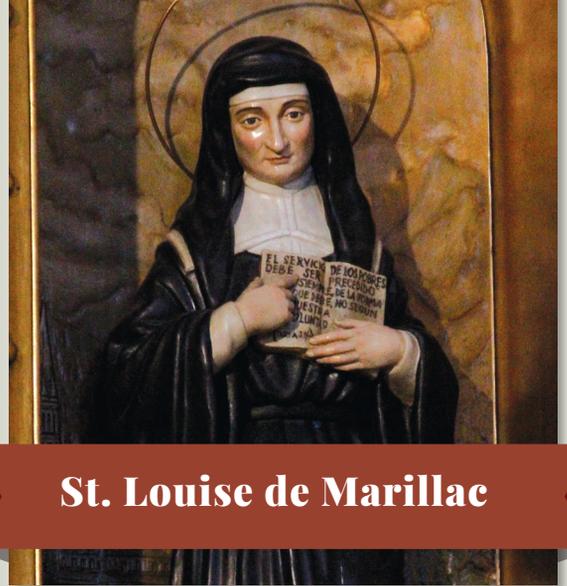
So, the stakes are the highest they ever could be, and the beautiful truth is that when we engage the fight within and decide to be holy, we will find healing in our hearts, peace in our minds and joy all around us.

Lent is a season where you and I simply must ask for God's guidance, commit to the fight for holiness and then simply refuse to give up until God breaks down the walls of sin in our hearts.

I pray Jesus blesses your Lent. I pray that, during these days, each of us double down on our joyful commitment to be like God.

I can't wait to see what he does! Enjoy another day in God's presence! †

PRAYER IS
HOW THE SOUL
BREATHES. PRAYER
IS HOW WE HEAR
THE VOICE OF
GOD. PRAYER IS
EVERYTHING.”



St. Louise de Marillac

FEAST DAY: MARCH 15
PATRON OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Orphaned as a teen and rejected by one religious order, St. Louise de Marillac persevered and eventually became the co-founder of the Daughters of Charity in 17th-century France – the first congregation of non-cloistered women dedicated to charitable service. Her talents for inviting, teaching and organizing were essential to making the vision of co-founder St. Vincent de Paul a reality. Today, more than 13,000 Daughters of Charity serve throughout the world.

Louise never knew her mother but enjoyed an elite education and lifestyle as the daughter of a French aristocrat. After her father's death, she lived with a devout spinster and became drawn to the cloistered life. When she was rejected by an order, she was told that God had other plans for her, which she took to heart. Louise married at the age of 22 and became a devoted wife and loving mother to a son, Michel. She became a leader in a group of wealthy women committed to helping the poor, while continuing to maintain a deep prayer life. At the age of 32, Louise experienced a vision in which a priest appeared to her and she saw herself caring for the poor as a vowed religious. A short time later, she met St. Vincent de Paul, who became her spiritual advisor.

After Louise's husband died, St. Vincent invited her to assist him with the Confraternities of Charity in French parishes. He soon realized that her ability for working with and among the peasants was an answer to his prayers. In 1633, with 12 young women, Vincent and Louise founded the Daughters of Charity, a community devoted to serving the poorest of the poor while living among them. The fact that the women in the order were not cloistered meant that they could travel to people's homes and work with medical professionals. At the time of her death 27 years later, Louise had helped establish more than 40 congregations in France. She was canonized in 1934. †



California Bishops Commit to Working for Better Futures for California’s Women, Children, and Families

The approaching 49th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* comes at a historic moment. The nation stands on the precipice of potentially overturning *Roe v. Wade*. At the same time, the Governor and state legislators have issued calls to make California a “sanctuary” destination for women seeking abortions from in and out of state.

However, asking to increase the number of abortions in California completely misses a vital, life-affirming point. California is already uniquely situated to respond actively to the needs of women, children, and families. Over the years, the California Catholic Conference has supported the state’s dynamic efforts to build programs for our most vulnerable populations, lifting families out of poverty and affirming the inherent dignity of each person.

Furthermore, the Catholic Church is the largest provider of private social services in California. We serve millions of the most at-risk families through our Catholic Charities and diocesan ministries, our Catholic hospitals and healthcare systems, and our Catholic schools and parishes.

With Pope Francis, we believe that abortion attacks the “sacredness of human life,” and that “it is not ‘progressive’ to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life.”² At this pivotal moment, we, the Bishops of the Dioceses of California, commit to a vision for our state that honors women with life-affirming support and practical resources so that all families can thrive, and so that no woman feels trapped into the devastating decision to end a life by abortion.

WE ENVISION

- A California that proclaims the inherent dignity of every woman, man, and child, born and unborn, and promotes the common good and human flourishing of all people.
- A California that prioritizes the wellbeing of women, children, and families not only with material resources but accompanied in solidarity.
- A California that celebrates with all mothers and fathers the tremendous gift of each child and affirms and empowers families welcoming children by birth, adoption, or fostering.

1. Pope Francis, (2015, May 30). Address of His Holiness to Meeting of the Science and Life Association.
2. Francis (2013, November 14) EVANGELII GAUDIUM: The Joy of the Gospel.

WE RESOLVE

- To commit to our sisters that we, the Catholic community of California, will be by your side as you walk the journey of motherhood.
- To raise awareness of the abundant life-affirming safety net resources available to women, children, and families in California through faith-based, community, and public agencies, including food, housing, healthcare, mental healthcare, intimate partner violence intervention, paid leave, childcare, education, employment, economic and material assistance.
- To unite our state's life-affirming pregnancy shelters, centers, and clinics, creating an accessible statewide network to accompany women facing challenging pregnancies and in the early years of parenthood.
- To advocate for transformative family policies, including increased access to affordable housing, prioritization of homeless pregnant and parenting women, expanded paid leave for families, dignified care for incarcerated pregnant and parenting women, and streamlined processes for families fostering and adopting infants and children.
- To empower our Catholic community to accompany the most vulnerable women, children, and families in our state, proclaiming the dignity of every human life through word and action.

Inspired by the love of the Triune God mirrored in the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and animated by the ministry of Jesus to comfort, provide, heal and restore, we dedicate ourselves to this cause.



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Archdiocese of Los Angeles

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Diocese of Santa Rosa



Scouts at Holy Spirit Parish prepare hot breakfast for motel residents

BY MICHELE JURICH

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PRATYUSH SETH

Scouts in Troop 154, sponsored by Holy Spirit Parish in Fremont, have put their skills to work on behalf of their neighbors in need. With portable stoves, propane and lightweight pans, the Scouts set up an outdoor kitchen in the parking lot of a motel the city of Fremont has designated as a shelter for people who might otherwise be homeless.

Working alongside Rahut, a Fremont-based non-profit organization dedicated to serving the homeless, the Scouts prepare hearty breakfasts of omelets and pancakes for the residents. The Scouts get the opportunity to hone their cooking skills along the way.

The connection was made by Rithwik Seth, a 17-year-old Scout and a senior at Irvington High School in Fremont. In working on a merit badge, he had been required to meet and interview a member of city government.

"She had friends who were looking for help with a program called Fremont Feed the Hungry," he said. The program's purpose was to collect money to buy food for families, but it needed reliable volunteers. "One of the huge things about Scouting is community service," Rithwik said. He offered the services of his troop when he learned about the families that had been lodged in the motel.

Scouts, accustomed to self-sufficiency on cookouts, developed the fresh breakfast program. "Some of the boys work on their cooking skills," he said.

Accompanied by their adult leaders, including Rithwik's father, Pratyush Seth, the Scouts go to the motel about 9:30 a.m. to serve breakfast at 10 a.m.

In their first days, they would need to send someone into the motel to knock on doors to alert the residents of mealtime.

No more. "We've been doing it long enough people know we're here," he said. Some residents ask for multiple orders to take back to their families waiting inside. It's all done in a socially distanced, safe and respectful way. At 11 a.m., the Scouts are cleaning up.

The streamlined process takes just a few Scouts, their adult leaders and the Rahut volunteers.

While the Scouts bring most of the food themselves, donated by their families, the willingness of the motel staff and guests to help out when needed touches his heart. One of the guests, for example, came to the rescue with a some cheese when the Scouts ran out, for example.

This service "definitely gives me a new perspective on contributing to my community," Rithwik said. "Some people think of community service as just giving money. What we've done here is the best way to help connect face-to-face, helping the people physically, mentally and emotionally."

Rithwik's Eagle Scout project also reflects those values. "I knew seniors were more susceptible to COVID," he said. "I knew they could barely go outside; families couldn't help; travel was hard." Rithwik organized a food delivery service for seniors in partnership with Life Elder Care for seniors who could

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15 ►

"Some people think of community service as just giving money. What we've done here is the best way to help connect face-to-face, helping the people physically, mentally and emotionally."



afford groceries. He arranged for masked-and-gloved Scouts to do their grocery shopping. He took special delight in recalling a woman who had requested sushi; the Scouts were able to deliver. She hadn't had sushi in three years, she told them.

For low-income seniors, the Scouts were able to obtain food through the local food bank.

At the time of this interview, Rithwik was completing his college applications. He plans to study computer science. His service has helped him set his goals. "I want to help people," he said. "I'll help create technology that will help people."

Scouts of Troop 154 were recognized along with Rahut by Rep. Ro Khanna, who represents the district in Congress. In addition to Rithwik, Scouts Aditya Kancharappu, Kevin Yan and Rikhil Seth were recognized for their dedication and repeated contributions. †

Gifted to Give – a fiesta! – on April 30

Five years in the making ... and the big celebration is finally happening! The planning is underway for the special fiesta to celebrate the 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines, particularly the Catholic Filipino heritage here in the Diocese of Oakland.

Coinciding with the celebrations happening in the Philippines, the Filipino clergy of the Diocese of Oakland are hosting "Gifted to Give," a dinner gala at the San Ramon Marriott Hotel on Saturday, April 30.

After a series of symposia, fellowship and liturgies over the past five years, we are optimistic that we are now able to safely gather as people of God truly "gifted to give" over food, music, cultural presentations and sharing of stories that make us truly Filipinos! And while this is a celebration of a Filipino heritage, this is not exclusively for Filipinos. If you have eaten, at least once in your life, lumpia, pansit or adobo, you are invited!

To learn more about underwriting and sponsorship opportunities and to reserves seats or tables for the event, kindly contact your local Filipino clergy or email frjetvilla@srdublin.org to be connected with the steering committee. †

– FATHER JOHN ERICK VILLA, ST. RAYMOND PARISH, DUBLIN

Big news for little people at Queen of All Saints School



Courtesy photo

Queen of All Saints School has a tradition of educating students in Concord. The school opened its doors to students in kindergarten through sixth grade in 1948, expanding later to include seventh and eighth grades. Transitional kindergarten came later. In 2018, the year the school became part of the new Lumen Christi Academies, one classroom was licensed as a preschool program. The program has grown quickly, and the school has been approved for a new state license, in two classrooms, to include toddler-age children. The Queen of All Saints Early Childhood Wing now consists of toddler (18-36 months), preschool (3-4.5 years), transitional kindergarten (4-5 years) and kindergarten (5-6 years) classes.

Learn more at www.QASConcord.org. †

gifted to give
500 YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE PHILIPPINES
Dinner Gala (Fiesta)
with Bishop Michael Barber, SJ
Saturday, April 30, 2022
San Ramon Marriott

The miracle of LOURDES

BY MICHELE JURICH

Michele Jurich is editor of The Catholic Voice.

PHOTOS FROM LOURDES COURTESY OF THE PAYLOR FAMILY AND THE ORDER OF MALTA WESTERN ASSOCIATION, USA

When Robert Paylor made the pilgrimage to Lourdes, a year after an illegal move by an opponent in the collegiate championship rugby game paralyzed him from the neck down, he was hoping for a miracle. The miracle he received wasn't the one he was praying for, but is the one that motivates him, and countless others, five years later.

If this had been a movie, the young athlete – 6-5, 233 pounds, on his last roster – strapped to the cart would have gone to Lourdes, been painstakingly dipped in the healing waters, and he would have miraculously climbed out of the water, healed. He likely would have then carried the next 10 people to the waters. That's

what Robert Paylor would expect of himself, a young man who lived by his high school motto, "Men for Others."

But that was not the miracle that awaited Robert Paylor. It might have been something even better. When the invitation to Lourdes arrived, Robert was rehabilitating from the devastating injury.

"When the offer was extended to first apply to go on this pilgrimage to Lourdes, there was no hesitation," Robert said. "I was excited to hear about it"

Robert had attended Catholic school from kindergarten through Jesuit High School in Sacramento. But it wasn't until the University of California, Berkeley athlete was in a hospital bed in Santa Clara that he heard of Lourdes.

"People were sending me water they had filled up on their own personal pilgrimages. They would have prayer cards and medals, sharing what this place was and what it meant."

The timing of the pilgrimage, through the Order of Malta Western Association, USA lined up perfectly with Robert's rehab in Denver. The pilgrimage would bring Robert and his companion – his mother, Debbie – to Lourdes.

"Going to Lourdes, you always hear about miracles," Robert said. "People are going in search of a miracle, a physical miracle. I certainly did."

Robert vividly recalled the 13-hour flight from Los Angeles. "I didn't sleep a second of that flight," he said. "I was praying. I was crying. I was desperate for healing," he said, having gone from an athletic body to a pretty broken body. "Here I was going to this place of many miracles, and I was hoping to have one of them."



"Mother Mary was who I prayed to," Debbie Paylor said. "I would pray for her intercession, for his healing." They made the pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Order of Malta Western Association, USA.



At Lourdes, he was under the care of the green team, captained by Mike Medeiros, which was designated for people with mobility impairments. Robert was among the malades, who are lifted into carts and pushed and pulled around Lourdes.

It took a couple of strong men to lift the young athlete, who wasn't able to transfer himself.

“Lourdes taught me perspective,” Robert said. “I have a significant challenge and my life has changed quite a bit. I don’t go to sleep and close my eyes wondering if I am going open them. I fight for mobility.”

“There were a lot of people with stage 4 cancer, ALS,” he said “Remind me not to complain about anything ever again. How could I complain?”

In conversation over a couple of beers with a priest from Santa Barbara, Robert said he came to use the term “compared to what?”

“This is really hard, but compared to what?”

“There’s so much I can do,” Robert said. “I am grateful. Not to dismiss our challenges, but it’s meant to put our challenges in perspective.”

One of his greatest experience at Lourdes was moving through the life-size Stations of Cross. “You work your way along a gravel road up this hill,” he said. “We’d get into carts. Someone would push from the back; someone would pull from the front.”

The process was “especially difficult for a big guy like me,” Robert said. Accompanying Robert on this journey with Edgar Gonzales, who despite fighting cancer was upbeat and positive, and Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto, who had confirmed Robert.

“It’s beautiful; it’s incredible; it gives so much peace,” Robert said. “But these guys were tired. Toward the end, there’s a cave in the side of the hill.”

Debbie Paylor and Edgar’s wife had gone ahead. “You need to come in and see this,” they reported.

As he was rolled into the cave, as water dripped from the ceiling, Robert saw the statue of Mary, holding the body of Jesus. “She’s weeping, she has one arm in the air. My mom broke down and I tried to hold myself together, witnessing the pain and love for Jesus she endured in that moment, and the pain and the love my mom gives me every single day.”

He thought, too, of the “living angels around me who would give me this amazing life.”

It was May 6, 2018, exactly one year from the date of his injury.

At the hotel that night, the sick and injured shared their experience, talking about their miracle from Lourdes. “We had all bathed in the waters,” Robert said. “I didn’t come out of the water walking.”

Robert told of what he had just witnessed, and being assisted by Edgar.

“At that moment, I had never said I might not ever walk again and actually believed it,” Robert said. He started crying

and said the words: “I might never walk again.”

“And I meant it. But I’m going to be a damn good man, and live a damn good life. I’m going to live with great joy and great purpose.”

Robert Paylor’s miracle had revealed itself.

There’s a saying at Cal: “The Bear will not quit!

The Bear will not die!” Football Coach Joe Kapp said this after the 1982 Big Game. It comes to mind when hearing Robert Paylor’s story.

Robert Paylor returned to the campus, where he was a regular at Holy Spirit Parish/Newman Hall, to continue his studies in business. He was supported by his rugby teammates and coaches.

A Cal professor asked Robert to come to class to share his story. Robert turned to his coach, Jack Clark, “an amazing coach and an equally amazing human being,” for assistance. They spent weeks developing the message Robert would deliver to the class. The response was energizing.

“They were laughing, crying, and a standing ovation at the end, Robert recalled. His own reaction was:



“This is amazing. This something I want to be doing every single day. It showed that purpose.”

Speaking to that class has brought invitations to speak to high school classes, professional sports teams and Fortune 500 companies.

His inspirational and motivational presentations acknowledge that everyone faces challenges; the real challenge is how to meet them.

“I think I was put on Earth to do this,” he said.

He has completed the first draft of his book; the working title is “From Paralyzed to Powerful.”

He knows his journey has not been solo.

“In anything I’ve done in these last four, five years, going to college, I’ve had an army of people behind me lifting me up and pushing me through this: my therapists, rugby teammates, coaches, GoFundMe donors, social media, the Order of Malta. The person who stands at the top of the list is my mom. She’s dedicated her life to my brother and me. It goes to show how amazing people are.

I love how this story has not attracted any negativity. Some people feel sorry for me – I probably would if I saw some one going through this – but most people are inspired.”

His is also a story of the power of forgiveness.

At first, he said, no one knew how he had been injured. The NBC Sports footage showed one angle, but later sideline and end zone videos emerged.

“I was just doing my job. I was trying to score. Sideline and end zone photos and videos clearly showed an arm lock around my neck. When I saw those pictures and videos, I was angry. I wanted to hate this person. I had been hit harder than anything in my entire my life.



“The player has never reached out to me; neither has the head coach.”

Robert said, “I harbor no anger within me.”

Faith, Robert said, is really everything.

“I had an upbringing in the faith,” he said. “Going to Catholic school, we start off every class with prayer,

grace before meals, Mass to attend. I loved it. It gave meaning and guidance to my life. I went to Jesuit High school in Sacramento. The motto is Men for Others.

“That’s what I wanted to be. That’s what I was. I was gifted with an amazing body. Tall, strong and fast, with energy. I was able to use those gifts that God gave me on the rugby field. To be a national champion. I lived with passion and purpose. It gave me a lot of joy to give that passion and energy to others.

“I had everything going my way. There wasn’t much for me to ask for.”

His prayers were of gratitude, that he could continue to be a good person and live out God’s will.”

Before he stepped onto the rugby field on May 6, 2017, he did as he always did before a game: He prayed an Our Father and the 23rd Psalm.

After he fell to the ground, he recalled, “Immediately, I started praying to God. I always believed God has a plan. At that moment it was hard to believe how it could be part of the plan.”

In addition to his speaking engagements, Robert is the executive director of the Big C Society, the organization of Cal varsity athletes.

He keeps up a rigorous rehabilitation schedule at his home.

At 25, he’s a man on a mission. A man for others.

A man who says, “To my dying day, I’ll keep trying to walk.” †



ROBERT PAYLOR

www.robertpaylor.com

He’s also on all social media channels

While Robert Paylor completed his studies in 2020, the graduation ceremony that year was canceled because of COVID-19. But the University set up a graduation ceremony in the Greek Theatre the next year.

Robert was ready.

Assisted by Tom Billups, Cal rugby assistant head coach, Robert Paylor rose from his wheelchair and used a walker to walk 10 feet across the stage to receive not only his diploma but also the cheers, respect and admiration of the assembly.



Photo: Keegan Houser, UC Berkeley News

THE MIRACLE ON 21ST STREET

Order of Malta Clinic of Northern California expands its free services to uninsured adults

It's been called the Miracle on 21st Street.

At the corner of 21st and Harrison Streets in Oakland, the Order of Malta Clinic of Northern California has been providing medical care to uninsured adults since 2008.

That's at no cost. No insurance is billed. It's free.

Imagine what that means to the patient. The ability to stay healthy and be able to work and earn money to pay the rent could prevent being homeless.

The clinic's presence, at the base of the Pilgrim's Path leading to the Cathedral of Christ the Light, is the keeping of a centuries-old commitment by the Order of Malta, founded in 1048, to care for the sick and the poor. It's a sign of the commitment, too, of then-Bishop Allen Vigneron, who on a pilgrimage to Lourdes, suggested the possibility of a medical clinic at the cathedral in progress, and to each after him who have supported the clinic.

The clinic runs with a tiny paid staff and an army of volunteers, including almost 50 health care professionals who share their expertise.

Board members are among the volunteers who bring their time, talent and treasure to their tiny clinic. The president of the clinic board is Tim McInerney.

Expansion – physical, services and outreach – is on the agenda for 2022.

Tim, whose father, William McInerney, was the first president of the clinic board, honored the many individuals from the Order of Malta who began the work

of building a medical clinic. “They started opening a few days a week,” Tim said. “We've expanded. Now we're open five days a week, looking to do Saturday hours or longer hours into the evening.”

It's a matter of meeting the needs of patients.

“Most of our people are the working poor,” he said. “They can't take time off work. It's valuable. So we're trying to make our hours better available to them.”

Another expansion is in relationships with training programs. A residency program from John Muir Medical Center participates in the clinic, as well as programs from a handful of local nursing schools.

“We could use their help; it's community service for them,” he said. “It works out well for both parties.”

A relationship with Sutter Health brings a mobile mammography clinic to the site.

“With the expansion, we can help more people,” Tim said, noting that most of the clinic's clients are working people.

“We're one service that could prevent homelessness,” he said. “If we can diagnose and treat a medical condition, these people could continue to work and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 ►



Tim McInerney



Chuck Wirth

“

We're one service that could prevent homelessness. If we can diagnose and treat a medical condition, these people could continue to work and pay their rent. That's a big focus of the clinic. Make our services available when people are available to come in.”

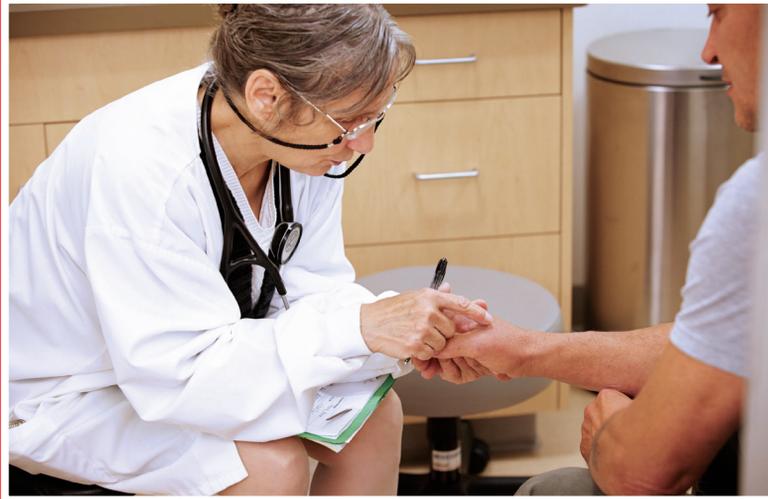
TIM McINERNEY

“

They started opening a few days a week,” Tim said. “We've expanded. Now we're open five days a week, looking to do Saturday hours or longer hours into the evening.

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pay their rent. That's a big focus of the clinic. Make our services available when people are available to come in."

The expansion also includes the greater use of a mobile clinic.

"I'd like to utilize it more, where we can bring medical services to the people, as opposed to having them come to us," Tim said. "We've taken the mobile clinic to parishes in the Diocese of Oakland where the rate of vaccination are lower than the county as a whole."

Expanding the information available to patients is greatly assisted by a partnership with the Mayo Clinic.

All of the members of the clinic board are members of the Order of Malta. They serve on various committees covering various areas of the clinic operation.

Chuck Wirth joined the board after a pilgrimage to Lourdes.

"I met some clinic people on a pilgrimage to Lourdes," he said. "My wife and I went on the pilgrimage; some people found out I had a health care background."

Chuck, who was retired, was invited to visit the clinic, where he met Dt. Thomas Wallace, the nonagenarian neurologist who volunteers regularly at the clinic.

"I was pretty impressed with it all," Chuck said. His background was in running clinics.

"I spent the better part of 30 years working in clinic environments, much of them much larger than our clinic in Oakland," he said. "It seemed to me it was a pretty good fit. It's a wonderful mission and ministry."

"They treat people with respect; it's not hard to do," he said. "It's not so simple to put together the organization that makes it all happen."

"It's an unbelievable organization," he said. "the time, effort and resources people put in the clinic ... it's just amazing."

When Chuck joined the board about two and a half years ago, one of the first things he was asked about was strategic planning.

"One of the things I ask: What's our strategy? When we grow up, what are we going to be? So I had some experience with strategic planning."

Chuck, as the facilitator, brought leadership together for the planning, which took about six months.

"We came up with a pretty robust strategic plan," he said. "One of the major elements was growth. Growth was aligned with providing more care to the uninsured in Northern California. We thought the clinic was pretty much at terminal capacity, with the resources we had, the space we had was the biggest factor."

What would it look like to see more patients? The clinic in its current space has three exam rooms. That's not enough.

But then 2020 came, and like most health care agencies, the clinic closed nonemergency ambulatory services.

"We made the pivot to telemedicine," Chuck said.

"In 2020, we didn't see as many patients, but it was a remarkable number," he said.

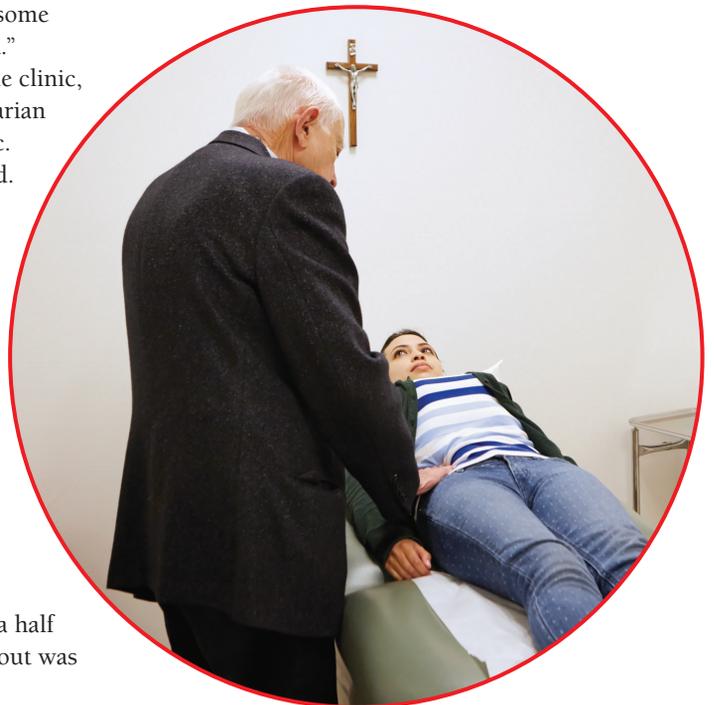
"This gives us a whole other way to reach patients that doesn't require brick and mortar," he said.

Telemedicine works well with follow-up visits, but the need for person-to-person care remains in the plans.

Doubling the exam rooms to six would be desirable, as well as providing additional space to accommodate staff and the waiting area.

He credits the clinic's "beautiful and generous donor base" for providing the medical providers with the freedom to treat patients without meeting the needs of an insurance company.

"The doctors do what they think is right," he said. "You start with people who really need help."



“

Growth was aligned with providing more care to the uninsured in Northern California. We thought the clinic was pretty much at terminal capacity, with the resources we had, the space we had was the biggest factor. — CHUCK WIRTH

”



Technology is an area of expansion, greatly aided by the generous donations of licenses for electronic medical records software from Kareo.

Quest Diagnosis provides laboratory work to the clinic at a discounted rate, another example of partnerships in the community.

“We are focused on how we can use the resources we have in the best way possible and how can we expand our capability to see more patients,” Chuck said. “Technology is one way, but also we’re taking a good hard look at internal operations, how we do things and how we can do them better.”

As the expansion plans develop, the operations committee is developing what might be called a blueprint for the clinic of the future.

One of the questions being considered: Can we use that clinic of the future as a template for free clinics in other communities?

“We’ve been asked by other communities to see if we can help them out,” Chuck said. “The clinic wasn’t built to be a template for other clinics; it was built to fit the space we have. I think we can blend best practices with our incredibly caring local flavor of the clinic we have.”

That caring environment is often recalled in letters from patients, who express their thanks in letters and cards.

“Their stories are heart-wrenching,” Tim said. “You just want to do more.”

The Order of Malta volunteers and staff are focused on their patients.

“Once they leave the clinic, we don’t know what they’re going back to. It’s safe to say it isn’t easy,” Tim said. “If we can help in any way, that’s what we’re here for.” †

**+ FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A DONATION:
www.orderofmaltaclinic.com
 And if you’re a health care professional with time to volunteer, the clinic would love to hear from you.**

**NP’s
 RN’s
 LVN’s
 CMA’s
 VOLUNTEER HERE
orderofmaltaclinic.com**

**THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT
 2121 HARRISON STREET OAKLAND CA**



Escuchar, orar y caminar



**POR REVERENDÍSIMO
LAWRENCE D'ANJOU,
VICARIO GENERAL**

El proceso del Sínodo 2021-2023 está en marcha, gracias a todos ustedes que han participado hasta la fecha. El verdadero corazón de este proceso consultivo mundial convocado por el Papa Francisco es la Sesión de Escucha. En los últimos meses, el Equipo Diocesano del Sínodo, nombrado por el Obispo Michael C. Barber, SJ, en el otoño de 2021, ha estado trabajando para crear esquemas, recursos y materiales para las Sesiones de Escucha, que ahora están disponibles para todos.*

En nuestra Diócesis, estamos llevando a cabo sesiones para cuatro audiencias diferentes: Parroquias, Escuelas, Ministerios de Jóvenes/ Adultos Jóvenes y Ministerios/ Organizaciones Católicas. Estas sesiones llegan a todos los rincones y comunidades de nuestra Diócesis, mientras nos hacemos la pregunta: “¿Qué le está diciendo el Espíritu Santo a nuestra Iglesia hoy?”

Durante estas sesiones, oraremos juntos y nos dividiremos en grupos pequeños, compartiremos reflexiones y, posteriormente, informaremos al grupo más grande. La duración de las sesiones varía, de acuerdo con el grupo que se reúna. Las sesiones para toda la parroquia y para Jóvenes / Adultos jóvenes incluyen la Adoración del Santísimo Sacramento. Otras sesiones permiten la oportunidad de escuchar durante una reunión previamente programada o en una sesión fuera de la parroquia.

El Obispo Michael C. Barber SJ, le ha dado una gran importancia a las contribuciones de los grupos de jóvenes y adultos jóvenes. El participará en dos sesiones este mes para conectarse directamente con representantes de grupos de jóvenes y adultos jóvenes de la Diócesis.

Los participantes en una Sesión de Escucha pueden incluir al párroco o facilitador laico, un(a) tomador(a) de notas para los grupos grandes y pequeños, lectores para las lecturas y proclamación de las Escrituras y facilitadores de grupos pequeños para las sesiones de trabajo.

Después de las oraciones y reflexiones iniciales, se les pide a los participantes que reflexionen y compartan pensamientos individuales sobre estas cuatro preguntas:

1. **¿Cómo se da el “caminar juntos” en su iglesia o grupo local para que pueda llevar a cabo la misión de la Iglesia?**
2. **¿En qué consiste la alegría de realizar un viaje juntos? ¿Qué nos ayuda o puede ser un obstáculo para esto?**
3. **¿Hay nuevos caminos por los que nos está guiando el Espíritu Santo a discernir para crecer juntos en nuestro recorrido?**
4. **¿Cómo nos invita el Espíritu Santo a proclamar el mensaje de Jesucristo en el mundo de hoy?**

La oración debe ser parte de cada sesión para que podamos escuchar mejor al Espíritu Santo. Las respuestas deben recopilarse y enviarse antes del 31 de marzo de 2022 para un informe final al Obispo Michael C. Barber, SJ, y, en última instancia, a la USCCB (Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos, por sus siglas en inglés) y al Vaticano. Si usted todavía no ha participado, comuníquese hoy mismo con su parroquia, ministerio u organización. Cada voz es invitada y bienvenida.



Como joven católico, esta idea de ser una Iglesia que escucha es un nuevo concepto teológico muy práctico, emocionante y algo que todos deberíamos estar haciendo todos los días.”

Joseph Nufable, Coordinador, Ministerio Juvenil y Miembro de RICA, Equipo Diocesano del Sínodo.



El propósito del Sínodo y de las Sesiones de Escucha no es producir documentos, sino ‘sembrar sueños, cultivar profecías y visiones, permitir que florezca la esperanza, inspirar confianza, vendar heridas, entrelazar relaciones, despertar a un amanecer de esperanza, aprender unos de otros y fomentar la recursividad que ilumine las mentes, promueva los corazones y fortalezca nuestras manos.’”

Discurso de apertura del Papa Francisco, en el Sínodo de los Obispos sobre los Jóvenes (3 de octubre de 2018).

Abran su corazón a lo que Dios les está diciendo acerca de su Iglesia y compartan lo que escuchan. Y oren por este proceso, no solo en nuestra Diócesis sino en todo el mundo. Tenga la seguridad de yo que estoy orando con ustedes.

*Estos materiales están disponibles en: <https://oakdiocese.org/synod-2021-2023>. Este artículo y todos estos materiales están disponibles en español en: <https://oakdiocese.org/synod-2021-2023>. Cualquier pregunta o idea adicional que tenga sobre este proceso, envíela por correo electrónico a: synod@oakdiocese.org. †

Oración de invocación al Espíritu Santo para la apertura del Sínodo

Estamos ante ti, Espíritu Santo,
reunidos en tu nombre.
Tú que eres nuestro verdadero consejero:
ven a nosotros, apóyanos, entra en nuestros corazones.
Enséñanos el camino,
muéstranos cómo alcanzar la meta.
Impide que perdamos el rumbo
como personas débiles y pecadoras.
No permitas que la ignorancia nos lleve por falsos caminos.
Concédenos el don del discernimiento,
para que no dejemos que nuestras acciones sean guiadas por prejuicios y falsas consideraciones.
Condúcenos a la unidad en ti,
para que no nos desviemos del camino de la verdad y la justicia,
sino que en nuestro peregrinaje terreno nos esforcemos por alcanzar la vida eterna.
Esto te lo pedimos a ti,
que obras en todo tiempo y lugar,
en comunión con el Padre y el Hijo por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.

Cronología del Sínodo



Listen, Pray and Journey Together



BY VERY REVEREND
LAWRENCE D'ANJOU,
VICAR GENERAL

The 2021-2023 Synod process is well underway, and thank you to those of you who have participated to date. The real heart of this worldwide consultative process called for by Pope Francis is the Listening Session. Over the past few months, the Synod Core Team, appointed by Bishop Barber in the fall of 2021, has been working to create outlines, resources and materials for these Listening Sessions, now available to all.*

In our diocese, we are holding these sessions for four different audiences: parishes, schools, youth/young adult ministries, and Ministry/Catholic organizations. These Sessions reach all corners, and peoples of our Diocese as we ask, "What is the Holy Spirit saying to our Church today"?

During these sessions, we will pray together and break into small groups, share reflections and ultimately report back to the larger group. Sessions vary in length depending on which group is meeting. All-parish and youth/young adult sessions include Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Other sessions allow for listening during an already-scheduled meeting or in a session outside of the parish. Bishop Barber has placed a

great significance on input from youth groups and young adults. He will hold two sessions this month to connect directly with representatives from youth and young adult groups around the diocese.

Participants in a Listening Session can include the pastor or lay facilitator, a scribe for both the larger and smaller groups, lectors for the readings and small group facilitators for breakout sessions.

After opening prayers and reflections, participants are asked to consider, reflect upon and share individual thoughts on these four questions:

1. How is "journeying together" happening in your local church or group, in carrying out the Church's mission?
2. What are the joys in carrying out journeying together? What helps or hinders us in this?
3. What new paths is the Holy Spirit leading us to discern to grow in our journey together?
4. How is the Holy Spirit inviting us to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ in today's world?

Prayer must be part of every session so that we can better listen to the Holy Spirit. Responses are to be collected and submitted by March 31, 2022 for a final report to Bishop Michael C. Barber and, ultimately, the



As a young Catholic, this idea of being a listening Church is a new theological concept that is very practical, exciting and something we should all be doing every day."

Joseph Nufable, coordinator, Youth Ministry and RCIA, Member, Synod Core Team.



The purpose of the Synod, and the listening sessions, is, ‘to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands.’”

FRANCIS, Address at the Opening of the Synod of Bishops on Young People (3 October 2018).

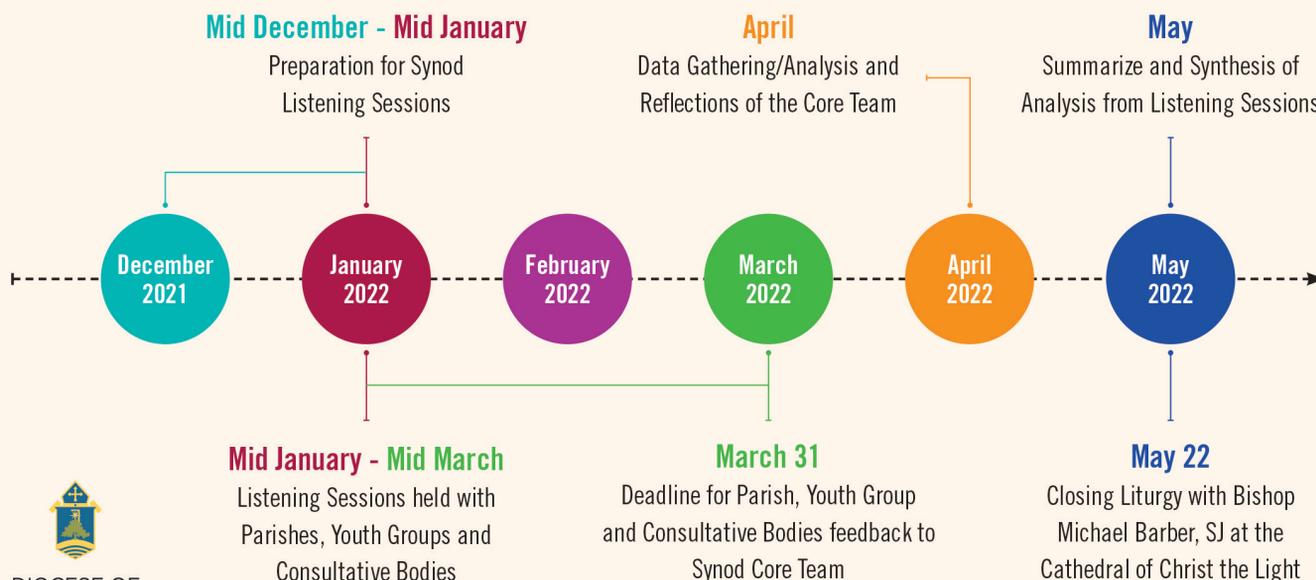
USCCB and the Vatican. If you haven't participated, please reach out to your parish, ministry or organization today. Every voice is welcome and encouraged. Open your heart to what God is saying to you about his Church and share what you hear. And please pray for this process, not only in our diocese but around the world. Be assured that I am praying with you.

**These materials are available in at <https://oakdiocese.org/synod-2021-2023>. Este artículo y todos estos materiales están disponibles en español en <https://oakdiocese.org/synod-2021-2023>. Any additional questions or ideas about this process, email synod@oakdiocese.org. †*

Synod Opening Prayer

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.
Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.
All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever. Amen.

Synod Timeline



Catholic influences in the romance novels of

Nicholas Sparks

BY MIKE
MASTROMATTEO
Catholic News Service
Mike Mastromatteo
is a writer and editor
from Toronto.

CNS PHOTO/COURTESY
NICHOLAS SPARKS



BEST-SELLING NOVELIST NICHOLAS SPARKS' MOST RECENT BOOK, "THE WISH," PRESENTS A PLOT COMMON TO MANY OF HIS SUCCESSFUL BOOKS.

Told through flashback and reflection over a 24-year timespan, the story follows the life of 40-ish New York City photographer Maggie Dawes, who as a teenager was sent to live with her Aunt Linda – a former nun – while she prepares to give birth to an unplanned and unexpected child. While living with her aunt in a small remote North Carolina community, Maggie meets up with Bryce Trickett, a slightly older teenager who serves as her mentor and eventual first true love.

There are a couple of near implausible twists and turns in the story, but the basic narrative tension – a perfect love vanquished by fate and misfortune – is a well-worn formula in Sparks' writing.

In a recent interview with Catholic News Service, Sparks discussed not only his ap-

proach to romance-focused storytelling, but also the Catholic influence that informs, even subtly, his body of work. While more widely regarded as a creator of romance stories, Sparks is a Catholic writer who is not shy about inserting some of his faith influences into his work.

"I was born and raised Catholic (and I am) still Catholic," Sparks said. "I have tried to make the best novels I can. And the faith element really depends on the particular story and its characters."

With "The Wish," the characters' Catholic faith and belief in God is what drives much of the tension in the story. One of the strongest characters is Aunt Linda, the former nun, who quotes St. Therese of Lisieux in an attempt to explain to Maggie the complications of human interaction.

Nicholas Sparks is pictured in an undated photo. In a recent interview with Catholic News Service, the bestselling author discussed not only his approach to romance-focused storytelling, but also the Catholic influence that informs his body of work.

“Catholicism pretty much sets the entire story in motion,” Sparks told CNS. “The characters’ faith, belief in God, and the particular practices and doctrines associated with Catholicism are what led to this story.”

As of December, Sparks had written 23 novels, a memoir and a nonfiction work. His books have sold more than 105 million copies worldwide and have been translated into 50 different languages. Along with his writing success, Sparks has ventured into philanthropy by establishing a foundation supporting “cultural and international understanding through education and student experience.” He also donates his time and resources in support of the creative writing program at the University of Notre Dame, his alma mater.

After obtaining a degree at Notre Dame, Sparks had no clear idea of what he wanted to do with his life.

The author credits his mother for setting him on a positive career path. While convalescing from an ankle injury while still at Notre Dame, Sparks – who had become an elite-level track star – responded to his mother’s offhand suggestion to “write a book.”

“At first, I didn’t think I could make a living writing novels,” Sparks told CNS. “And so, I went ahead and got a business finance degree and then, when I graduated, I wasn’t sure exactly what I wanted to do. So, I tried a variety of different jobs and tried to zero in on who I was as a person, where my skill set lay, and I kept on writing.”

Sparks credits his mother not only for the career advice, but for instilling a sense of perseverance and resiliency in the face of life’s capriciousness. And like many Catholic families, it was the mother who made sure that the children paid some attention to the tenets of the faith during their formative years.

Sparks’ 1996 breakthrough book, “The Notebook,” not only became a bestseller, but was also made into a film starring Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams. Since then, 10 other Sparks novels have been made into movies.

Although his novels might seem overly sentimental, Sparks believes in the power of the story to stir a sense of mystery, wonder and other worldliness in his readers. His books tend to idealize love relationships, but they also suggest that they are not without pain, suffering and the possibility of irreparable loss.

In “The Notebook,” Sparks voices some of his attitude to faith and wonderment through the main character, Noah: “I bow my head and pray silently for the strength I know I will need. I have always been a firm believer in God and the power of prayer, though, to be honest, my faith has made the list of questions I definitely want answered after I’m gone.”

Sparks resides today in the coastal town of New Bern, North Carolina, an area that has become the setting for most of the author’s stories. Despite a hectic schedule of travel and promotion, Sparks finds time on occasion to attend Mass at New Bern’s St. Paul Catholic Church.

Sparks’ rapport with his readers stems in part from the authenticity and “bits of business” that the author puts into the characters he creates. Clearly this has special resonance with Catholic/Christian readers.

“Many of my novels have in some no small way come from my own experience,” he said. “I was raised in a very Catholic family. I actually know a family whose teenage daughter got pregnant. And their solution was to ship her to live with a relative until the baby was born. So, I’m not necessarily inserting myself into the stories. I’m inserting those experiences I’m aware of in my own path that I think can add authenticity to certain elements within a novel.”

Sparks is at work on his next book, expected to be released this year. He is reluctant to reveal plot details in advance of a new book’s release, but he did say it would be set in North Carolina and would involve a complicated love story.

Whatever form the book takes, the action will almost certainly speak to the author’s embrace on the human condition and how fate, fortune, suffering, disappointment, faith, wisdom and joy play out in our lives.

“I think faith is the process or the act of believing without proof,” Sparks said. “And one has to justify the act of belief without the aspects of proof. And part of that is there are unanswerable questions. Why is there suffering in the world? Why do people have to suffer? These are questions that plague theologians and philosophers for thousands of years. But the belief without proof on the other hand is about submission. It’s the idea that there is a God – Father; Jesus, his Son; and the Holy Spirit – and we’re not always meant to understand all of it.” †

“
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without
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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

OFFICIAL SCHEDULE

March 2

7 a.m. Ash Wednesday Mass, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

12:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Mass, UC Berkeley campus, Berkeley

March 4 and 5

24 Hours for the Lord throughout the Diocese of Oakland
Please visit www.oakdiocese.org/24-hours-for-the-lord for complete list of parishes offering adoration and confession

March 10

10 a.m. Priest Personnel Board Meeting

1 p.m. Presbyteral Council Meeting

March 12

1 p.m. Synod Listening Session with youth, St. Isidore Parish, Danville

5 p.m. Rey of Hope 2022 Gala Honoring Bishop John S. Cummins and The Cristo Rey De La Salle East Bay High School Class of 2022, Claremont Country Club, Oakland

March 14

USCCB Committee on Doctrine Meeting, Washington, D.C.

March 15

10:30 a.m. College of Consultors Meeting

March 17

Study Day with Presbyterate of the Diocese, St. Isidore, Danville

March 18

10 a.m. Rite of Election, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

2 p.m. Rite of Election, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

March 19

4 p.m. Rite of Election, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

March 24

7 p.m. Celebration of the Rite of Confirmation, St. Patrick Parish, Rodeo

March 25

9 a.m. Catholic Charities of the East Bay Board Meeting, Oakland

7 p.m. Synod Listening Session with young adults, Assumption Parish, San Leandro

March 26

Knights of Columbus Vocations Dinner in support of seminarians, St. Raymond Parish, Dublin

Note: Subject to change. Please see www.oakdiocese.org/bishop for schedule updates.

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES

Lenten Fasting and Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of universal fast and abstinence. Fasting is obligatory for all who have completed their 18th year until the beginning of their 60th year. Fasting allows a person to eat one full meal. Two smaller meals may be taken, not to equal one full meal. Abstinence (from meat) is obligatory for all who have completed their 14th year of age. If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the “paschal fast” to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus and to prepare to share more fully and celebrate more readily his Resurrection. Fridays in Lent are obligatory days of abstinence (from meat) for all who have completed their 14th year. As always, anyone for whom fasting or abstinence would pose a health risk is excused.

Celebration of Sacraments and Rites during Lent

Sacrament of Reconciliations many children, and adults in RCIA, are participating in the Sacrament of Penance for the first time, it is important to remember that a person’s reception of the Sacrament of Penance is not a matter of parish record. In order to safeguard the seal of the sacrament, any sort of public acknowledgment should be avoided, including announcing their names, printing names in the parish bulletins, including them in the worship aid, etc. Certificates should never be issued for anyone

receiving this Sacrament. When planning communal Reconciliation services for the parish, please be reminded that the Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution should be used. The option of general confession and general absolution is not permitted in this diocese.

A reminder that the Sacrament of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick can never be denied to the faithful who legitimately seek it. Those Sacraments can be celebrated on any day, including Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Funerals during the season of Lent and the Easter Triduum

The Lenten season should be reflected in the choice of music and scripture. Also, it may also reflect a change in the color of vesture and employ the option to use purple. (see Order of Christian Funerals, 39)

On Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, a funeral Mass may not be celebrated. On these days the body of the deceased may be brought into the church for a Funeral Liturgy outside Mass, using the Order of Christian Funerals, part I-chapter 4. A Mass for the deceased should be offered as soon as possible as is convenient after Easter Sunday (Order of Christian Funerals, 107-203). Marriages during the Season of Lent and the Triduum Marriages during the season of Lent may not be the best choice. However, one cannot deny the Sacraments to the faithful if they are properly disposed. If a marriage does take place during the Lenten season, there should be a marked moderation in the festivity, and the parish environment should not be altered from that of Lent. The celebration of marriage (and the convalidation of marriage) is not permitted during the Easter Triduum.

Communion for the Sick and Viaticum Communion may be brought to the sick on all days except Holy Saturday. That day, communion may be given only as Viaticum. Communion services outside of the liturgy are not held on Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday. According to the Church’s ancient tradition, except for Confession, the sacraments are not celebrated on Good Friday or Holy Saturday.

– Office of Worship †



**How can we help?
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March 5, 2022, 11 a.m.

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Katherine Delucchi
Joseph Diaz
Anita Diaz
Valdo Diaz
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Francisco Estrada
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John Lagomarsino
James Lee
Rosario Maldonado
Rosita Mcconnel
Jul Miguel
Matilda Moniz
Betty Morelli
Gloria Murdock
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James Payette
Theresa Pellini
Frank Pichay
Artemio Quintong
Michael Ramponi
James Ratterman
Joseph Ratto
Nathan Rios
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Cyril Ruiz
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Beverly Sereda
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Ngive Thein
Donna Turner
Christopher Vaitafa
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James Caccavo,
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Margaret Costa
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Joseph Elysisal
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Erinda Mahdi
Richard Mannini
Carol McEnerey
Anthony Neray
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George Secchi
Domenic Sinopoli
Ella Lynn Tostado
Barbara Walsh
William G. Walsh
Todd Walter
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Rose Anne Wright

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Roman Catholic Diocese of Oakland

2121 Harrison St., #100

Oakland, CA 94612



*“Feed my lambs,
feed my sheep”*

**2022 BISHOP'S
MINISTRIES
APPEAL**



Please Support the 2022 Bishop's Ministries Appeal.

All the funds raised help support the work and vital ministries provided to the parishes and faithful of the Diocese.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” Peter said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.”

He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”

Jesus said to Peter the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.” *Jn 21:15-17*

www.oakdiocese.org/bishops-ministries-appeal