

**NORTH
COAST** CATHOLIC



A PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

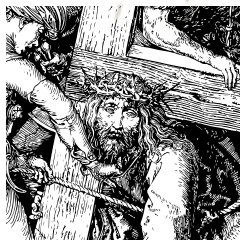
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NORTH COAST CATHOLIC
THE NEWSPAPER OF
THE DIOCESE OF SANTA ROSA

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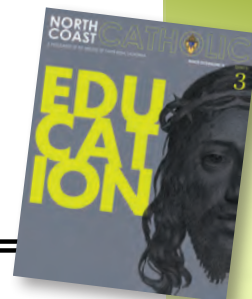
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St. Francis de Sales,
pray for us.

**FOR THE LORD GIVES WISDOM; FROM HIS MOUTH
COME KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING.**

PROVERBS 2:6





FROM *the* BISHOP

NATIONAL EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL VII

We have considered the Eucharist from the lens of the Eucharistic Presence of our Lord as well as the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as the place or 'event' during which the miraculous transformation of bread and wine is effected. I began last month to discuss the troubling consideration of the meaning of 'communion'. In an age when restriction on complete and unconditional inclusion is viewed negatively, we must grapple with the question of whether Holy Communion is intended by our Lord for all or if it is legitimate under certain circumstances to exclude or prohibit some.

As I pointed out last month, the Bishops make it clear in their document, *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church*, (USCCB, November 2021) that some behaviors disrupt and rupture 'communion': "There are some sins, however, that do rupture the communion we share with God and the Church and that cause grave offense to human dignity. These are referred to as grave or mortal sins (see 1 John 5:16-17)" (Paragraph 46).

The Bishops' document goes on to make a couple of comments on the incompatibility of serious sin and the reception of Holy Communion. They write: "To receive the Body and Blood of Christ while in a state of mortal sin represents a contradiction. The person who, by his or her own action, has broken communion with Christ and his Church but receives the Blessed Sacrament, acts incoherently, both claiming and rejecting communion at the same time. It is thus a counter-sign, a lie -- it expresses a communion that in fact has been broken" (Paragraph 47).

'Acting incoherently' describes very well the condition of someone who, while rejecting those things which manifest 'communion' simultaneously claims 'communion'. This is simply incoherent.

The question of incoherency touches, in our present American society, in a particular way on those issues connected with sex and its expressions as well as life at both its earliest beginning and at its end. There is not a strong argument that those Catholics who have chosen to marry without the blessing of the Church or who are actively cohabiting should be included. There is a recognition that their freely chosen actions place them outside of full communion and are thus (horrible word) 'excluded' from the full communion manifested by the reception of Holy Communion. Someone living a life and making choices in an ongoing way which are incompatible with the teachings of the Church, indeed of the Gospel itself, are routinely 'excluded'. There is a practice, which is not officially approved, of offering a blessing to those in this condition or those who have not professed belief in the Holy Catholic Church but this actually makes the point. They are welcome and included but not entirely. This moves in the direction of inclusion but not an unconditional inclusion.

Scripturally, we find in the First Letter of John (1 John 1:5-2:2) we find: "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say, "We have fellowship with him," while we continue to walk in darkness, we lie and do not act in truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the Blood of his Son Jesus

cleanses us from all sin. If we say, "We are without sin," we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing. If we say, "We have not sinned," we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

As I wrote in November 2019, "Imagine, from the perspective of a slave, the challenge of coming to Holy Mass (if they were permitted to do so by their 'masters'), hearing about the great evil of slavery and then also hearing that the Catholics who owned or trafficked them were welcome, without conversion or repentance, to approach the blessed table of the Lord's Sacred Body and Precious Blood." That is a manifestation of incoherence'. Yes, all are welcome, and all are included but conversion, in this case related to slavery, is morally required. A proposal that reception of Holy Communion should not, in any significant way, be tied to the moral actions or to a commitment to repentance and reform is, as the Bishops have noted, incoherent.

Pray for me as I promise to pray for you.

Bishop Robert F. Vasa
Bishop of Santa Rosa





Revival is All Around



By Chris Lyford

Editor, North Coast Catholic

Our Catholic School communities are where families live out our Catholic faith in millions of ways on the Mondays and Tuesdays of life. So much good can be witnessed in any given day that it is worth paying a visit to any of our beloved schools to see the life, energy, faith, and humor of students and teachers alike. This is the time to stand up for our Catholic schools and support each of them through prayer, service, and finance. Please keep them in your prayers and make a decision to support your local school in any way you can.

East Palestine, Ohio. Please pray for healing and protection every day for all the people effected, and those who will be affected in the future from this and every other cause of physical sickness. St. Mother Teresa used to always say, 'I go to the area of greatest need'. These days there are plenty of 'areas' from which to choose in order to follow her example.

On February 8th a revival started at Asbury University, a small Christian college in Wilmore, Kentucky. A service at the college chapel in Kentucky ballooned into a nonstop prayer and worship session and people traveled thousands of miles to take part in it. The gathering went on for 16 days, 24 hours a day. There is truly nothing that compares to gathering with fellow believers and spending the whole time praising and thanking God.

Meanwhile, not to brag, but to point to a deeper and more profound revival; at St. John the Baptist Parish in Napa, along with nearly 500 other parishes in California have

had perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 24/7. Napa has had theirs for at least 15 years and counting. You can go to www.therealpresence.org to find out more. The revival has been happening for quite some time. The theme of this revival is: Jesus, body blood soul and divinity.

If you want to take a break from the fire hose of news and information this lent (or anytime year-round), then make a plan to make a pilgrimage to your local parish for a personal mini retreat. You can go during the day when there are few people and just spend some one-on-one time with the creator of the universe, or plan on attending one of the evening stations of the cross prayer. Did you know where the prayer "We adore you oh Christ, and we praise you..." came from?

(From Aleteia) While St. Francis is well known for his love of the poor and most vulnerable of society, he also had an intense love of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. In his Letter to All the Friars, St. Francis gave the following exhortation that clearly displays his passion,

Let the entire man be seized with fear; let the whole world tremble; let heaven exult when Christ, the Son of the Living God, is on the altar in the hands of the priest. O admirable height and stupendous condescension! O humble sublimity! O sublime humility! that the Lord of the universe, God, and the Son of God, so humbles Himself that for our salvation he hides himself under a morsel of bread.

Whenever he caught sight of a Catholic church in the distance, St. Francis was known to kneel down and give praise to God. Often, he would say the following words that he passed on to his friars.

We adore you, O Lord Jesus Christ, in this church and all the churches of the world, and we bless you, because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world. Amen

This little prayer was used by Franciscans for many centuries and over time it was adapted to become a "standard" prayer in the popular devotion known as the Stations of the Cross. Franciscans were instrumental in spreading this devotion throughout Europe and the United States and so it should come as no surprise that this prayer of St. Francis has become the main prayer for this devotion.

Typically, the prayer is shortened to say, "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because, by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world." It is said at the beginning of each Station and is usually prayed while genuflecting.

The next time you pray the Stations of the Cross at home or in your parish, remember St. Francis and his passionate love of Jesus. ☩





EDUCATION

SUPPORT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Support Catholic Education by contributing to the **AQUINAS FUND OF THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FOUNDATION** of the Diocese of Santa Rosa.



Dr. Adrian Peterson

Superintendent of Catholic Schools
for the Diocese of Santa Rosa

This special edition of the North Coast Catholic is dedicated to the schools of the Diocese of Santa Rosa. The magazine really is a celebration of the amazing work accomplished by our priests, teachers, and administrators.

In 1888, the parishioners of Saint Vincent were able to send their children to a Catholic school. We have been educating students around the Diocese for a very long time. Our schools remained open during tough times and are thriving today.

It was through the hard work and dedication of the religious order and priests that have us celebrating our schools. Our predecessors' foresight and passion for building schools to serve their parishioners; their commitment was remarkable. Without a doubt, the Sisters and priests would be proud to witness the vibrant communities that exist today.

I am proud to say we serve over

3,330 students.

We remain steadfast on academic excellence and forming students who know, love and follow Jesus.

It is a privilege and honor to be leading the schools.

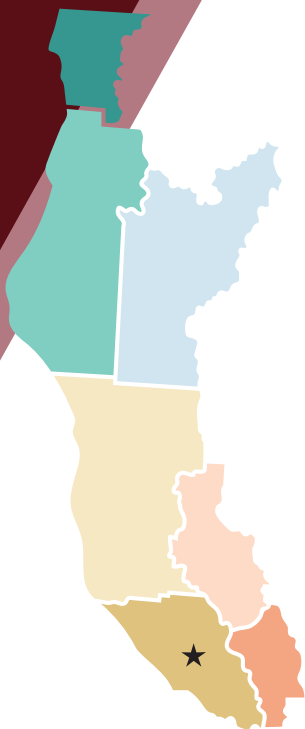


DEPARTMENT OF
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE OF SANTA ROSA



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Est. 1964



CARDINAL NEWMAN HIGH SCHOOL BREAKING NEW GROUND

Cardinal Newman High School is grateful to donors who recognized how essential a Chapel would be for their students and the students attending their adjacent sister school, St. Rose Catholic School. On January 27, the feast day of St. Angela Merici, the patron saint shared by both schools, golden shovels broke ground for the long-awaited Chapel.

The Chapel groundbreaking ceremony, led by Cardinal Newman's Campus Ministry student leaders and Chaplain, Fr. John Plass, blessed the ground and celebrated

St. Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursuline order and holy advocate for education for girls. Student leaders set a tone of gratitude and renewal, thanking all those who made this moment possible, and reflecting on the opportunity to rebuild all that was lost or weakened. Students see the new Chapel as a symbol of the unification of school life and faith. In her dedication speech, CNHS Junior Meghan Snyder described the Chapel as "a symbol of resilience after the fires and a sacred place of worship. It lies in the center of our campus lifting our hearts and spirits up to God. It will act as an outlet to revive our faith and restore hope to our spiritual life."

During the ceremony, CNHS President Dr. Linda Norman reminded the community, "When this school was designed - before it was even built - there was a place designated for a Chapel in the same spot where we are currently breaking ground, right in the heart of campus. This plan was made before the school opened in 1964 - and here we are today, coming full circle in 2023! How fitting it is that the groundbreaking is occurring on the Feast Day of St. Angela Merici - Foundress of the Ursuline Order, Patron of Ursuline High School - and co-patron of both Cardinal Newman and St. Rose Catholic School. Along with St. Angela's statue which is now in the





center of our schools' shared driveway, this Chapel represents and confirms a spiritual joining of the Cardinal Newman, Ursuline, and St. Rose school communities."

As we celebrated the coming of the Chapel, a symbol of Cardinal Newman's continued spiritual growth, Newman's senior class also spent a portion of the week dedicated to their own spiritual growth at the annual senior retreat. This retreat is a much-beloved school tradition with its powerful impact and creating of memories that last a lifetime. It offers an opportunity for students to retreat from their busy lives and bond more fully with God and one another through outdoor recreation, campfires, reflection, faith sharing, and prayer. The theme for this year's retreat was Go Make a Difference, and students and faculty came together under the ancient redwood trees of Mt. Gilead in Sebastopol, finding peace in their disconnection from the distractions

of technology. During the day they hiked, went rock-wall climbing, and ziplining; some thrillseekers even soared

through the air on the "Goliath" swing. In the evenings they gathered around the fire to sing and reminisce about their high school experience, but they also focused on "inner activities," attending Masses and exploring the paradox of 'grounding while letting go' as they prepare for the next big phase of their lives. They shared meals and shared their stories, spending quality time together before the hustle and bustle of graduation overtakes their lives in this final phase of their high-school careers.

After the retreat, one senior reflected, "I loved the vulnerability and intimacy of the evening prayer time and the confession/reflection quiet time. It helped me understand people more and get closer on a deeper level."

Cardinal Newman's student body continues to grow as well, with its biggest Admissions Season in recent years, culminating in over 200 student interviews. Cardinal Newman High School looks forward to welcoming their newest Cardinals to the nest this Spring! In addition to their well-known sports programs, their Christian values, and new, modern buildings, applicants to Cardinal Newman are also drawn to strong academics that emphasize critical thinking and problem solving, and programs like the Ag Sciences that honor stewardship and connection to God's creation. Students also look forward to letting their creative side shine in a variety of Fine and Performing Arts programs. Including the upcoming **Arts Alive!**, a two-week celebration of the Arts at Cardinal Newman, with live student performances of music, dance, and theater and a walk-through art gallery of multimedia arts.



If you are interested in providing a Catholic, college preparatory education for a young person in your life, please contact Cardinal Newman's Admissions Director, WENDY HOLLAND at holland@cardinalnewman.org.



Est. 1918



ST. VINCENT HIGH SCHOOL

PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: PATRICK DALY

As the oldest Catholic school in our area, our time tested College prep curriculum continues to adapt to the needs of our 21st century students through intentional collaboration, critical thinking, and creative problem solving opportunities given through experiential learning activities. As a result of our unique size, students are encouraged to participate in multiple extracurricular activities. Our students have access to more varied offerings that any other private or public school. We offer engaging student life that includes our thriving Visual and Performing Arts department.

8:1

**STUDENT/FACULTY
RATIO**

The SVHS administration partners with Mustang parents daily as the primary educators to support the whole child. Our 8:1 student to faculty ratio allows for individuals to grow at their own pace while they are provided with a personalized and balanced educational experience.

Each Spring, we celebrate the many accomplishments realized by our graduating seniors as they are required to defend their academic and service careers through our formal Learning Defenses program. Assessment skills building early on supports them to best prepare for these and future career presentations. New this year is our AP Capstone program specifically designed for our highest achieving students who elect to work towards this nationally recognized diploma sponsored by the College Board.

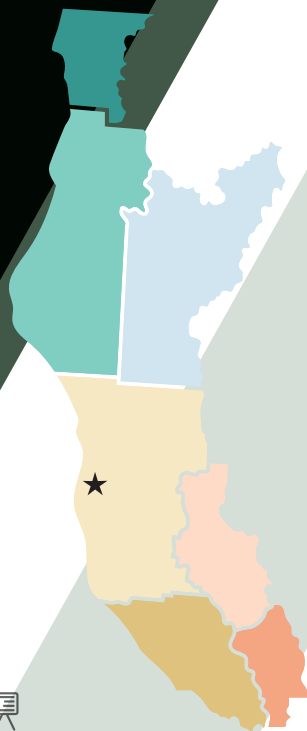
Our physical campus continues to benefit from the dedication and support of our generous community. Last Fall's opening of the Linda Gonzalez Art Studio and Village was made possible by generous benefactors of the St. Vincent de Paul community, who are committed to upholding Linda's love of the Arts. We were able to upgrade our Biology Lab this Winter after receiving an important grant from the Petaluma Educational Foundation.



21ST CENTURY READINESS IN A TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC COLLEGE PREP SETTING

For more than 105 years, St. Vincent de Paul Schools have been educating and supporting the children of our parishioners and our neighboring communities. The K-12 mission strengthens our community with both mentoring roles and leadership opportunities while a robust service program helps them live our Christian values daily in service to others. And, our youngest SV students enjoy cheering on their older buddies as well. Our middle school students have the benefits of collaborating in our high school classrooms in elective classes and advanced STEM offerings.

NEW



SEEKING TO KNOW THE TRUE, THE GOOD, AND THE BEAUTIFUL

OUR MISSION

San José Sánchez Del Río Catholic School educates children in grades K-8 in the tradition of the classic liberal arts, instilling in them the joy of curiosity and the ability to think and learn while helping them to grow in love of God. All that the students and staff do is grounded in the core values of our Catholic Faith. Following this plan San José Sánchez Del Río aims to form the hearts and minds of children to seek to discover the core purpose for which God has created them

SAN JOSÉ SÁNCHEZ DEL RÍO CATHOLIC SCHOOL

AT OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

FORT BRAGG, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: KATHLEEN KASPERSON

OUR VISION

To create a reformed model for Catholic elementary school education that in all its aspects is grounded in the primary purpose of helping our children to know and love Jesus Christ and to guide them in discovering the purpose for which God has created them while upholding the tradition of academic excellence.

SCHOOL CULTURE

Through academic instruction guided by the love of Christ the staff of José Sánchez Del Río Catholic School desire to respond to Christ's command to let the little children come to Him by infusing all of the lessons and activities of each day with the beauty of our Catholic Faith and the traditions of our Catholic culture. We aim to give all of our students the best education available while at the same time aiming to instill in them a love of the Catholic Faith.

OUR PROGRAM

English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Latin, Church History, Sacramental Preparation, Art History, Music, Daily Mass & Catechism Classes

WHAT SETS US APART?

Our students and staff pursue excellence in all things, as we study the wisdom and timeless lessons to be found in history and in the Great Books. We discover the wonder and beauty of God's creation as we study science, music, and art. And we seek to understand our core purpose as created by God.

Together, the staff, the students and our families work for the good of our families, our church and our community with a servant's heart. Our families participate in this great work of educating their children,

by making sacrifices daily for the good of the school---not just financially, but also by helping support this project in a myriad of hidden and humble ways, done out of true Christian charity.

Excellence In Academics, Virtue Through Faith



Est.1912



ST. BERNARD'S ACADEMY

EUREKA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: PAUL SHANIHAN

“Catholic education continues to shine a beacon of light from coast to coast during the COVID-19 pandemic. From the very beginning, Catholic school principals and teachers put children first.”

Our schools stayed open. We welcomed new families who didn't want their children learning online. We had so much interest in Catholic education that we created waiting lists. We added capacity through creativity and flexibility. The auditorium became a classroom. The library became a classroom. We brought in tents and set up tables outside. We saw solutions.

What happened next?

Our new families fell in love with the care and support they were given at their Catholic schools. Students felt a shift as they walked through hallways and classrooms where they were seen, truly seen, as made in the image and likeness of God. While their neighbors languished online, they were connecting and learning in the classroom.

Then what happened?

All of those new families stayed when public schools began to open. In fact, they became our best recruiters for new students this year.

The word is out. Catholic education matters because we fulfill on our commitment to students and their families. We continue to work tirelessly to create a safe space where students can struggle and fail and grow and succeed. A place where students are challenged and supported each and every day. A place where prayer and scripture give hope and peace in a world of stress and uncertainty. Our Catholic school alumni appreciate and respect our efforts to bring normalcy to education; they have been giving back at record levels. The federal government recognized our efforts and passed the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act and funneled hundreds of millions of dollars to Catholic schools through the EANS program.

Catholic schools are thriving!

Confronted with the darkness of the unknown, our Catholic schools did what they have always done: delivered love, light, and learning in the image of Jesus Christ.

- Paul Shanahan

DEACON DANCE FARRELL

“I see the value of Catholic education now, more than ever”

Parents and their children have been under attack. Attacks from schools that are supposed to be looking after their children's best interests, attacks from politicians who think they know better what is good for another's children, attacks from a culture that seems to have forgotten basic morality and common decency. While we would never wish for this pandemic that we have been facing these last couple years, one benefit of these trying times has been a “waking up” of many families to the dangers the world is imposing on our children.

With this, across the nation, we see parents turning once again to Catholic schools. As they have listened in on how their teachers are forming their children in virtual classrooms, parents are realizing they want something very different. As schools have closed and left their children behind, they have desired more stability for their loved ones. As they have seen education move towards the novel, they have desired the tradition and solidity of Catholic schools. Across the nation, Catholic schools that many thought would soon be deserted have instead become the safe home to families wanting more. There is a revival going on in case you didn't notice.

Many of them are Catholic, most of them are not. Many are religious, most are not. Many have considered private education before, but most have not. They hold one thing in common, they are putting their children first when no one else seems to want to do the same. And that is where we Christians shine, because we too see that no matter where they are coming from, they are made in the image and likeness of God, that God has called them by name, and that He loves them dearly. We cannot love them less. We have a saying in our line of work, “We don't teach them because they are Catholic, we teach them because WE are.”

Est.1980



ST. EUGENE'S CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: FATHER GABRIEL SANCHEZ-NAVARRO

It was announced on January 29th that Fr. Gabriel Sanchez-Navarro will be the principal of *Saint Eugene* in the fall of 2023. Fr. Gabriel was ordained on December 12th and is assigned as *Parochial Vicar* of St. Eugene's Cathedral as well.



“How wonderful is it that Saint Eugene has a priest leading the school and one that speaks Spanish! We are so grateful for Bishop allowing this opportunity for the school. The Diocese of Santa Rosa surely will benefit from such a move.”

Dr. Adrian Peterson

Superintendent of Catholic Schools
for the Diocese of Santa Rosa

Est. 1912



ST. ROSE SCHOOL

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: KATHLEEN AYMAR

On a day-to-day basis, what are some of your favorite moments?

MSA: After teaching in public school, I realized the deepest part of me was silent. I couldn't teach the kids about the true meaning of Christmas or Easter. Teaching in a Catholic school is everything beautiful. I remember the first school Mass I went to with my daughter in her Kindergarten class. I cried because it was overwhelming to be with people who loved and worshiped God. I didn't have to be silent anymore. It was a celebration, a community celebration. I love teaching at St. Rose School. When I come home from work, my husband says he always knows how my day has been. He will say, "I know how your day went. It was full of prayer and joy."

The children, too, are the greatest role models for loving God and being in the presence of God. You can feel the Holy Spirit is with us and the kids are filled with Jesus. That is something that was missing when I was teaching in the public schools. If your faith is so strong or the kids' faith is so strong, but you can't share it, it can feel like a prison.

There are great hardships in families. In public schools I was not able to offer them all of the support that I can offer. I want to offer my families prayers and a community of faith that can help heal and change. Having that kind of community in public school is much harder. Our class prays for the souls of the departed and we make God the center of our hearts and the center of our school day. My faith is celebrated at every moment of the day because I am allowed to share it all day long.

We also offer it in what we learn, write, and read. I love being in a profession that embraces my faith.

As you have worked to foster the Catholic identity of the school, what are the fruits you have personally witnessed in the lives of the students?

MSA: Our school and our community have been through a lot of hardships. Our families lost homes in the fires, the school also burned, the pandemic came and we had to Zoom for almost an entire year. We have had to come back in-person under a lot of restraints. We don't have as many activities or even the regular movement in the classroom. In these situations we teach that when we love God and put God first, God will take care of us. We also learn about gratitude. Gratitude as a virtue. The kids just did their Catholic Schools Week writing and many of the kids wrote about gratitude.

The kids also have the DESIRE to pray. They want to take time out of the day to pray. We also have kids that are not Catholic. They, too, desire to pray and it sometimes leads them to want to be baptized. I never push it. It is their own faith developing. I get to see the kids' faith in the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. I get to witness them receive Jesus the first time. First Reconciliation becomes a whole celebration. We talk about how it is their chance to show God how much we love him. We learn about the history and how it comes into our heart and soul. We learn about how what we do to others, we also do to Jesus and how that plays out on the playground or at home if we don't treat people with kindness.

What is your biggest challenge regarding the future?

MSA: The greatest challenge currently are the restrictions from Covid. Families hesitate being in the church. People still feel uncomfortable being at Mass. When covid exposures happen at the school, half of the class is out. Preparing for Sacraments has



INTERVIEW WITH MICHELLE SWENSON-AGUIRRE

Second Grade Teacher

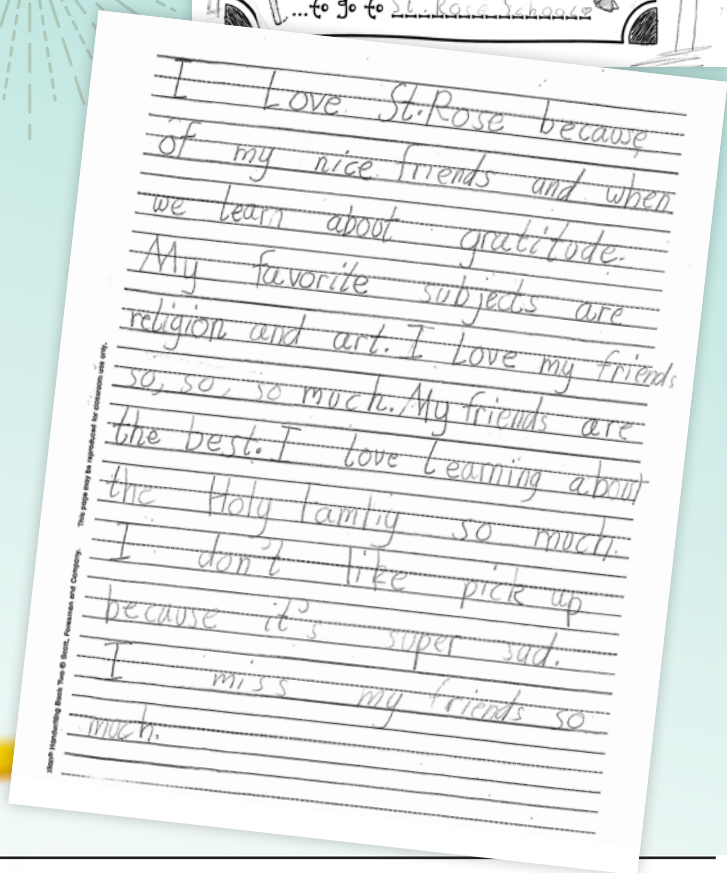
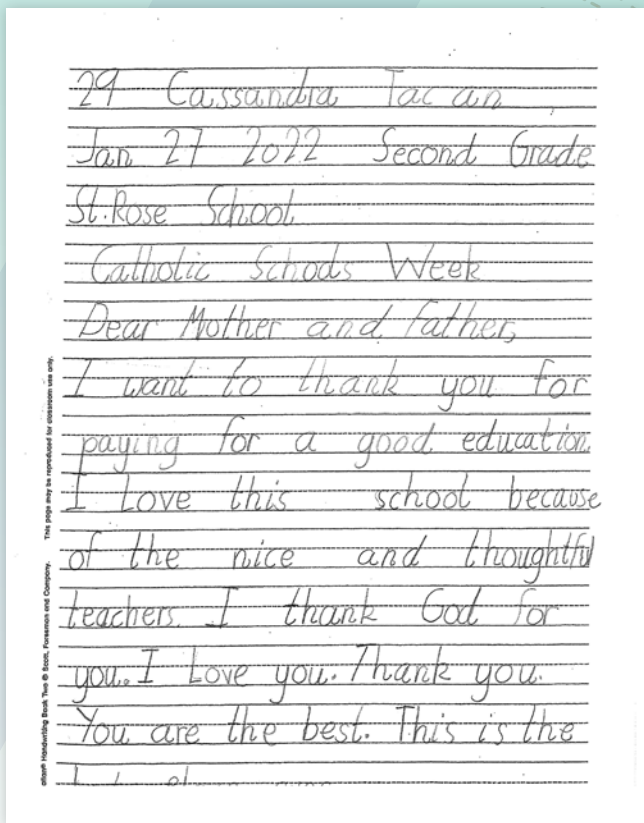
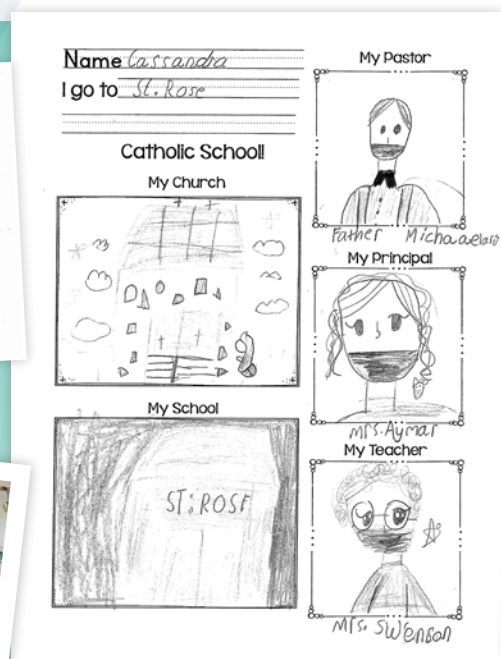
**How many years have you been a teacher?
What other positions do you hold at your school?**

MSA: Michelle Swenson-Aguirre began teaching in 1987. She taught in public schools in Davis for 10 years. After having kids and moving to Sonoma County, she took a break from teaching, but continued to volunteer as a catechist at St. Sebastian's in Sebastopol. When her kids enrolled at St. Rose School she was hired as a Teacher Aide. She has been teaching at St. Rose since 2011. She teaches 2nd grade and prepares the kids for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

been challenging because of these things. Even if parents are comfortable attending meetings or activities, we have not always been able to allow them to come. We used to have many community volunteers too. Having community, parents, and volunteers at the Sacramental celebrations have not quite been the same.

Please share any other heartfelt reflection as the spirit leads...

MSA: Teaching is not a profession when you have faith. It is a ministry. You don't get paid what you can in a different role; you stay late to work; and you prepare over the summer, but it comes from your heart. As a ministry for God it makes such a difference in your sense of purpose for God's will in your life. You can't replace it with anything else, not retirement, not salary. If God is calling you to help with the Church or in a Catholic school - we you have to know that if it is God's will, he will take care of us. Everything will fall into place. If you give God a little, he will give you a mile.



Est. 1959



ST. APOLLINARIS

NAPA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: OLIVIA BRAZIL



INTERVIEW

WITH KIM LEONARDI

First Grade Teacher

How many years have you been a teacher?

KL: I have been teaching for 25 years.

What other positions do you hold at your school?

KL: Currently I teach first grade, but I have also taught third grade and was the student support coordinator for a time.

On a day-to-day basis, what are some of your favorite moments?

KL: Day by day my favorite moments involve seeing the students every morning, and seeing those 'light-bulb-moments' that occur in first grade when the children are reading.

What do you believe are some of the successes in creating a learning environment at the school?

KL: Having children feel comfortable in the classroom by participating and seeing them enjoy learning goes a long way to creating the environment where learning happens.

As you have worked to foster the Catholic identity of the school, what are the fruits you have personally witnessed in the lives of the students?

KL: When I see the students enjoy going to church and comfortable praying I believe the faith is taking root in them. I am so happy they are excited to come to school every day.

What would you consider the top three challenges you have faced?

KL: COVID and having the students in and out of the classroom. Distance learning at such a young age is so hard. That has been the biggest challenge. Wearing a mask while trying to teach phonics to young students.

What is your biggest challenge regarding the future?

KL: To keep the children focused is guaranteed to be the biggest challenge for the future.

Other Thoughts?

KL: I believe it's so important to teach the whole child and not just look at their academic growth. It's important to prioritize their emotional, social, and spiritual growth as well. It's important to adjust teaching to meet all the learning styles of the students and work closely with their parents to ensure the success of the child.

Why I Love St. A's:

I like St. A's for the community and the teachers. The teachers are willing to help you at all times and everyone here is friendly to talk to. -Owen, 8th Grade

I like St. A's because it is a positive environment. Teachers are nice and you can reach out to them with any concerns. You really get to know the students in your classes, and I really like the academics. -Natalie, 8th Grade

I like St. A's because I like to play. -Mele, TK

I like St. A's because it's a great school and there is lots of stuff to do. - Julian, TK I like to learn at St. A's. -Declyn, 1st Grade

There are so many nice people.

-Oliver, 1st Grade

I like how all of the teachers are always there for you and give you attention.

-David, 5th Grade

I like that everyone is nice, we get to go to Church on Wednesdays and participate in the Mass. -Abigail, 5th Grade

I love the teachers. -Vicente, Kindergarten

I like when I learn. -Emmy, Kindergarten

I love St. A's because it is a happy place where people get to learn wonderful things.

-Nadia, 3rd Grade

This school is a family. -Nhan, 3rd Grade

I like our playground, and everyone is so nice.

-Jackson, 2nd Grade

*I like Science! -Emma, 2nd Grade
I like how we have the Walk-a-Thon, Spirit Days and go to Mass on Wednesdays.*

-Sera, 6th Grade

We have a lot of teachers and aides who always help you. This is a great school experience. -Samantha, 6th Grade

I like the extra subjects like PE and Art. I like learning a new language and making new friends. All our teachers help us.

-Connor, 6th Grade

I love that our school is so fun!

-Priscilla, 4th Grade

Est. 1945



ST. FRANCIS SOLANO SCHOOL

SONOMA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: DEBBIE PICARD



St. Francis Solano School serves the families of the St. Francis Solano Parish and the Sonoma Valley by cultivating an atmosphere of academic achievement in which students live and embrace Roman Catholic Values.

Guided by our Pastor, **Reverend Alvin Villaruel**, St. Francis Solano School is proud to provide a Roman Catholic faith-based foundation for its students. We are welcoming and inclusive of students of all faiths.

The text that is used to support the religion curricula is the Faith and Life series presented by Ignatius Press. Particular emphasis is placed on the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion for students in the second grade and Confirmation for students in the seventh grade.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

This fun fall afternoon is an opportunity for all St. Francis students to bring their pets to be blessed. Dogs, cats, fish and even chickens are regular visitors to this blessing, and children who do not have a pet are welcome to bring their favorite stuffed animal.



SECOND GRADE RECONCILIATION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Second grade is a very special year for St. Francis Solano Students, who celebrate the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion each spring. All students in the class have the opportunity to participate in the ceremonies and celebrations regardless of whether they are receiving the sacraments or not.

SEVENTH GRADE CONFIRMATION

At the end of Seventh Grade, students who feel ready to be confirmed into the Catholic faith may select their sponsor and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Vasa.



Est. 1950



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SCHOOL

HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: JOE FELICE



FROM THE PRINCIPAL JOE FELICE

St. John the Baptist Catholic School has a long and storied history of serving the Healdsburg community. Even though the world has changed drastically since we opened our doors in 1950, one thing has remained constant. We remain *"dedicated to the work of Christ"*.

Our school offers an ever evolving, well-rounded and challenging curriculum. I know firsthand how prepared our students are for high school as all six of our children are St. John's graduates. However, it is the community that sets us even further apart from other schools. With over 1800 alumni,



many of them second and even third generation students, we are deeply rooted in the business, leadership, recreational and faith life of the area.

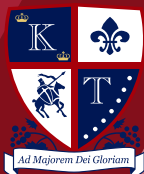
I want to thank our faculty and staff for their tremendous commitment to the wellbeing and development of each child entrusted to us. I want to thank our pastor, Father Sean Rogers for his support and involvement, making us a true "parish school". Finally, I want to thank all our families and supporters, whether it be financially, through prayer or simple encouragement.



Photography Credit: ©Gretchen Gause



Est. 1945



KOLBY-TRINITY

NAPA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: JOHN BERTOLINI

REFLECTION FROM ANGEL MONTIEL

High School Freshman



When *St. Helena Catholic School* closed, my parents sent me to *Kolbe-Trinity*. Although I struggled at first, my fifth and sixth grade teacher, Mrs. Laura Fidler, never gave up on me. I learned discipline and hard work and my grades improved tremendously. Now I can read and intelligently discuss *St. Augustine's Confessions* as a high school freshman. I am very grateful for the education I have received at *Kolbe-Trinity*.



KOLBE TRINITY'S CLASSICAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION:

A classical education is not an education for the elite: it is for everyone! Our students are taught the fundamental truths of our Catholic faith and the greatest ideas from the greatest minds of western civilization. An education in virtue is fundamental to live the good life and all students, no matter their ethnicity, prior education, or economic background, have a right to this education. Every day we strive to follow Jesus' Great Commission to teach all nations.



Continúa en la página 18

Est. 1953



ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS

UKIAH, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: ANDREW SORIA



school start online programming and then becoming its Associate Head of School for Academics. When my sister-in-law, who works at St. John's Healdsburg, mentioned that there was a principal job opening in Ukiah, I knew I had to apply because it seemed to fit so much of what I was looking for in a job.

Why do you feel led to work in a Catholic school?

AS: Because it's who I am! From the very beginning of my time in college, I felt a strong sense that God was calling me to gain an education so that He could use me to disciple others. That sense of call has taken slightly different shapes since then, but I've never wavered from the belief that my life is meant to serve God and help others love Him with their hearts and their minds. It's been an enormous blessing to work basically continually in schools with a religious mission and to see fruit of a desire that God put on my heart quite a long time ago now.

On a day-to-day basis, what are your favorite moments?

AS: It's probably cliché to say this, but my favorite moments are when I get to interact

with students. Children ask such good questions and are capable of such amazing insight, and they almost always make me laugh. Students have always had the power to keep me from thinking that my life is ultimately about me, when really it should be about others. As a principal, it's particularly interesting to get to interact with different students at different developmental stages all in the same day. Three kids can have the same issue but need three totally different solutions.

Our students are also really the only way I keep up-to-date on what's cool anymore. Without them, I'd be even more hopelessly uncool than I already am!

What do you see as challenges for the future?

AS: For any Christian school, Protestant or Catholic, the challenge of this era is learning how to appeal to an increasingly-secular world without losing the imprint of Christ. A closed Catholic school doesn't do anyone any good, but neither does a Catholic school that's not really Catholic. It's way too easy for my day to get caught up in budget conversations and marketing plans, and I



INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW SORIA

Principal

How many years have you been in education?

AS: I taught my first class in 2011 and have been a full-time educator since 2015. I've been at St. Mary's a little less than a year now.

Where were you working before this?

AS: So far, I've spent the bulk of my career at Pacifica Christian High School in Santa Monica. I started there as an English and psychology teacher and eventually worked my way into administrative roles, first helping the

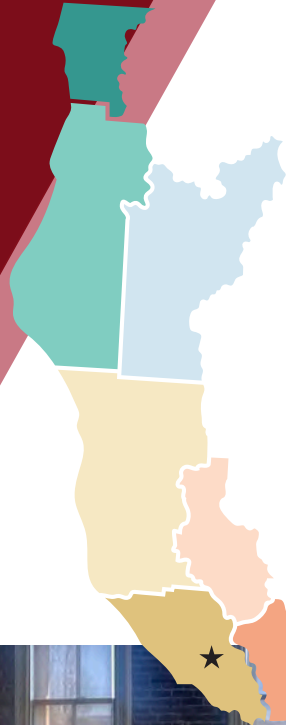


need to be very deliberate to take time to pray for the school and our families. I struggle a lot with how to make sure our students, parents, and staff are not only growing in academic ways but also in spiritual ways.

What gives you optimism for the future?

AS: It seems like every week there is some new article about how Catholic schools are seeing a resurgence. I think families are realizing that there is a real value in a Catholic education, whether the family is Catholic or not. When I look at our supportive and caring staff and the level of support that we're able to provide for our kids, I really do believe that we're providing some of the best education around. I'm also excited that we're moving forward with plans to establish a transitional kindergarten next year, which I think will allow us to expand our reach and continue to serve the greater Ukiah area more effectively. There is a lot to be thankful for here!

Est. 1888

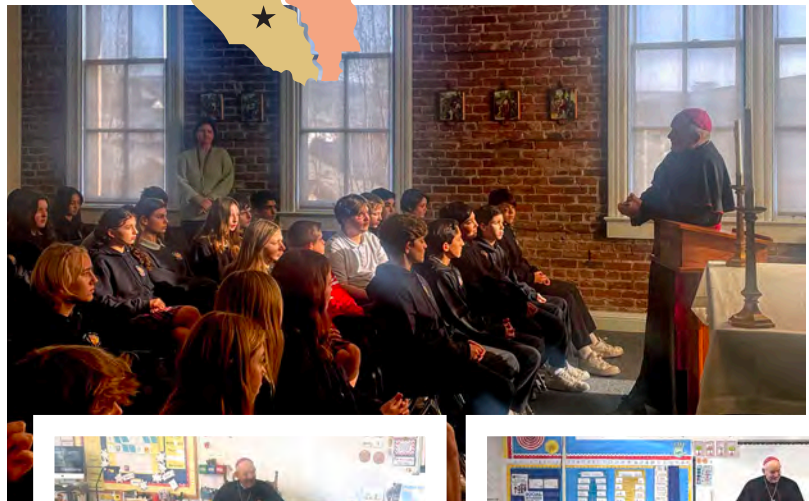


ST. VINCENT'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA

PRINCIPAL: SHANNON JORDAN

Mission Statement Established in 1888, as a Roman Catholic elementary school and a ministry of **St. Vincent de Paul Church**, our mission is to educate and form the whole child, made in the image of God, within a faith-filled community in which all students develop skills as caring and compassionate Christians, critical and creative thinkers, responsible citizens, and lifelong learners.





DEL OBISPO

REAVIVAMIENTO EUCARISTICO NACIONAL VII

Hemos considerado la Eucaristía desde el lente de la Presencia Eucarística de Nuestro Señor, así como el Santo Sacrificio de la Misa como el lugar o “evento” durante el cual se efectúa la transformación milagrosa del pan y el vino. Comencé el mes pasado a hablar sobre la preocupante consideración del significado de ‘comunión’. En una era en la que la restricción completa o incondicional de ser inclusive se ve de una manera negativa, debemos abordar la cuestión de si nuestro Señor pretende la Sagrada Comunión para todos o si es legítimo, bajo ciertas circunstancias, excluirla o prohibirla a algunos.

Como señalé el mes pasado, los Obispos dejan claro en su documento, *El Misterio de la Eucaristía en la Vida de la Iglesia*, (USCCB, Noviembre de 2021) que algunos comportamientos destruyen y rompen la ‘comunión’: “Hay algunos pecados, sin embargo, que sí rompen la comunión que compartimos con Dios y la Iglesia y que ofenden gravemente la dignidad humana, se denominan pecados graves o mortales (ver 1 Juan 5:16-17)” (Párrafo 46).

El documento de los Obispos continúa con un par de comentarios sobre la incompatibilidad del pecado grave y la recepción de la Sagrada Comunión. Escriben: “Recibir el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo en estado de pecado mortal representa una contradicción. La persona que, por su propia acción, ha roto la comunión con Cristo y su Iglesia pero recibe el Santísimo Sacramento, actúa incoherentemente, reclamando y rechazando al mismo tiempo la comunión. Es, pues, un signo contradictorio, una mentira — expresa una comunión que de hecho ha sido rota” (Párrafo 47).

‘Actuar incoherentemente’ describe muy bien la condición de alguien que, mientras rechaza aquellas cosas que manifiestan ‘comunión’, al mismo tiempo reclama ‘comunión’. Esto es simplemente incoherente.

La cuestión de la incoherencia toca, en nuestra sociedad Estadounidense actual, de manera particular los temas relacionados con el sexo y sus expresiones, así como con la vida, tanto en su comienzo más temprano como en su final. No existe un argumento sólido para incluir a aquellos Católicos que han optado por casarse sin la bendición de la Iglesia o que cohabitan activamente. Hay un reconocimiento de que sus acciones libremente elegidas los colocan fuera de la plena comunión y por lo tanto (palabra horrible) ‘excluidos’ de la plena comunión manifestada por la recepción de la Sagrada Comunión. Alguien que vive una vida y toma decisiones de manera continua que son incompatibles con las enseñanzas de la Iglesia, de hecho, con el Evangelio mismo, es rutinariamente ‘excluido’. Existe una práctica, que no está aprobada oficialmente, de ofrecer una bendición a quienes se encuentran en esta condición o a quienes no han profesado la creencia en la Santa Iglesia Católica, pero esto en realidad aclara el punto. Son bienvenidos e incluidos pero no del todo. Esto se mueve en la dirección de la inclusión, pero no una inclusión incondicional.

Bíblicamente, en la Primera Carta de Juan (1 Juan 1:5-2:2) encontramos: “Dios es luz, y en él no hay oscuridad alguna. Si decimos, ‘Tenemos comunión con él,’ ‘Mientras andamos en tinieblas, mentimos y no obramos con verdad. Pero si andamos en luz, como él está en luz, entonces tenemos comunión unos con otros, y la Sangre de su Hijo Jesús

nos limpia de todo pecado. Si decimos: “No tenemos pecado”, nos engañamos a nosotros mismos, y la verdad no está en nosotros. Si reconocemos nuestros pecados, él es fiel y justo y perdonará nuestros pecados y nos limpiará de toda maldad. Si decimos: “No hemos pecado”, lo hacemos a el mentiroso, y su palabra no está en nosotros”.

Como escribí en noviembre de 2019, “Imaginen, desde la perspectiva de un esclavo, el desafío de asistir a la Santa Misa (si sus ‘amos’ les permitieran hacerlo), escuchar sobre el gran mal de la esclavitud y luego escuchar que los Católicos que los poseían o traficaban con ellos eran bienvenidos, sin conversión ni arrepentimiento, a acercarse a la bendita mesa del Sagrado Cuerpo y Preciosa Sangre del Señor”. Esa es una manifestación de ‘incoherencia’. Sí, todos son bienvenidos y todos están incluidos, pero la conversión, en este caso relacionada con la esclavitud, es un requisito moral. Una propuesta de que la recepción de la Sagrada Comunión no debe vincularse, de manera significativa, a las acciones morales o al compromiso de arrepentimiento y reforma es, como han señalado los Obispos, incoherente.

Ore por mí como prometo
orar por usted.

**Reverendísimo
Robert F. Vasa**
Obispo de Santa Rosa

PREGUNTAS AL DIÁCONO MARIO

DIÁCONO MARIO ZÚNIGA

¿Por qué ofrecemos Misas por los difuntos?

El ofrecimiento de Misas por el descanso del alma de los fieles que se han ido está ligado a nuestra creencia en el purgatorio.

Creemos que si la persona ha muerto creyendo en Dios pero con pecados veniales y con dolor causado por sus pecados, entonces Dios en su divino amor y misericordia purificará aquella alma.

Después que la purificación haya terminado, el alma tendrá la santidad y pureza que necesita para compartir el cielo; una las Bienaventuranzas dice: “Felices los de corazón limpio, porque, verán a Dios”

Aunque cada individuo tendrá que pasar por un juicio personal ante el Señor al morir y deberá rendir cuentas de su vida, la comunión de la Iglesia compartida en esta tierra continúa, con excepción de las almas que han sido condenadas al infierno.

El Concilio Vaticano II afirma en La Constitución Dogmática de la Iglesia, #51: “Este sagrado concilio acepta fielmente la fe venerable de nuestros antecesores en la comunión viviente, la cual existe entre nosotros y nuestros hermanos que se han ido a la gloria del cielo, o quienes están siendo purificados después de su muerte.”

Entonces, de la misma manera que aquí en la tierra, oramos los unos por los otros, que compartimos las dificultades, y nos ayudamos el uno al otro en el camino de la salvación; los fieles en la tierra podemos ofrecer oraciones y sacrificios para ayudar a las almas que se han ido a la purificación en el purgatorio después de la muerte; y no hay oración más perfecta, un mejor regalo para nuestros fieles difuntos; que la de ofrecer el Sacrificio de la Santa Misa.

En 1902, El Papa León XIII en su

encíclica *Mirae Caritatis* elabora de una manera maravillosa este punto y enfatizó la conexión entre la Comunión de los Santos con la Santa Misa: “La gracia del amor mutuo entre los vivientes, fortalecida e incrementada por la virtud del Sacramento (Sacrificio) de la Eucaristía, fluye en todos los que pertenecen a la comunión de los santos.

La comunión de los santos es algo sencillo-el compartir mutuo, la ayuda, la expiación, la oración, y los beneficios entre los fieles, aquellos que ya están en la eterna Gloria del Padre, los que están purificándose, y aquellos que están en el peregrinar aquí en la tierra.

Todos estos forman una sola ciudad, en la cual la cabeza es Cristo, y donde el principio que predomina es el Amor.”

La fe nos enseña que, si bien el augusto Sacrificio se ofrece solamente a Dios, puede ser también celebrado en honor de todos los santos que están en el Cielo con Dios, a quien los ha coronado, para obtener su intercesión por nosotros, y también, de acuerdo a la tradición apostólica, para limpiar las manchas de aquellos que murieron en el Señor pero que aún no están totalmente purificados.”

Un punto de vista: La Santa Misa trasciende el tiempo y el espacio, uniendo a los fieles que están en el Cielo, en la tierra y en el purgatorio en una Comunión Santa, y la Santa Eucaristía por si misma aumenta nuestra unión con Cristo, borra pecados veniales, y nos preserva del pecado mortal en el futuro (Catecismo Católico #1391-1396).

Por lo tanto, el ofrecimiento de misa y otras oraciones o sacrificios por las intenciones de los fieles que ya han fallecido son buenas y son actos santos.

Esta práctica de ofrecer misa por los difuntos no es nueva.

El Catecismo nos lo dice, “Desde el

comienzo la Iglesia ha honrado la memoria de los difuntos y ha ofrecido oraciones para la salvación de sus almas, por encima de toda oración está el Sacrificio Eucarístico, ya que por medio de él, la purificación puede ser alcanzada y ellos pueden obtener la bendición de estar frente a Dios.

En sí, este ‘comienzo’ tiene sus raíces desde el Antiguo Testamento. En el libro de los Macabeos podemos encontrar que se ofrecían oraciones y sacrificios por los soldados judíos que al morir llevaban puestos amuletos paganos, los cuales eran prohibidos por la Ley; en 2da de Macabeos dice, “Suplicaron que el pecado cometido fuera completamente borrado” (12:42) y “Mando pues a ofrecer este sacrificio de expiación por los muertos para que quedaran libres de sus pecados” (12:45)

En los comienzos de la historia de la Iglesia, podemos encontrar evidencia de las oraciones por los difuntos. Inscripciones encontradas en las catacumbas Romanas en el segundo siglo son evidencia de esta práctica.

Por ejemplo, Tertuliano en el año 211 observaba el aniversario de los difuntos con oraciones.

El testimonio de los Padres de la Iglesia lo apoyan de una gran manera:

San Cirilo de Jerusalén (386), en una de sus muchas predicas catequéticas, explicaba como en la Misa los vivos y los muertos son recordados, y como el Sacrificio Eucarístico de nuestro Señor es un gran beneficio para los pecadores, vivos y muertos.

San Ambrosio (397) predico, “Los hemos amado durante la vida en esta tierra; no los abandonemos en la muerte, hasta que los hayamos ayudado con nuestras oraciones a entrar en la casa del Señor”.

San Juan Crisóstomo (407) dijo: “Ayudémosles y conmemorémosles. Si los hijos de Job fueron purificados por el

sacrificio de su padre, ¿Por qué vamos a dudar que nuestras ofrendas por los difuntos les traigan algún consuelo? No dudemos ni un momento en ayudarles a aquellos que han muerto y ofrezcamos nuestras oraciones por ellos”

Uno podría tal vez preguntarse, “¿Qué tal si el alma de la persona está ya purificada y se ha ido al cielo?”

Aquí en la tierra no sabemos cuándo es el juicio de Dios ni el tiempo divino de Él; entonces siempre es bueno recordar a los que han fallecido y encomendarlos a Dios por medio de la oración y el sacrificio.

Y aunque el alma ha sido purificada y ya está en la presencia de Dios en el Cielo, entonces las oraciones y sacrificios ofrecidos beneficiaran a otras almas en el purgatorio por medio del amor y la misericordia de Dios. Puedes estar seguro que ninguna oración es pérdida de tiempo.

Cuando nos enfrentemos con la muerte de una persona, el tener una Misa ofrecida por el descanso de su alma y ofrecer oraciones, son más beneficiosos y reconfortantes que una tarjeta de condolencia o un ramo de flores.

Es muy importante recordar a nuestros seres queridos que se han ido al otro lado de la vida con la Santa Misa, y siempre recordemos que nuestras oraciones y sacrificios pueden ayudarles a ganar el descanso eterno.

Una de las formas más nobles que podemos honrar a nuestros queridos difuntos, es, haciéndolos sentir, siempre orgullosos del buen camino que llevamos en la vida. Porque la gente va a decir: “Mira que trabajo tan buenos hicieron los padres con ese hijo/hija”.

Al contrario, si nos conducimos por el mal camino, en la vida que llevamos; los vamos a hacer sentir apenados, porque la gente va a decir: “Mira que mal trabajo hicieron los padres con ese hijo/hija”

Para terminar,

Algunas personas me dicen, cuando se les muere algún familiar querido, que se lamentan que no hicieron lo suficiente por ellos.

La buena noticia es que Si, todavía puedes hacer mucho por ellos, ofreciéndoles la mejor ayuda, el mejor regalo:

¡Orar por ellos, sin cesar! 🙏



LIFE IS A JOURNEY



By Stephen Morris

Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Leading children to know the Lord and appreciate the truth, beauty, and goodness of the Catholic Church is a hard journey!

If you've read anything I've written over the last two years, followed me on social media, or happened to have heard of me—you know I'm all about pilgrimage. Life is a journey, and our destination is not on earth. These are not my groundbreaking ideas though, I'm just applying the concept of “life as pilgrimage” to the 21st century and thank God I'm not alone. Locally and across the globe we've seen a resurgence of people getting out and making real connections. Take for example the Modern-Day Catholic Pilgrim group at www.moderncatholicpilgrim.com or the California Mission Walkers that cover the 800 miles of CA Missions; you can find them at www.missionwalk.org.

The most notable of all pilgrimages is the Camino de Santiago, which has a motto that can be applied to leading our young people today: “*The Way is Made by Walking.*” We could also turn to the beloved sit-com Cheers for a similar sentiment: “Making your way in the world today takes everything you got.” Perhaps a looser translation to make my point: “You have to put one foot in front of the other.”



Raising God-fearing children in our pagan society requires simple steps: preparation and discipline. The best part is that our parents and children already exercise both preparation and discipline in the myriad of youth activities they are involved in. Music, dance, hobbies, and sports all come with rigid requirements and commitments. We just need the faithful to shift those efforts to their faith practice.

This Lent – let us rededicate ourselves to prioritizing faith sharing in the home. Of course, it's not easy, pilgrimages never are, but there are countless opportunities to prepare and discipline self. Call, text, email me or reach out to your pastor, Google them... there are countless ways to take the first step. And after that, put one *prayerful* foot in front of the other. 🙏

Here is one big step to begin a beautiful season of outreach:

YOAM (Youth On A Mission)
MAKES ITS RETURN!

Please find all registration details to this phenomenal opportunity for teens to grow in their discipleship formation.

www.yoamnorcal.weebly.com



Will You Finish the Lenten Race Strong?

Greetings Family:

As we approach the final weeks of Lent and look forward to the joyous season of Easter, how are you doing with your Lenten practices? Lent can seem like running a long distance race and to be successful you just have to keep on pushing towards the finish line. But as you know, the reward is worth it! Reaching the glory of Easter Sunday is unmatched in the understanding our Catholic faith. Yes, Lent can seem long and it can be hard to keep up our Lenten promises, but St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy always gives us resolve when he writes: *"I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith."* (2 Timothy 4:7).

So we want to give you some encouragement to finish your Lenten race strong! One of the helpful inspirations we have in our Catholic faith is to turn to the saints to help guide us in our journey of life in holiness. And in looking for a saint to help give us courage and strength we can turn to St. Joseph, our spiritual father.

Even though in the Bible none of St. Joseph's words are recorded, he certainly showed us how to behave through his actions. In Fr. Donald Calloway's book, **Consecration to St. Joseph**, he lists many names in a Litany of St. Joseph that can help us to imitate him. Let's look at just a few to help us finish this Lenten season strong.

St. Joseph: Zealous Defender of Christ and Most Faithful St. Joseph did all he could to protect the young Jesus, even fleeing to Egypt after receiving the message of an angel. He listened to God and did what was asked. Do we take the time to be silent and listen for God's quiet voice and follow His promptings? Are we willing to do something difficult to defend our faith and the teachings of the Church (the Magisterium)? Are you willing and able to proudly proclaim your Catholic faith to all?

St. Joseph: Most Obedient and Most Courageous Sometimes we may feel that some of the teachings of our Catholic faith are difficult for us to obey. And usually it is because of our pride that "we know better" or this is "not hurting anyone." But in the big picture of life, it is those exact things that separate us from God and hurt us. It takes a lot of courage to trust in God as we say in the Our Father prayer "Thy will be done." Note that it does not say "My will be done." Strive to be courageous and obedient.

St. Joseph: Glory of the Domestic Life and Pillar of the Family The family is the foundation of society. When families are strong so are societies. Put God first and your family second. This advice is for children as well as parents. What do you do to make your family and home a happy, faithful, loving place where each person is valued and loved?

This year the Feast of St. Joseph (March 19) falls on a Sunday so the celebration of his feast day will be moved and celebrated on Monday, March 20th instead. If you are able, attend Mass that day and pray to St. Joseph for his help to make you more like him.

A MEMORARE TO ST. JOSEPH

Remember, O Most Chaste Spouse of the Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, my spiritual father, and beg your protection. O Foster Father of the Redeemer, despise not my petitions, but in your goodness hear and answer me. Amen

So, be zealous, faithful, obedient, courageous, a pillar for your families, and a lover of family life. Be strong in your willingness to change for the better as you strive to complete Lent well and enter Easter ready to serve God and your families as followers of Jesus. **✚**

Praying you all have a blessed Lent and finish strong!



Pax Christi,

**Carlin &
Deacon Dave
Gould**

*Co-Directors of the
Marriage & Family
Life Office*





SURVIVOR OF TURKEY EARTHQUAKE: 'God protected me and the Virgin Mary did not leave me'

By **Guitta Maroun**

CNA Newsroom, Mar 1, 2023 / 10:15 am



Bassel Habkhouk is reunited with his two children after being trapped for 52 hours after the devastating Feb. 6, 2023, earthquake in Turkey and Syria. | Photo courtesy of Bassel Habkhouk Guitta Maroun

Only a few hours after Bassel Habkhouk, a young Lebanese Catholic and father of two, arrived for a visit in Turkey on Feb. 6, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck the country and nearby Syria.

Habkhouk found himself trapped underneath the rubble of fallen buildings for 52 hours as a result of the devastating earthquake, which killed more than 50,000 people and injured many more with tens of thousands still missing and hundreds of thousands homeless, according to the Associated Press.

Miraculously, Habkhouk survived, and he recently shared with ACI MENA, CNA's Arabic-language news partner, details of his ordeal and the role the Virgin Mary played in it.

TRAPPED FOR MORE THAN TWO DAYS

Habkhouk was out with his good friend, Elias Al-Haddad, when the earthquake hit. The pair fell to the ground after debris fell on them.

"Elias Al-Haddad spoke to me after the accident and asked for my help, but I was unable to move and help," Habkhouk recalled. "After about six hours, I no longer heard his voice."

Sadly, Al-Haddad did not survive, and Habkhouk's own journey to survival began.

"I stayed under the rubble for 52 hours, becoming stuck in a block about 2 meters long and 40 centimeters wide," he recounted. "Exposed to the cold air without knowing

where it came from, I did not feel hungry or thirsty, although I still had some food in my possession."

Habkhouk considered the most difficult moment under the rubble was when the rescue team contacted him in the evening of the second day.

"I found a plastic pipe about a meter long, and used it to hit the debris around me, signaling to the rescuers to know where I was," he said, but after knowing his location, they rescued another man beside him who was calling out in pain.

After five hours of relief work that continued until 2 a.m. the next day, the rescue of the other man was complete and the rescue workers left. Habkhouk feared they would leave him stranded because he is not a Turkish citizen.

From 2 to 7 a.m. Habkhouk, once again alone, clung to his will and began to think of alternate ways to escape.

THE ROSARY AND THE VIRGIN MARY

Habkhouk described his first moments under the rubble and his immediate prayer: "When the rubble fell on me, I fell to the ground, crying out from the bottom of my heart: O MARY!"

"I continued to call the Virgin Mary for the next 40 seconds until the earthquake stopped," he continued. "Then I prayed the rosary from under the rubble. God protected me, and the Virgin Mary did not leave me."

Habkhouk said prayer gave him the power to resist despair and strengthened his faith that he would be rescued.

Fifty-two hours after he became trapped, at 7 a.m. on Feb. 8, Habkhouk was rescued by a Turkish security team.

MORE IN MIDDLE EAST - AFRICA

Nigeria elections

Muslim-Muslim ticket proclaimed winner of Nigeria's presidential election amid protests

READ ARTICLE

After 52 hours under the rubble left by the devastating Feb. 6, 2023, earthquake in Turkey, Bassel Habkhouk was rescued by a Turkish Security team. Photo courtesy of Bassel Habkhouk

After 52 hours under the rubble left by the devastating Feb. 6, 2023, earthquake in Turkey, Bassel Habkhouk was rescued by a Turkish Security team. Photo courtesy of Bassel Habkhouk

A VOW TO OUR LADY OF MANTARA

Habkhouk said this was not the first time he and his family have turned to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"Since childhood, I was raised according to the traditions of my village, Maghdouché," he said. "There I was taught the importance of Catholic holidays (Christmas, Easter, the birthday of the Virgin Mary, etc.) ... I believe

in the Lord and I have sought the intercession of his mother, the Virgin Mary, in the course of my life.”

“The people of Maghdouché used to make the sign of the cross whenever they left the village, saying to her: On you we place our hope, O Mother of God! And then on they went, trusting in the Lord through the intercession of Mary, and thanking her for her care for them, especially during difficult journeys.”

Habkhouk also mentioned his mother’s love for God, Mary, and the saints. Every morning, he said, she goes to the shrine of Our Lady of Mantara and asks for Mary’s intercession and for her to protect her children.

Bassel Habkhouk is received by his home village in Lebanon after surviving the Feb. 6, 2023, earthquake in Turkey. Photo courtesy of Bassel Habkhouk

“When the devastating earthquake occurred,” he said, “she promised the Virgin Mary that if her son returned from Turkey safely, she would descend barefoot from the village to the shrine of Our Lady of Mantara, and she would enter with me crawling to the cave. And she fulfilled her promise after I returned home.”

For Habkhouk, words cannot describe his extreme happiness upon returning to Lebanon and his massive reception amid the ringing of bells, cheers, and ululations.

“The joy of the people of Maghdouché is indescribable, and I am grateful for the love of everyone who showered us with it, despite their different sects,” he said. ☩

This story was first published by ACI MENA, CNA’s Arabic-language news partner, and has been adapted by CNA.

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POPE FRANCIS PRAYS FOR UKRAINE

This was Pope Francis’ spontaneous prayer for Ukraine on anniversary of war

From Catholic News Service



In a special appeal at the end of his general audience on Feb. 22, the pope called the conflict in Ukraine an “absurd and cruel war.”

“The toll of dead, wounded, refugees and displaced persons, destruction, economic and social damage speaks for itself. May the Lord forgive so many crimes and so much violence,” he said.



“Let us remain close to the tormented Ukrainian people, who continue to suffer,” he continued, “and let us ask ourselves: has everything possible been done to stop the war? I appeal to those who

have authority over nations to make a concrete commitment to end the conflict, to achieve a cease-fire and to start peace negotiations. What is built on rubble will never be a true victory.” ☩

Why Water? Understanding the Importance of Providing Safe Water to Haiti's Poorest Families

Few of us think much about water. We want some, and we turn a tap. We drink it, and we expect to feel refreshed. Water isn't something we worry about, and with good reason. We are blessed to have safe, clean water at our fingertips.

Unfortunately, millions of families in the developing countries of the world — Haiti among them — are far less fortunate. For them, water must be found, it is rarely clean, and it can pose serious dangers if they don't take precautions before drinking it. This is because poor families often rely on collected rain or murky streams — water sources that are almost inevitably contaminated with parasites that cause disease.

"That is why Father Glenn Meaux has made providing safe water to the people of Kobonal, Haiti, a priority," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, one of the largest Catholic charities serving in Haiti. For years, Cavnar's ministry has partnered with Kobonal missionary Fr. Meaux to address the plight of the poor in Haiti by funding feeding programs, housing projects, educational outreaches, water projects and more.

"It may surprise some American Catholics, but providing safe water can literally be a lifesaving measure in a remote community. In fact, one of the first projects we did with Fr. Meaux involved capping a spring to bring clean water to a town that had lost a tragic number of children to illnesses caused by contaminated water," Cavnar said. "Fr. Meaux had seen them carrying a child's coffin down the hillside and was shocked to learn local families were losing babies and toddlers to unsafe water every month. He contacted us to

see whether something could be done, and we rallied support from American Catholics to fund the water project he needed. This gift to the community has probably saved dozens of lives since then."

The impact of unsafe water goes further, affecting older children and adults too, according to Cavnar.

"When an older child becomes ill, he or she often misses school, and sick adults can find it difficult to work steadily and secure a stable income. These may not seem like serious problems, but as sick days mount, the impact can be devastating. Children fall behind in their classwork or drop out of school entirely, losing the opportunities for advancement that an education can bring. Their parents struggle to make ends meet, sometimes even finding it impossible to provide food each day. Once that downward spiral begins, it can lead to families falling into despair — and a real sense of hopelessness."

Fortunately, modern technology can provide a solution if funding is available. Well-digging rigs can be secured to reach safe water sources underground, and hand or solar pumps can be used to make water stations effective even when electricity isn't available.

"We have had a lot of experience solving water scarcity problems and developing water delivery systems in remote areas," Cavnar said. "The technology and skills are available if we can get the funding for the project work involved. That is why we are seeking support from American Catholics to help Fr. Meaux with his latest project — installing two new freshwater wells and repairing several other wells in his area." (See story on opposite page.)



In Haiti's rural communities, water is often collected from murky ponds or other contaminated sources. It can be tainted with animal waste or teeming with bacteria and harmful parasites. For the poor, who must rely on this water, one drink can lead to serious illnesses, and infants and very young children are at the greatest risk.

As Cavnar has said, managing major water projects is one of Cross Catholic Outreach's areas of expertise, and he remains confident Fr. Meaux's wells will be built, benefiting the communities he serves.

"I believe we'll succeed because Catholics in America often rally to accomplish missions of mercy like this," he said. "They are eager to help others, particularly those with an urgent need. What matters to them is that their donations are used wisely and will produce an important, tangible benefit for the poor. They support water projects such as this one because they understand the value of safe water. They would want that for their own families, and their hearts go out to poor parents who must give their

sons and daughters contaminated water to drink. I believe they will want to end that suffering and support a committed Catholic leader like Fr. Meaux."

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach water programs and other outreaches to the poor can contribute through the ministry brochure inserted in this issue or send tax-deductible gifts to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02435, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis. Use the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write "Monthly Mission Partner" on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up those arrangements.

Legacy Giving Provides Catholics With Unique Opportunity to Bless Others

If you are like many Catholics born in the 1950s or before, you have probably begun to think about the spiritual legacy your life and actions represent. What did we care about? What did we value? These are some of the things we hope will be remembered.

"For a growing number of Catholics, this introspection has led to the exploration of 'legacy giving' — the use of one's will, trust, life insurance or retirement policies to leave behind an echo of one's beliefs, deeds and values — a blessing of others that will

reverberate beyond our own lifetime, hopefully influencing our family and others we cherish," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, an official Catholic relief and development charity with a staff dedicated to such estate planning.

According to Cavnar, Cross Catholic Outreach has helped many Catholics establish these "legacy gifts" and expects them to play a significant role in future ministry missions.

"A will or trust can also reflect a person's special heart for a country or for an area of need. It can be used

to build houses for poor families or to build classrooms to educate children, for example," Cavnar said. "Others simply want to help the poorest of the poor and make their legacy gift for that purpose. It's their way of saying, 'As a Catholic, I value life and support works of mercy. I want my family to understand that calling and believe in it too.' And because legacy gifts can be quite large, they often achieve incredible things. A single one might build an entire school or fund the construction of hundreds of homes. It's producing an amazing impact

and serves as an incredible testament to the faith of the giver."

In addition to this service, Cross Catholic Outreach's staff can support donors seeking to establish a charitable gift annuity, charitable remainder trust or special endowment. Financial planners can also obtain information to help those who seek professional counsel or have donor-advised funds.

To learn more about these services, the charity recommends readers visit its special online portal at CrossCatholicLegacy.org.

American Catholics Rally to Provide Poor Families With Safe Water Through Fr. Meaux's Kobonal Haiti Mission

When Father Glenn Meaux and his missionary team arrived in Kobonal, Haiti, in 1989, he was deeply disturbed by the magnitude of poverty he saw there. Hardly anyone in the village owned the land their fragile huts occupied. No one grew gardens or raised animals. Very few employment opportunities existed for the unskilled, uneducated population, so very few families were able to earn money to buy food.

During the rainy season, the women and children would gather water from the plentiful streams and rivers — but the water was obviously tainted. During the dry season, people resorted to digging holes in the sand in order to find water.

In addition to suffering hunger and thirst, the people were also

“There was no agriculture, there was no irrigation system, there was literally no hope at the time.”

Fr. Glenn Meaux,
Haiti Kobonal Mission

starving for spiritual guidance. Entrenched in superstition and occult practices, few had ever heard the name of Christ.

“There was no agriculture, there was no irrigation system— there was literally no hope at the time,” Fr. Meaux recalled.

This is the challenging ground on which the Kobonal Haiti Mission took root, and in the three ensuing decades, the mission has worked marvels, helping hundreds of families improve their lives. Still, Fr. Meaux's heart breaks every time he sees a mother or child living in a dilapidated shack or gathering water from a murky stream.

“Fr. Meaux has already given the best years of his life to the people of Haiti (see story on opposite page), but he always has his eyes forward, looking for the next thing he can do to help relieve the people's suffering and increase their opportunities in life,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a leading Catholic relief and development ministry that has partnered with Fr. Meaux for more than a decade and a half. “Many people are aware of the wonderful things he's done to address the people's urgent needs, but his ultimate goal is to break the cycle of poverty in this part of Haiti and forever change the fate of the families he serves.”

Fr. Meaux stated his objectives even more simply.

“As Catholics, we must extend our hands to help our brothers and sisters



ABOVE: In Haiti's rural communities, poor families are often forced to collect drinking water from unsafe sources, and they can suffer serious illnesses from waterborne parasites and diseases as a result. LEFT: Fr. Meaux has a plan to provide safe water, and American Catholics can support his efforts through contributions to Cross Catholic Outreach.



in need,” he said.

Currently, one of the mission's primary project goals is to bring clean water to the people of Kobonal, ending the need for families to collect unsafe water from remote sources.

“Women and children are often tasked with finding and collecting water, and the murky streams they draw from aren't fit for animals, much less people,” Cavnar said. “At Cross Catholic Outreach, we work on many projects like this, obtaining donations from U.S. Catholics to pay for the equipment and organize the construction efforts involved. Our current goal is to help Fr. Meaux put in three clean-water wells, build a

community distribution point and repair five existing wells. If we can accomplish this, it will positively impact 211 adults and 567 children who currently face the greatest challenges to their health and well-being. The people in these villages will use the water not only for drinking and cooking but also to sustain important gardens they depend on for food and income.”

According to Cavnar, the wells will make use of freestanding hand pumps, and the families in each community will choose a leader to oversee and perform maintenance on the equipment. Each well will have a cement wall around it for security and be available daily during specific hours of operation. The water will be free,

but the benefiting families will be encouraged to contribute a token amount to a community fund that can be tapped if repairs are ever needed on the wells. Contributing in this way will give villagers a sense of ownership and pride in their community.

“Anticipation is mounting for this project, and volunteers have already stepped forward to offer their help with the construction of the wells. Now, all that's needed are the funds for drilling, purchasing pumps, constructing a pump house to store supplies and training community members to handle maintenance of the new facilities,” Cavnar said. “Our goal now is to make American Catholics aware of the project and gain their support.”

How to Help

To fund Cross Catholic Outreach's effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02435, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions for becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify an aid project, 100% of the donation will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.





MARCH PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

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CONGRATULATIONS



Ana Maria Alvarez-Padilla

An individual winner of a *North Bay Gives Award* pictured here with **Deacon John Storm**, director Catholic Restorative Justice Ministries at the *North Bay Business Journal's North Bay Gives Awards* on Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022 at Ellington Hall in Santa Rosa. (Loren Hansen Photography)



Reorganization

Following March 10th information regarding the Diocese of Santa Rosa Bankruptcy filing can be found on our website at:

www.srdiocese.org/reorganization
(you can scan the QR code as well).

All updates and press releases will be posted there.



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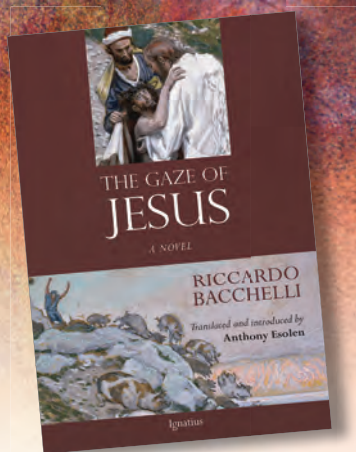
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POWERFUL NOVELS ON BIBLICAL FIGURES



◆ The Gaze of Jesus

8-time Nobel Prize nominee **Riccardo Bacchelli** imagines the life of the Gerasene demoniac after his exorcism by Jesus: his inner battles, his return to the family, his quest for love and meaning. The healer's gaze has been branded into his mind, but he cannot grasp who this man really is. As he gathers second-hand news of the Galilean miracle worker, he is determined to piece together the puzzle.

Elegantly translated and introduced by **Anthony Esolen**, this is a gripping psychological, historical, and theological investigation into what it takes for the "uncalled" to follow Christ, to seek the face of Jesus from a distance. Bacchelli offers a visceral experience of the world of the New Testament, including elaborate character studies of the Bible's darkest figures: Herod, Herodias, and Judas.

GZJP . . . Sewn Softcover, \$17.95

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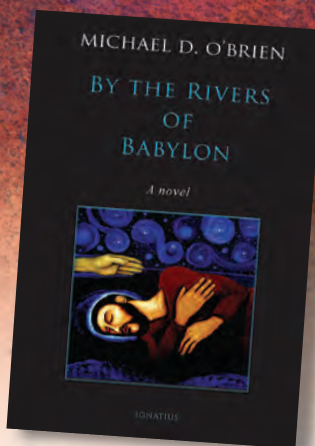
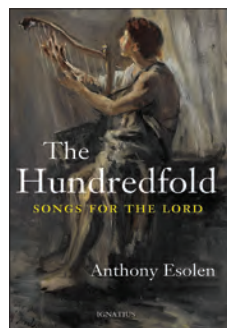
"Esolen's beautiful translation showcases Bacchelli's masterly delineation of character. In the demoniac, all who desire to be transformed by the gaze of Jesus will find a relatable figure for our own conversion." — **Eleanor Nicholson**, Author, *A Bloody Habit: A Novel*

Also by Anthony Esolen

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◆ By the Rivers of Babylon

Best-selling novelist **Michael O'Brien** vividly portrays the early life of the prophet Ezekiel, from his childhood to his service in the Temple to the Babylonian Captivity, where he was enslaved among the exiles along the River Chebar.

Ezekiel, a bricklayer, is simple and timid. He is not yet a priest, and his visions have not yet begun. He stands in the midst of the Jewish exiles as they struggle to build a town of their own, to remain faithful to God's covenant without the Temple, and to discern the various forces that threaten to divide them and erode their faith. All of these experiences flow like streams into Ezekiel's later mission to rally his people from inner destruction.

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—**Peter Kreeft**, Best-selling Author; Professor of Philosophy, Boston College

"Beautifully crafted and thoroughly researched, this novel tells the fascinating story of a very fascinating man."

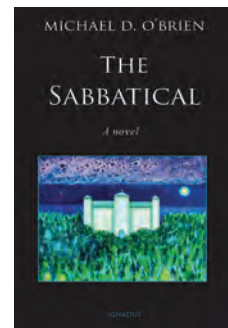
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