



Coats for Kids 2023

BY MO KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Springfield, MO

The Knights of Columbus are hosting “Coats for Kids” beginning **Saturday, October 14** through **Saturday, December 9**. The new coats will be distributed on Saturdays, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the designated locations below.

The Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids program enables local councils the opportunity to purchase new winter coats and distribute them at no cost to children in need.

All kids are welcome: from babies to teens. There are no income requirements. **The child must be present to try the coat on for size**, but there are no other requirements!

Dates and locations for the distributions are:

- **Oct. 14**, Springfield Cardinals Indoor Training Facility, 955 E Trafficway St., Springfield
- **Oct. 21**, Holy Family Catholic Church, Lake Rd. 39-30, Shell Knob
- **Oct. 21**, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 515 E. Washington St., Marshfield
- **Oct. 28**, St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 405 7th St., Monett
- **Nov. 4**, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, US Hwy 60 & Carnation Dr., Aurora

- **Nov. 4**, Our Lady of the Cove Catholic Church, 20 Kimberling Blvd., Kimberling City
- **Nov. 11**, St. Susanne Catholic Church, 720 W. Sloan, Mt. Vernon
- **Nov. 18**, 2 T's Auction, 309 Center St., Sarcoxie
- **Dec. 2**, McAuley Catholic High School, 930 S. Pearl, Joplin
- **Dec. 2**, St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, 345 Grand Ave., Lebanon
- **Dec. 9**, Wichita Technical Institute, 1715 N. Rangeline Road, Joplin

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFO!



The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
a Pontifical Mission Society

World Mission Sunday 2023

October 22nd

Were not our hearts burning within us?

Luke 24:13-35

Let us set out again with burning hearts, with our eyes open and our feet in motion. Let us set out to make other hearts burn with the word of God, to open the eyes of others to Jesus in the Eucharist, and to invite everyone to walk together on the path of peace and salvation that God, in Christ, has bestowed upon all humanity.

Our Lady of the Way, Mother of Christ's missionary disciples and Queen of Missions, pray for us! —Pope Francis, Message for 2023 World Mission Sunday



26M
Children



38,140
Seminarians



8,750
Shelters



12,000
Health Centers



844,000
Catechists



258,540
Religious sisters

WWW.ONEFAMILYINMISSION.ORG

BE THE SPARK THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES. GIVE NOW.



The next issue of **The Mirror** will be **October 27, 2023**. Sign up to receive the diocesan newspaper via Email in digital format: Contact Debbie Thompson at (417) 866-0841, or Email: dthompson@dioscg.org.





COME, AND YOU WILL SEE
Bp. Edward M. Rice

Missouri needs a conversion of heart

The recent financial report from the 2022 National Religious Retirement Office indicates that our diocese donated **\$78,302.79** for the care of retired religious in the United States. I also received a letter thanking the diocese for the **\$49,263.69** collected for the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA. These two collections highlight the generosity of our people for the various causes we are asked to support.

In our own area, Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri is well on the way to completing LifeHouse Cape Girardeau, tentatively scheduled for completion and occupancy in April of 2024. At the recent Dinner for Life, in Springfield on Sept. 23, an update was given on the progress. LifeHouse Cape sits on an almost two-acre plot of land donated by a generous benefactor for this specific purpose. The space itself, spanning 17,000 square feet, will include 15 units, each unit will house a mother and her children. While LifeHouse Springfield is based in the repurposed Carmelite Monastery, LifeHouse Cape is a new building that was specifically designed to include indoor and outdoor community spaces and administrative and office space for LifeHouse; Catholic Charities offices, and pregnancy support programs. The location, close to downtown, will provide employment opportunities for the women from the

many nearby businesses and industries.

OCTOBER IS RESPECT LIFE MONTH

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has asked every (arch)diocese to Walk with Moms in Need and our local LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Homes are the perfect examples of doing just that! As a diocese, we can be so proud of what is being accomplished to assist women in need. Further, Bishop Burbidge, USCCB Chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities, has called for “radical solidarity,” with women in need. Pope St. John Paul II first defined “radical solidarity” in this way: “In firmly rejecting ‘pro-choice,’ it is necessary to courageously become ‘pro woman,’ promoting a choice that is really in favor of women... The only honest stance in these cases, is that of radical solidarity with the woman. It is not right to leave her alone.”

LifeHouse Cape and LifeHouse Springfield are perfect examples of this “radical solidarity” and I encourage everyone to offer a financial gift to Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri for our LifeHouse ministries.

The decision to overthrow Roe v Wade is an answer to our prayers, but

it has also rallied those in the abortion industry. Pro-abortion extremists want to change state constitutions, and Missouri is one of the targets. Massive out-of-state dollars will fund their pro-abortion campaigns as they rally their troops—so, we cannot sit idle.



While our Missouri Catholic Conference lobbyists are working the political angle at the state capitol, we must push for voter registration at our parishes, and we must counter the lies. We cannot expect support from the secular media and popular culture, and at times, we may feel like we are David against Goliath, but what we do have is faith. Let us always be courageous, because in the end: life will be victorious!

CONVERSION OF HEARTS

Now, some reject that the death penalty is a pro-life issue as well and I would respond with “Indeed, it is!” Paragraph 2267 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) says, “The death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person.” And as much as Missouri is a pro-life state regarding abortion, one-fourth of the executions in the US in 2023 occurred in Missouri. Catholics are called to be pro-life from the “womb

to the tomb,” and so we have a lot of hearts to touch if we are fully pro-life. Recent efforts in various states to promote euthanasia, assisted suicide, and non-resuscitation on request, are becoming popular as well. As Bishop Burbidge stated, “The transformation of our culture also requires continual conversion of our own hearts so that we can recognize in every person, the face of Christ and place their needs before our own.”

That sounds like “radical solidarity.”

“O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine.” ©TM



VEN Y VERÁS

Obispo Edward M. Rice

Missouri necesita una conversión del corazón

El reciente informe financiero de la Oficina Nacional de Jubilaciones Religiosas 2022 indica que nuestra diócesis donó **\$78,302.79** para el cuidado de los religiosos jubilados en Estados Unidos. También recibí una carta de agradecimiento a la diócesis por los **\$49,263.69** recaudados para la Archidiócesis para los Servicios Militares de Estados Unidos. Estas dos colectas ponen de manifiesto la generosidad de nuestro pueblo con las distintas causas que se nos pide que apoyemos.

En nuestra propia zona, Caridades Católicas del Sur de Missouri está a punto de terminar LifeHouse Cape Girardeau, cuya finalización y ocupación están previstas para abril de 2024. En la reciente Cena por la Vida, celebrada en Springfield el 23 de septiembre, se ofreció información actualizada sobre los avances. LifeHouse Cape se asienta en un terreno de casi dos acres donado por un generoso benefactor para este fin específico. El espacio en sí, de 17.000 pies cuadrados, incluirá 15 unidades, cada una de las cuales albergará a una madre y a sus hijos. Mientras que LifeHouse Springfield tiene su sede en el Monasterio Carmelita rehabilitado, LifeHouse Cape es un edificio nuevo que se diseñó específicamente para incluir espacios comunitarios interiores y exteriores y espacio administrativo y de oficinas para LifeHouse; las Oficinas de Caridades Católicas y programas de apoyo al embarazo. La ubicación, cerca del centro de la ciudad, ofrecerá

oportunidades de empleo a las mujeres de las muchas empresas e industrias cercanas.

OCTUBRE ES EL MES DEL RESPETO A LA VIDA

La Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos ha pedido a todas las (arqui)diócesis que tengan la Caminata con las Madres Necesitadas, y nuestras Maternidades de Crisis LifeHouse locales son perfectas. Como diócesis, podemos estar muy orgullosos de lo que se está logrando para ayudar a las mujeres necesitadas. Además, el obispo Burbidge, presidente del Comité de Actividades Pro-Vida de la USCCB, ha hecho un llamamiento a la “solidaridad radical” con las mujeres necesitadas. El Papa San Juan Pablo II definió por primera vez la “solidaridad radical” de esta manera: “Al rechazar firmemente el ‘pro-choice’ (pro-elección), es necesario convertirse valientemente en ‘pro-mujer’, promoviendo una elección que esté realmente a favor de las mujeres. ... La única postura honesta en estos casos, es la de solidaridad radical con la mujer. No está bien dejarla sola”.

LifeHouse Cape y LifeHouse Springfield son ejemplos perfectos de esta “solidaridad radical” y animo a todos a ofrecer un donativo económico a Caridades Católicas del Sur de Missouri para nuestros ministerios LifeHouse.

La decisión de anular Roe contra Wade es una respuesta a nuestras plegarias, pero también ha movilizado a los de la industria del aborto. Los extremistas proabortistas quieren

cambiar las constituciones estatales, y Missouri es uno de los objetivos. Grandes cantidades de dinero de fuera del estado financiarán sus campañas a favor del aborto mientras reúnen a sus tropas, así que no podemos quedarnos de brazos cruzados. Mientras los grupos de presión de nuestra Conferencia Católica de Missouri trabajan en el aspecto político en el capitolio del estado, nosotros debemos presionar para que se registre a los votantes en nuestras parroquias, y debemos contrarrestar las mentiras. No podemos esperar el apoyo de los medios de comunicación seculares y de la cultura popular, y a veces podemos sentirnos como David contra Goliat, pero lo que sí tenemos es fe. Seamos siempre valientes, porque al final: **ila vida saldrá victoriosa!**

Seamos siempre valientes, porque al final: ila vida saldrá victoriosa!

CONVERSIÓN DE LOS CORAZONES

Ahora bien, algunos rechazan que la pena de muerte sea también una cuestión provida, y yo respondería: “¡Claro que lo es!”. El párrafo 2267 del *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica* (CIC) dice: “la pena de muerte es inadmisibles, porque atenta contra la inviolabilidad y la dignidad de la persona”. Y por mucho que Missouri sea un estado provida en lo

que respecta al aborto, una cuarta parte de las ejecuciones que se produjeron en Estados Unidos en 2023 tuvieron lugar en Misuri. Los católicos estamos llamados a ser provida “desde el vientre materno hasta la tumba”, por lo que tenemos muchos corazones que tocar si somos plenamente provida. También se están popularizando los recientes esfuerzos en varios estados para

promover la eutanasia, el suicidio asistido y la no reanimación a petición. Como afirmó el obispo Burbidge: “La transformación de nuestra cultura requiere también la conversión continua de nuestros propios corazones, para que podamos reconocer en cada persona el rostro de Cristo y anteponer sus necesidades a las nuestras”.

Eso suena a “solidaridad radical”.
“Oh Sacramento Santísimo, Oh Sacramento Divino, toda la alabanza y toda la acción de gracias sean en cada momento tuyos.” ©TM



Another Walk Through: ‘Walking Together’

Before his retirement in 2008 as the Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Bishop John Leibrecht wrote a standing column in *The Mirror* entitled, “Walking Together.” At the end of each article, Bp. Leibrecht would normally share a funny story referencing his travels to the schools, or time with friends, family, or other bishops. *The Mirror* has decided to share a few of these in an ongoing series entitled, “Another walk through: ‘Walking Together.’” We hope you enjoy them.

January 12, 1990 A teacher was helping her class learn a prayer before meals. The children repeated phrase by phrase, “Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your bounty.” The teacher asked, “Does anyone know what ‘bounty’ is?” “Yes,” one little girl quickly responded, “It’s paper towels!”

January 19, 1990 It appears as though St. Peter told a recent arrival in heaven, “Up here, a penny is the same as a thousand dollars and a minute is a thousand years.” The newcomer said, “That’s great! Can I have a penny?” “Sure,” Peter responded, “in a minute.”

January 26, 1990 Second-graders at Immaculate Conception School, Springfield, recently gave me a spiritual bouquet. It was in the form of a large paper-chain necklace. One of the students put it over my head and around my neck. Paper links in the chain carried the names of the second-graders and the list of prayers each promised me. One little fellow, possibly concerned that I wouldn’t see his individual link in the chain, called out loudly, “I want you to know I’m saying 1,000 Our Fathers for you!”

Meet Me at the Grotto

Come pray the rosary with Bishop Edward Rice!

Thu., Oct. 26	Carthage	CRM Campus-Chapel	6:30 pm
Tue., Oct. 31	Springfield	St. Agnes Cathedral	6:30 pm



By
Drew
Garvey

BREAKING PORNOGRAPHY, RESTORING HOPE PART V: *The Church Will Help*

Parts I - IV of this series focused on the nature of pornography and its effects. How and why pornography is a serious problem is hopefully clear now. Part IV, however, began a subtle transition from the vice of pornography to the virtue of hope. The Church is the ever-faithful light of hope that guides us to believe in, and attain, the promises of Christ. Her hope rests in her possession of the fullness of truth, a wealth of knowledge revealed by God himself. What then ought the Church do with this divine wellspring of wisdom?

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark record Jesus' call to proclaim the word of God to all the world (see Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15). Every Catholic has a duty and responsibility to evangelize (proclaim the Gospel) in the mission field. The mission field is not necessarily some foreign land on the other side of the world. It is at school, at work, at a friend's house, and at home. Simply put, the mission field is everywhere. Neither the mission field nor pornography have geographic, cultural, ethnic, gender, or faith boundaries. Recognizing pornography's prevalence in society, the Church has the wisdom and drive to evangelize, but she needs active participation.

Venerable Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical "Fidei Donum" ("The Gift of Faith"), called for a "threefold assistance" in the Church's missionary activity: prayers, material aid, and gift of self. Prayer has the power to change lives; it can help a person overcome loneliness, despair, and addiction, all effects of pornography. Material aid



(e.g. money, supplies, food, etc.) helps the Church contribute significantly to the fight against pornography. Monetary and supply donations help the Church produce booklets, articles, and brochures, and maintain schools, parishes, and diocesan Websites. Our diocesan Website, and the Website of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, currently has freedom from pornography resource Webpages. The URLs for those Webpages are found below. Finally, the gift of self is needed. Pornography addicts need accountability partners, and the Church needs help spreading the word on pornography's destructive evils.

Pope St. John Paul II made an extraordinary development on the understanding of "gift of self," particularly as it relates to pornography. His now famous Theology of the Body (TOB) is difficult to understand, but extremely profound. If it were possible to summarize TOB in layman's terms in one sentence, it might read: freely giving oneself in union to a reciprocating person brings happiness, and awareness

of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. John Paul II calls this the "spousal meaning of the body." Pornography and the spousal meaning of the body (TOB) are incompatible. Pornography will not bring happiness; it does not respect the Holy Spirit's dwelling within each person; freedom is either hindered or removed; and, reciprocity, union, and the gift of self are impossible to fulfill, both inside, and certainly outside, of marriage.

The Church's arguments against pornography, and Her zeal to fight it, have the same foundation as John Paul II's theology of the body: God, who is Love (see 1 John 4:8, 16), and our being created in His image and likeness. Out of love, God created mankind with the freedom to love. Pornography seriously attacks and misconstrues the true meaning of freedom, love, and hope, and

that is where we will begin next time.
©TM

Drew Garvey is from Immaculate Conception Parish, in Jackson, MO. He earned his master's in theology (MTS) from Franciscan University of Steubenville. He and his wife, Olivia, and their daughter, Etta, currently reside in Buffalo, NY. He may be reached via Email to dgarvey93@yahoo.com.

Diocesan freedom from pornography Webpage:

<https://diosc.org/about/family-ministries/anti-pornography-resources/>.

Archdiocese of St. Louis freedom from pornography Webpage:

<https://www.archstl.org/marriage-family-life/resources/for-families/anti-pornography>.

▶ NEXT IN THE SERIES:

BREAKING PORNOGRAPHY, RESTORING HOPE PART VI: *Authentic Freedom*

1. Define freedom
2. Establish five pillars of freedom (continuation of pornography pillars analogy): *Truth, balance, discipline, rules, and responsibility*
3. Apply understanding of five pillars of freedom:
 - Baseball analogy
 - Pornography analogy
4. Absolute freedom
5. Conclusion

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ST. MARK PARISH

building expansion dedication & blessing | Nov. 1, 2023

St. Mark Parish will celebrate its expansion with a dedication & blessing by Bishop Rice on **Nov. 1: Mass at 5 p.m., meal to follow, at St. Mark Catholic Church in Houston, MO.**

RSVP with number of persons attending to the Parish office
Email: stmarkhoustonmo@gmail.com

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For Adults

The VIRTUS Protecting God's Children Safe Environment training for adults is available online.

Preregistration is necessary: If you are a new registrant please go to www.virtus.org and click on "first time registrant" on the left, and follow the prompts to register for Online training. Instructions for the registration process can also be found on the Child and Youth Protection Page of the diocesan Website.

www.diosc.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Register-for-a-VIRTUS-with-Online-Option.pdf

Both in-person and online training sessions are for adults only.

Before engaging in activities involving minors and/or vulnerable adults, new volunteers or employees are required to complete the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children training for adults, submit a current Background Disclosure and Authorization Form, and read, sign and submit the annual Code of Conduct, which are available on the VIRTUS Website and the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau Child and Youth Protection Webpage: www.diosc.org/child-youth-protection/

For more information, please contact the Office of Child and Youth Protection, childandyouthprotection@diosc.org; or Bill Holtmeyer, billholtmeyer@diosc.org; or Shelly Ferry, sferry@diosc.org, (417) 866-0841.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Aurora—Holy Trinity Catholic Church will hold **"My Family at the Grotto"** each day during the month of October: each day a different family will be praying the rosary at the Mary Grotto. All are invited to come and pray. Sign up by calling the parish office: (417) 678-2403.

Dexter—Sacred Heart Catholic Church, located at 102 E Castor St. will have its annual **Turkey Dinner**, Sun., Nov. 5, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Turkey, ham, stuffing, all the fixings, dessert, and drink included. Cost: \$12.50-adults; \$6-children; under age 6, no cost. Dine in or carry-out available.

Monett—St. Lawrence Parish Council of Catholic Women will hold its annual **Fall Feast**, Sun., Nov. 5, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Turkey, ham, all the trimmings, roll, drink, and dessert. Cost: \$10-adults; \$8-senior (65+); \$6-children, ages 5-11 years; under age 4, no cost. For more information, please call Linda Dohmen, (417) 235-4702.

Jackson—The Jackson Knights of Columbus # 6405 will have its **Fish & Chicken Dinner**, Fri., Oct. 20, 4:30-7 p.m., in the Lower KC Hall. Fried fish, chicken, fries, hushpuppies, baked beans, slaw, and homemade mac & cheese. Cost is \$13, dine in or carry-out is available.

Jackson—The Jackson Knights of Columbus #6405 will have a **Sausage & Pancake breakfast**, Sun., Nov. 5, 7-11 a.m. Homemade sausage, pancakes, eggs, hash browns, and biscuits & gravy. Orders are also being taken for the Knight's famous, homemade sausage; available in link or 1 lb. bulk packaging. To place an order, or for more information, contact the KC Hall at (573) 243-5464 or kchalljacksonmo@att.net.

Leopold—St. John Parish Council of Catholic Women will host its annual **Country Christmas Home Tour**, Sun., Dec. 17, 1-4 p.m. Tour five beautifully decorated homes, stop by St. John Catholic Church to listen to organ music, followed by soup and cookies served in the school cafeteria. Proceeds from this event are shared with St. John Youth Group. For questions and ticket purchasing, contact Geri Geringer at (573) 208-6445.

Springfield—Sacred Heart Parish will hold its annual **Craft, Vendor & Cookie Sale**, Fri., Dec. 1, 5-9 p.m. and Sat., Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. This event will be held in conjunction with the Midtown Victorian Homes Tour, in which Sacred Heart is a stop. Many vendors, handmade jewelry, crafts, and our famous cookies sold-by-the-pound. Food will be available for purchase both days. For more information, contact the parish office at

(417) 869-3646.

Springfield—St. Agnes Cathedral will host a **Holiday Market**, Sat., Nov. 4, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sun., Nov. 5, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., in the school gymnasium, located in The Catholic Center. Candles, cards, religious items, wooden crafts, paintings, many handmade items, baked goods, including empanadas, Mexican sweets, and other items for sale. Space is still available, if you are interested in renting a booth, contact Judy at (641) 751-6632.

Springfield—Immaculate Conception Parish Council of Catholic Women will have its **Holiday Sale**, Sat., Nov. 11, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sun., Nov. 12, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Start your Christmas shopping at our huge White Elephant & Bake Sale, located in Community Rooms A & B. The bistro will serve breakfast items, sandwiches, soups, & desserts.

Springfield—St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish Council of Catholic Women will hold its 15th annual **Fall Bazaar**, Sat., Nov. 4, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sun., Nov. 5, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Crafts, wood carvings, gourds, Christmas decorations & ornaments, painted wood & glass items, jewelry, religious items, aprons, skin care, quilts, handmade soaps, bake sale and much more! Chili, frito pie, vegetable soup, hot dogs, and cinnamon rolls will be for sale in the food café.

Springfield—The Holy Trinity PCCW has made the difficult decision to **cancel the 2023 Fall Bazaar**. Mass is currently being celebrated in the gymnasium due to the installation of new pews and other work being done in the sanctuary. Please mark your calendar for next year's Fall Bazaar, which will be held Nov. 9-10, 2024.

Springfield—The Greater Ozarks Chapter Knights of Columbus will sponsor a **Silver Rose Icon prayer service** at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, located at 2200 W Republic Rd, Sun., Oct. 22, 3 p.m. Bishop Rice will preside. All are welcome!

Springfield—Come and just be present before our Lord during **Springfield Area Perpetual Adoration**, hosted at Holy Trinity Chapel, which has an **urgent need of Adorers** on Wednesdays, 2 a.m., 3 a.m. & 6 a.m. and Saturday, at 3 p.m. Substitutes are needed for all hours. For more information or to sign up, please contact Marilyn Gibson at (417) 224-4043. Please consider spending time with our Lord in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Parishes and organizations are invited to submit notices of future events to be printed on a space-available basis. There is no fee.

ATTENTION: CATHOLIC MEN
You are invited to the Southeast Missouri...



CATHOLIC MAN NIGHT
Men Meeting Jesus

Monday, November 6 | 6:30-9:00 pm
St. Vincent de Paul, Cape Girardeau, MO

An evening of Adoration, Adoration, and Discussion with Special Guest **Fr. Larry Richards!**

Questions? Email to SEMOCatholicManNight@gmail.com
No meal at this event. So please plan accordingly.

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2F JUNE 24-28	2C JULY 15-19
3F JULY 8-12	3C JULY 22-26

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REGISTRATION OPENS DEC. 13, 2023! Beginning at 3:30 pm on 12/13/23
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Fr. Mark Binder, Co-Founder of Camp Re-NEW-All

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By
Fr. Joshua
J. Whitfield

WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 29:

Scripture and the Church

In a sense, the Body of Christ speaks through the Scripture. But, as we know, such an encounter — if it's an encounter with the real Christ — implies faith and the "traditioned" communion of the Church. These are the factors necessarily involved in the event we call revelation. It's how the Church, through the Scripture and Tradition, presents the "mystery of Christ" to the world (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 80).

But however clear this process is, it doesn't really clear everything up. That is to say: by no means does it prevent arguments from breaking out about the Bible or its interpretation and application. If you've ever been around Christian people for any length of time, you know this. Christians have always argued about the Scripture — and they always will.

This is why, when we talk about the Church in relation to the Scripture, we're not talking about some abstract or merely conceptual church. Rather, we're talking about a real Church, the Catholic Church. For that's where and how such arguments are handled — by the Church exercising its teaching authority, its "living Magisterium." The task of the Magisterium is simple: it's to preserve the People of God from error so that they may remain in "the truth that liberates" (cf. *Catechism*, No. 890). It's a task that demands a real, tangible, fully human, but also inspired, Church. When we talk about the Church as necessary to the right reading of the Scripture, that Church must indeed be an actual Church. Otherwise, this process leading to the event of revelation, which I've described, all falls apart. This is undoubtedly a bold claim on the part of the Catholic Church, yet by no means is it a novel claim. It's not new at all.

We see this in the writings of the early Church Father St. Irenaeus. When he emphasized the necessity of the Church, he wasn't talking about some mere concept, but the real Church.

"Suppose there arises a dispute

relative to some important question among us," he said, "should we not have recourse to the most ancient Churches with which the apostles held in constant intercourse, and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question?"

Writing in a free market of



(Shutterstock)

competing Christianities, Irenaeus' argument was basically that Christians should stand on the Faith associated with the apostles and their successors. When a tricky argument arises, go to the apostolic line, Irenaeus said, referring to the apostolic communities in which the Faith has always been proclaimed. "For how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings? Would it not be necessary in that case to follow the tradition which they handed down to those to whom they did commit the Churches?" (*Against Heresies*, No. 3.4.1). The Church, which preceded the formation of the Scripture, remains the arbiter of theological controversy for Irenaeus. And such remains the Catholic view. By now, it should be clear that the notion that each individual is free to interpret the Scripture for himself or herself is not a Catholic idea. But nor is it really a Protestant idea; even the Reformers were clear that the Bible had to be read under some authority. It's just that the Reformers rejected Roman authority.

But, of course, that doesn't mean every argument among Christians

needs immediately to be appealed to the teaching office of the Church. Argument is in fact good for a community. As St. Augustine said of heretics: they're useful in that they help us seek the truth more urgently (cf. *Sermon No. 51.11*). The same is true for charitable arguments generally. Before seeking out the final

word of the Church's Magisterium, Christians should take up the studious and spiritual task of interpretation. For instance, as Augustine said, "When investigation reveals an uncertainty as to how a locution should be pointed or construed, the rule of faith should be consulted as it is found in the more open places of the Scriptures and in the authority of the Church" (*On Christian Doctrine*, No. 3.2.2).

That is, Scripture interprets Scripture, Augustine said; yet, even this method of interpretation presupposes the rule of faith. For example, if there's a passage in the Gospels that makes Jesus look merely human (say, when he thirsts on the cross) we should remember those passages wherein he looks like God (say, when he walks on water). That is, we should remember both the "form of God" and the "form of the servant" when reading about Jesus in the Gospels (cf. *The Trinity*, No. 1.3.14). That's how Augustine applied the rule of faith: by remembering always the core Christian belief that Jesus is fully human and fully God, by remembering what the Church has always proclaimed to be

true. "Remember you are Catholics!" Augustine once preached; again, Christians do indeed read the Scripture with a ready set of commitments (*"Sermon," No. 52.2*). That's what engaging the Scripture as a Catholic looks like — like faith, like study and, finally, like obedience to the Church.

And this is basically the Catholic approach today. Each Catholic is encouraged to read the Scripture and, within reason, even interpret it for himself or herself; however, such reading and personal interpretation must always be subject to the Church's traditioned guidance and even the Church's correction. I personally could interpret a certain passage of the Scripture and think I've achieved some remarkable insight, and indeed I may have. However, if I were to pass such insight off as settled Catholic teaching, then there's a problem. Each person may be comforted by the Scripture in his or her own way, but the Church insists we are guided by several millennia of faithful reading, by the tradition and finally the authority of the Church.

Interpreters and readers of the Scripture form a spiritual symbiosis with the Church's Magisterium, a symbiosis of spiritual and intellectual exploration and humble ecclesial obedience. As the Second Vatican Council teaches, "It is the task of exegetes (interpreters of the Bible) to work, according to these rules, towards a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture in order that their research may help the Church to form a firmer judgment." However, "interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgment of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and interpreting the Word of God" (*Dei Verbum*, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," No. 12). The Catholic Church does indeed say there is an ultimate authority capable of making a judgment about what is an appropriate interpretation and what isn't. Again, the

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Reformers believed this too. They just took Rome out of the equation.

Now, this authority is mostly a negative authority. That is, the Catholic Church has left many questions of Biblical interpretation open. Only in rare instances does the Church exclude an interpretation, and then, only when it contradicts the rule of faith or seems otherwise contrary to the truth. It's a policing authority, so to speak. And necessary, considering the long strange history of heresies and cults and wild biblical ideas put forward that have ruined people's lives. Like Harold Camping, to cite one example among too many: he said the world would end on May 21, 2011; then he said Oct. 21, 2011. Now, of course, Camping was just deluded. It was simply foolishness. Yet, some people were ruined by his foolishness. The Catholic Church, though, weathered that apocalyptic nonsense 1,000 years ago. Of course, one still finds such nonsense from time to time among Catholics, but it never takes the form of authoritative teaching; it's always fringe. And that's because the Catholic Church exercises a "living Magisterium," an authority capable of settling such nonsense, preserving the faithful from harmful speculation.

And as I said, the Magisterium is exercised by a real Church, the Catholic

Church. Again, this is a bold claim — but necessary. Authentic interpretation is "entrusted to the living teaching of the Church alone" ("Dei Verbum," No. 10) And particularly, "This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome" (Catechism, No. 85). So, the Catholic Church does attach the final word on interpretation — again, mostly in a negative sense — to the bishops in communion with the Bishop of Rome, the pope.

But this is no different than what St. Irenaeus said in his time. For him, if one wanted to settle some important argument about the Faith, one should seek out the apostles and their successors, particularly, "the Church that is greatest, most ancient, and known to all, founded and set up by the two apostles Peter and Paul at Rome." By appealing to the tradition and the faith proclaimed "down through the successions of bishops even to us," believers are able "to shame all who in any way, through infatuation or vainglory or blindness and a wicked doctrine, gather together wrongly." But again, Irenaeus pointed first to Rome. "For it is necessary for every church — that is, the believers from everywhere — to agree with this church, in which

the tradition from the apostles has always been preserved by those who are from everywhere, because of its more excellent origin" ("Against Heresies," No. 3.3.2). So, even in the early Church, the buck stopped somewhere. And for Catholics — for a very long time — it stopped in Rome.

Now, the claim made by the Catholic Church to be the final interpreting authority of both the Scripture and Tradition is indeed bold. However, it's not an authority merely to invent things. The Church cannot invent doctrine and dogma. Everything the Church teaches must be obedient to the rule of faith and the word of God. Again, this is a patristic principle, as St. Augustine exemplifies. "The authority of these books," he said, "had come down to us from the apostles through the succession of bishops and the extension of the Church, and from a position of lofty supremacy claims the submission of every faithful ... mind" ("Against Faustus," No. 11.5). Augustine was clear that the Scripture wields authority over doctrine. As the ancient ecumenical councils enthroned the Gospels before deliberation, the Church has always understood its role to be steward, not master, of the Scripture. Again, as the Second Vatican Council taught, "this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant

("Dei Verbum," No. 10). What the Church teaches, it believes always to be under the authority of the Scripture. The dogmas of the Church are not something added to the Scripture; rather, such dogma is in coherent harmony with the Scripture, a traditioned articulation of the Scripture. And that's because, as we've said before, the Scripture and Tradition, although distinct, are not two separate sources of truth; rather, they flow "from the same divine well-spring." They "form one thing, and move towards the same goal" ("Dei Verbum," No. 9). And that's the revelation of the "mystery of Christ" — a revelation we believe still possible today.

NEXT EDITION:
WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 30

The Vision of Christ

Father Joshua J. Whitfield is pastor of St. Rita Catholic Community in Dallas and author of *The Crisis of Bad Preaching* (Ave Maria Press, \$17.95), and other books.

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Color Dash 5K & Fun Walk provides free cancer screenings

Cape Girardeau, MO

The Saint Francis Foundation hosted its fifth annual Color Dash 5K and Fun Walk on Sat., Oct. 7, 2023, at AC Brase Arena Park. More than 200 participants and volunteers turned out for the 5K and one-mile fun walk. An excess of \$31,000 was raised to provide free cancer screenings to individuals in need throughout the community.

For the second year in a row, the overall female winner was **Abigail Kasten**. The overall male winner was **Jamie Golden**. The overall survivor female winner was **Delisal Cole**. The overall survivor male winner was **Kent Edwards**.

The results of the female 19 and under category were: Charis Cheek in first place; Abbygail Powell in second place; and Laurel Ervin in third place. For the female 20-29 category: Katrina Stewart won first place; Makayla Kindler won second place; and Morgan Stewart won third place. In the female 30-39 category: Maria Golden won



2023 Color Dash 5K and Fun Walk—Runner and cancer survivor, Kent Edwards, is pictured with Nathan Gautier, Development Office-Special Events for Saint Francis Foundation. An excess of \$31,000 was raised to provide free cancer screenings in the community. (Submitted photo)

first place; Lacy Turner won second place; and Colleen Smith won third place. In the 40-49 female category: Alice Goldweida won first place; Angela Wildermuth won second place; and Melanie Lange won third place. In the 50-59 female category: Tammy Coates won first place; Pam Groshong won second place; and

Karen Karalunas-Fisher won third place. In the 60 and over female category: Cynthia Layton won first place; Tammy Beck won second place; and Nancy Matherne won third place.

The results of the male 19 and under category were: John Paul Wildermuth in first place; Trent Lange in second place; and Sean Bierbaum in third place. For the male 20-29 category: Joshua Lange won first place; Steven Sadler won second place; and Daniel Stewart won third place. In the 50-59 male category: Rob Dodson won first place and Michael Barnes won second place. In the 60 and over male category: Roger Ellinger won first place; Mark Reder won second place; and Dan Matherne won third place.

Color Dash is part of the month-long Pink Up initiative at Saint Francis Healthcare System which raises awareness of breast cancer prevention and treatment. To learn more, visit pinkup.org.

For more information about Saint Francis Foundation, call (573) 331-5133 or visit foundation.sfmc.net @TM

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“LAUDATE DEUM” • the Pope’s cry for a response to the climate crisis

Vatican News

Pope Francis has published an Apostolic Exhortation building on his 2015 encyclical. We’re not reacting enough, he says, we’re close to breaking point. He criticises climate change deniers, saying that the human origin of global warming is now beyond doubt. And he describes how care for our common home flows from the Christian faith.

“Praise God’ is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God’s place, they become their own worst enemies.”

That’s how Pope Francis ends his new Apostolic Exhortation, published on the 4th October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

It’s a text in continuity with his 2015 encyclical *Laudato si’*, which is broader in scope. In six chapters and 73 paragraphs, the Successor of Peter tries to clarify and bring to completion that previous text on integral ecology, while at the same time sounding an alarm, and a call for co-responsibility, in the face of the climate emergency.

In particular, the Exhortation looks ahead to COP28, which will be held in Dubai between the end of November and beginning of December.

The Holy Father writes: “With the passage of time, I have realized that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point. In addition to this possibility, it is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons.”

It’s “one of the principal challenges facing society and the global

community” and “the effects of climate change are borne by the most vulnerable people, whether at home or around the world.”



Land devastated by drought (Vatican News)

Signs of climate change increasingly evident

The first chapter is dedicated to the global climate crisis.

“Despite all attempts to deny, conceal, gloss over or relativize the issue, the signs of climate change are here and increasingly evident,” says the Pope.

He goes on to observe that “in recent years we have witnessed extreme weather phenomena, frequent periods of unusual heat, drought and other cries of protest on the part of the earth”, a “silent disease that affects everyone.”

Moreover, Pope Francis says, “it is verifiable that specific climate changes provoked by humanity are notably heightening the probability of extreme phenomena that are increasingly frequent and intense.”

Now, the Holy Father explains, if global temperature increases by

more than two degrees, “the icecaps of Greenland and a large part of Antarctica will melt completely, with immensely grave consequences for everyone.”

percentage of the planet contaminates more than the poorest 50% of the total world population, and that per capita emissions of the richer countries are much greater than those of the poorer ones.”

“How can we forget that Africa, home to more than half of the world’s poorest people, is responsible for a minimal portion of historic emissions?” The Pope also challenges of those who say efforts to mitigate climate change by reducing the use of fossil fuels “will lead to a reduction in the number of jobs.”

What is happening, in fact, is that “millions of people are losing their jobs due to different effects of climate change: rising sea levels, droughts and other phenomena affecting the planet have left many people adrift.” At the same time, “the transition to renewable forms of energy, properly managed” is capable of

“generating countless jobs in different sectors. This demands that politicians and business leaders should even now be concerning themselves with it.”

Indubitable human origins

“It is no longer possible to doubt the human – ‘anthropic’ – origin of climate change,” the Pope says.

“The concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere ... was stable until the nineteenth century ... In the past fifty years, this increase has accelerated significantly.”

At the same time, global temperature “has risen at an unprecedented speed, greater than any time over the past two thousand years. In this period, the trend was a warming of 0.15° C per decade, double that of the last 150 years ... At this rate, it is possible that in just ten years we will reach the recommended maximum global ceiling of 1.5° C.”

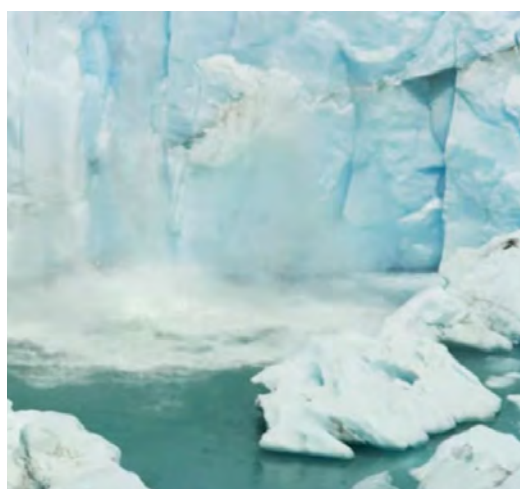
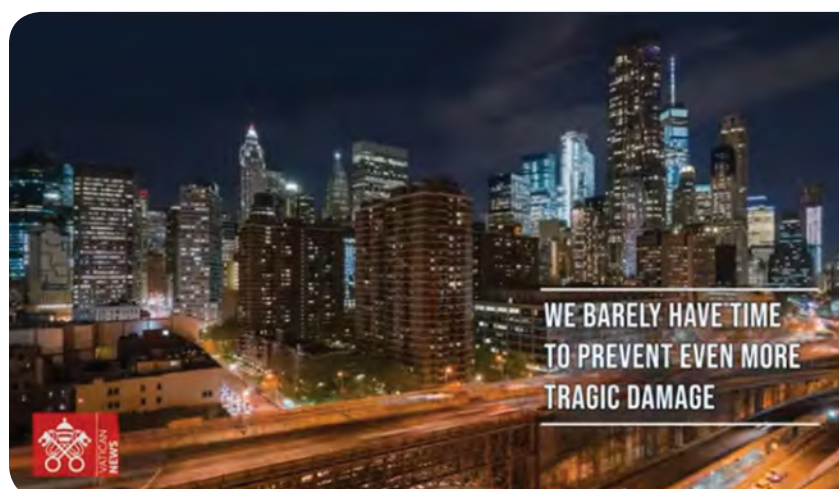
Speaking of those who play down climate change, he responds: “what we are presently experiencing is an unusual acceleration of warming, at such a speed that it will take only one generation – not centuries or millennia – in order to verify it.”

“Probably in a few years many populations will have to move their homes because of these facts.” Extreme colds, too, are “alternative expressions of the same cause.”

Not the fault of the poor

“In an attempt to simplify reality,” Pope Francis writes, “there are those who would place responsibility on the poor, since they have many children, and even attempt to resolve the problem by mutilating women in less developed countries.”

“As usual, it would seem that everything is the fault of the poor. Yet the reality is that a low, richer



This has resulted in acidification of the seas and the melting of glaciers. "It is not possible to conceal" the correlation between these events and the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, the Holy Father bitterly observes, "the climate crisis is not exactly a matter that interests the great economic powers, whose concern is with the greatest profit possible at minimal cost and in the shortest amount of time."

Barely in time to avoid more terrible damage

"I feel obliged," continues Pope Francis, "to make these clarifications, which may appear obvious, because of certain dismissive and scarcely reasonable opinions that I encounter, even within the Catholic Church."

Yet, "we can no longer doubt that the reason for the unusual rapidity of these dangerous changes is a fact that cannot be concealed: the enormous novelties that have to do with unchecked human intervention on nature in the past two centuries."

Unfortunately, some effects of this climate crisis are already irreversible, for at least several hundred years, and "the melting of the poles will not be able to be reversed for hundreds of years."

We are, then, barely in time to avoid even more terrible damage. The Pope writes that "certain apocalyptic diagnoses may well appear scarcely reasonable or insufficiently grounded", but "we cannot state with certainty" what is going to happen.

Therefore, "a broader perspective is urgently needed ... What is being asked of us is nothing other than a certain responsibility for the legacy we will leave behind, once we pass from this world."

Recalling the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, Pope Francis repeats that "Everything is connected and no one is saved alone."

The technocratic paradigm: the idea of a human being without limits

In the second chapter, the Pope speaks of the technocratic paradigm which consists in thinking that "reality, goodness and truth automatically flow from technological and economic power as such" and "monstrously feeds

upon itself," taking its inspiration from the idea of a human being without limitations.

"Never has humanity had such power over itself," the Holy Father continues, "yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used ... It is extremely risky for a small part of humanity to have it."

Unfortunately – as demonstrated, too, by the atomic bomb – "our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience."

The Pope reaffirms that "the world that surrounds us is not an object of exploitation, unbridled use and unlimited ambition." He reminds us that we, too, are part of nature, and that this "excludes the idea that the human being is extraneous, a foreign element capable only of harming the environment. Human beings must be recognized as a part of nature"; "human groupings have often 'created' an environment."

The ethical decadence of power: marketing and fake news

We have made "impressive and awesome technological advances, and we have not realized that at the same time we have turned into highly dangerous beings, capable of threatening the lives of many beings and our own survival."

"The ethical decadence of real power is disguised thanks to marketing and false information, useful tools in the hands of those with greater resources to employ them to shape public opinion."

Through these mechanisms, people in areas where polluting projects are to be implemented are deceived, convinced that economic and employment opportunities will be generated, but "they are not clearly told that the project will result in ... a desolate and less habitable landscape" and a clear decline in quality of life.

"The mentality of maximum gain at minimal cost, disguised in terms of reasonableness, progress and illusory promises, makes impossible any sincere concern for our common home and any real preoccupation about assisting the poor and the needy discarded by our society ... astounded and excited by the

promises of any number of false prophets, the poor themselves at times fall prey to the illusion of a world that is not being built for them."

There exists, then, "rule by those born with greater possibilities and advantages." Pope Francis invites these individuals to ask themselves, "with an eye to the children who will pay for the

harm done by their actions," what the meaning of their life is.

Weak international politics

In the next chapter of the Exhortation, the pope addresses the weakness of international politics, insisting on the need to foster "multilateral agreements between States."

He explains that "when we talk about the possibility of some form of world authority regulated by law, we need not necessarily think of a personal authority" but of "more effective world organizations, equipped with the power to provide for the global common good, the elimination of hunger and poverty and the sure defence of fundamental human rights".

These, he says, "must be endowed with real authority, in such a way as to provide for the attainment of certain essential goals."

Pope Francis deplores that "global crises are being squandered when they could be the occasions to bring about beneficial changes. This is what happened in the 2007-2008 financial crisis and again in the Covid-19 crisis", which led to "greater individualism, less integration and increased freedom for the truly powerful, who always find a way to escape unscathed."

"More than saving the old multilateralism, it appears that the current challenge is to reconfigure and recreate it, taking into account the new world situation," recognising that many civil society aggregations and organizations help compensate for the weaknesses of the international community. The Pope cites the Ottawa process on landmines, which, he says, shows how civil society creates efficient dynamics that the UN does not achieve.

Useless institutions that preserve the strongest

What Pope Francis is proposing is a "multilateralism 'from below' and not simply one determined by the elites of power ... It is to be hoped that this will happen with respect to the climate crisis. For this reason, I reiterate that "unless citizens control political power – national, regional and municipal – it will not be possible to control damage to the environment."

After reaffirming the primacy of the human person, Pope Francis explains – speaking of the defense of human dignity in all circumstances – that "It is not a matter of replacing politics, but of recognizing that the emerging forces are becoming increasingly relevant".



"The very fact," he says, "that answers to problems can come from any country, however little, ends up presenting multilateralism as an inevitable process."

Therefore, "a different framework for effective cooperation is required. It is not enough to think only of balances of power but also of the need to provide a response to new problems and to react with global mechanisms"; it is a matter of "establishing global and effective rules."

"All this presupposes the development of a new procedure for decision-making"; what is required are "spaces for conversation, consultation, arbitration, conflict resolution and supervision, and, in the end, a sort of increased "democratization" in the global context, so that the various situations can be expressed and included. It is no longer helpful for us to support institutions in order to preserve the rights of the more powerful without caring for those of all."

Climate conferences

In the following chapter, Francis describes the various climate conferences held to date.

He recalls the one in Paris, the agreement resulting from which came into effect in November 2016. Although "a binding agreement, not all its dispositions are obligations in the strict sense, and some of them leave ample room for discretion." Moreover, there are no sanctions for failure to meet obligations, and there is a lack of effective tools to enforce the agreement, as well as no real sanctions, and no effective tools to ensure compliance.

Additionally, "work is still under way to consolidate concrete procedures for monitoring and to facilitate general criteria for comparing the objectives of the different countries."

The Pope mentions his disappointment with the Madrid COP and recalls that the Glasgow COP revived the Paris goals, with many "recommendations", but "proposals tending to ensure a rapid and effective transition to alternative and less polluting forms of energy made no progress."



CLIMATE CHANGE // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9...

COP27, held in Egypt in 2022, was “one more example of the difficulty of negotiations”, and even though it “marked a step forward in consolidating a system for financing ‘loss and damage’ in countries most affected by climate disasters”, this remained “imprecise” on many points.

International negotiations, the Pope concludes, “cannot make significant progress due to positions taken by countries which place their national interests above the global common good. Those who will have to suffer the consequences of what we are trying to hide will not forget this failure of conscience and responsibility.”

What to expect from the Dubai COP?

Looking ahead to COP, Pope Francis writes that “to say that there is nothing to hope for would be suicidal, for it would mean exposing all humanity, especially the poorest, to the worst impacts of climate change.”

We must, says the Pope, “keep hoping that COP28 will allow for a decisive acceleration of energy transition, with effective commitments subject to ongoing monitoring. This Conference can represent a change of direction.”

The Holy Father observes that “the necessary transition towards clean energy sources such as wind and solar energy, and the abandonment of fossil fuels, is not progressing at the necessary speed. Consequently, whatever is being done risks being seen only as a ploy to distract attention.”

We cannot search merely for a technological solution to our problems: “we risk remaining trapped in the mindset of pasting and papering over cracks, while beneath the surface there



is a continuing deterioration to which we continue to contribute.”

No more ridiculing of environmental questions

Pope Francis asks us to put an end to “the irresponsible derision that would present this issue as something purely ecological, “green”, romantic, frequently subject to ridicule by economic interests.”

“Let us finally admit that it is a human and social problem on any number of levels. For this reason, it calls for involvement on the part of all.”

On the subject of protests by groups “negatively portrayed as radicalized”, Pope Francis affirms that “in reality they are filling a space left empty by society as a whole, which ought to exercise a healthy “pressure”, since every family ought to realize that the future of their children is at stake.”

“May those taking part in the Conference be strategists capable of considering the common good and the future of their children, more than the short-term interests of certain countries or businesses. In this way, may they demonstrate the nobility of politics and not its shame. To the powerful,

I can only repeat this question: “What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power, only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?”

A commitment that flows from the Christian faith

Finally, the Pope reminds his readers that the motivations for this commitment flow from the Christian

faith, encouraging “my brothers and sisters of other religions to do the same.”

“The Judaeo-Christian vision of the cosmos defends the unique and central value of the human being amid the marvellous concert of all God’s creatures,” but “as part of the universe, all of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal

family, a sublime communion which fills us with a sacred, affectionate and humble respect.”

“This is not a product of our own will; its origin lies elsewhere, in the depths of our being, since God has joined us so closely to the world around us.”

What is important, Pope Francis writes, is to remember that “there are no lasting changes without cultural changes, without a maturing of lifestyles and convictions within societies, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes.”

“Efforts by households to reduce pollution and waste, and to consume with prudence, are creating a new culture. The mere fact that personal, family and community habits are changing is ... helping to bring about large processes of transformation rising from deep within society.”

The Holy Father ends his Exhortation with a reminder that “emissions per individual in the United States are about two times greater than those of individuals living in China, and about seven times greater than the average of the poorest countries.”

He goes on to affirm that “a broad change in the irresponsible lifestyle connected with the Western model would have a significant long-term impact. As a result, along with indispensable political decisions, we would be making progress along the way to genuine care for one another.” ©VN

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[4] Cf. INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC), *Climate Change 2021, The Physical Science Basis*, Cambridge and New York, 2021, B.2.2.
[5] Cf. ID., *Climate Change 2023, Synthesis Report, Summary for Policymakers*, B.3.2. For the 2023 Report, see https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf.
[6] Cf. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM, *The Emissions Gap Report 2022*: <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2022>.
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[8] Cf. IPCC, *Climate Change 2023, Synthesis Report, Summary for Policymakers*, A.1.3.
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[13] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), 101: AAS 107 (2015), 887.
[14] *Ibid.*, 105: AAS 107 (2015), 889.
[15] *Ibid.*, 106: AAS 107 (2015), 890.
[16] *Ibid.*, 104: AAS 107 (2015), 888-889.
[17] *Ibid.*, 105: AAS 107 (2015), 889.
[18] *Ibid.*, 139: AAS 107 (2015), 903.
[19] *Ibid.*, 220: AAS 107 (2015), 934.
[20] Cf. S. SÖRLIN-P. WARDE, “*Making the Environment Historical. An Introduction*”, in S. SÖRLIN-P. WARDE, eds., *Nature’s End: History and the Environment*, Basingstoke-New York, 2009, 1-23.
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[22] Cf. *War, Progress and the End of History, Including a Short Story of the Anti-Christ. Three Discussions by Vladimir Soloviev*, London, 1915, p. 197.
[23] Cf. SAINT PAUL VI, *Address to FAO on its 25th Anniversary* (16 November 1970), 4: AAS 62 (1970), 833.
[24] Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* (3 October 2020), 11: AAS 112 (2020), 972.
[25] *Ibid.*, 174: AAS 112 (2020), 1030.
[26] *Ibid.*, 172: AAS 112 (2020), 1029.
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] Cf. *ibid.*, 170: AAS 112 (2020), 1029.
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] *Ibid.*, 175: AAS 112 (2020), 1031.
[31] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), 179: AAS 107 (2015), 918.
[32] *Ibid.*, 167: AAS 107 (2015), 914.
[33] *Ibid.*, 169: AAS 107 (2015), 915.
[34] *Ibid.*, 111: AAS 107 (2015), 982.
[35] *Ibid.*, 57: AAS 107 (2015), 870.
[36] *Ibid.*, 68: AAS 107 (2015), 874.
[37] *Ibid.*, 86: AAS 107 (2015), 881.
[38] *Ibid.*, 97: AAS 107 (2015), 886.
[39] *Ibid.*, 100: AAS 197 (2015), 887.
[40] *Ibid.*, 233: AAS 107 (2015), 938.
[41] Cf. D. J. HARAWAY, *When Species Meet*, Minneapolis, 2008, pp. 205-249.
[42] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), 89: AAS 107 (2015), 883.
[43] Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 215: AAS 105 (2013), 1109.
[44] Cf. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM, *The Emissions Gap Report 2022*: <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2022>.

GLAD YOU ASKED!
a new column by Fr. Belken

-Why do we do that?
-What does the Church teach on this subject?
-Transubstanti...what?

Ask me anything...

submit questions to:
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The Mirror

DURING THIS EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL, FR. DAVID COON OFFERS THE FOLLOWING BRIEF REFLECTION FOR CLERGY AND PARISHES:

“The happiness you are seeking, the happiness you have a right to enjoy has a Name and a face: It is Jesus of Nazareth, hidden in the Eucharist.”

-POPE BENEDICT XVI

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BLESSING OF PETS IN WEST PLAINS



As did many of our parish families, on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Oct. 4, Fr. Maurice Chukwukere blessed pets at St. Mary Catholic Church, West Plains. (Photo by Ann Hall/The Mirror)

Special Learners Parish School of Religion Program

By Paula Wright Springfield

St. Agnes Cathedral, Springfield, is currently offering a Special Learners School of Religion class. Leading the instruction is Genevieve Otradovec, a certified Special Education teacher, along with substitute teacher Catherine Shipman, a certified Speech Pathologist. The class is structured to prepare students for the reception of the sacraments and the curriculum is in accordance with diocesan recommendations.

Families from other parishes are welcome to participate in the class. The Special Learners PSR Class is held in St. Agnes Cathedral on Sunday mornings from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

"Families of children with special needs want them to be part of the Church and this class enables these students to prepare for the sacraments and learn about the Catholic faith," shared Iris Bounds, the Faith Formation Coordinator for St. Agnes Cathedral.

Materials used in class are very hands-on and encourage personal interaction which supports learning. The program utilizes the *Adaptive First Eucharist Preparation Kit* from Loyola Press, along with other hands-on instructional materials to include kits from Wee Believers.

"The special learners PSR Class was designed to allow students of all ages access to religious education in a way that is more hands-on," said Genevieve Otradovec, Special Learners PSR teacher. "Each student learns in different ways and understands at differing levels. My goal has always been to allow my class the opportunity to have access to their sacraments and be active, participating members of our religious family."

"We focus heavily on understanding the order of the Mass, religious items, Old Testament, and Jesus' birth and death," Otradovec said.



"I am honored to work with my students each Sunday. They are warm, loving, and always excited to learn something new," Otradovec said. "Each student teaches me something new about themselves and about our faith. There is something incredibly special about seeing our faith through their eyes and being able to watch them experience the Mass, being Catholic, and reaching an understanding of what all that means."

Anyone who would like to enroll their child in the program at St. Agnes Cathedral or is interested in ideas to begin a program in their parish, may call the parish office at (417) 831-3565. ©TM

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St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2023
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Holy Trinity Parish, Springfield



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601 S. Jefferson, Springfield/The Catholic Center Gym

Saturday, November 4, 9:00am-4:00pm

Sunday, November 5, 8:30am-1:00pm

FEATURING: Ruth Apollonia, author of the *Annabelle of Anchony* series, and John Carpenter, author of *Be Not Afraid* and *He Is Alive: Science Finds Jesus*

Family photos • Mexican sweets • Handmade candles • Rag rugs
Paper crafts • Wooden crafts • Scentsy • Jewelry • Baked goods



Messenger

A quarterly publication by the Missouri Catholic Conference - The public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Missouri.

The Eucharist: The Real & True Presence of Jesus Christ on Earth

The Catholic Mass sets itself apart from other Christian worship services through the sacrament of the Eucharist. Though many Protestant gatherings feature a "Lord's Supper," the Mass contrasts all Protestant sects through the Church's teaching on the Real Presence of Christ's Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity present in the Holy Eucharist under the form of bread and wine. Throughout the Church's 2000-year history this teaching has remained constant. With the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress just around the corner, now is an excellent time to reacquaint oneself with the Church Fathers' writings on the Eucharist and the Real Presence.

Christ explained the nature of the Eucharist while speaking to the Israelites, saying "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world... Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." Catholic theologians throughout history have reinforced Our Lord's teaching that He is truly present in the Eucharist.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, a disciple of the Apostle, St. John the Evangelist, was consecrated a bishop by St. Peter, the first Pope. He was a child at the time of Christ's crucifixion and grew to the age of maturity as the 12 Apostles were preaching the gospel. In AD 110, he wrote:

"I have no taste for corruptible food nor for the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ... and for drink I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible... Take note of those who hold heterodox opinions on the grace of Jesus Christ which has come to us, and see how contrary their opinions are to the mind of God... They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, flesh which suffered for our sins and which that Father, in his goodness, raised up again. They who deny the gift of God are perishing in their disputes." (Letters to the Romans, Smyrnaeans.)

Another successor of St. John was St. Irenaeus, who wrote extensively about the Real Presence in the Eucharist in a series of letters to confront the errors of the Gnostic heresy. Gnosticism promoted the belief that there were two Gods: a higher God of pure essence and love which was the true God, and a lower God, who was the creator. Gnostics also believed that physical matter (i.e. the human body) was evil. Therefore, Jesus was not incarnated into a human body, but only had



Bishop Rice carries the monstrance with the holy Eucharist during Marian Days.
Photo courtesy of Bruce Stidham/The Mirror

the appearance of a human body in order to communicate with humanity. As a result, in Gnosticism, since Jesus did not have a real human body, He could not have been crucified and died on the cross. During his time as the bishop of Lyon in Roman Gaul, Irenaeus wrote that the Real Presence in the Eucharist demonstrates Christ's Divine Nature.

"He has declared the cup, a part of creation, to be his own blood, from which he causes our blood to flow; and the bread, a part of creation, he has established as his own body, from which he gives increase unto our bodies. When, therefore, the mixed cup [wine and water] and the baked bread receives the Word of God and becomes the Eucharist, the body of Christ, and from these the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God, which is eternal life—flesh which is nourished

by the body and blood of the Lord, and is in fact a member of him?"
Against Heresies, AD 189.)

Moving beyond individual Church theologians, the Church ecumenical councils have time and again affirmed the Real Presence of the Eucharist. In its refutation of the Nestorian heresy which believes that Christ was simply a man inspired by God but not God incarnate. The Council of Ephesus in 431 AD clarified that at every mass, the faithful receive the Eucharist, "not merely common flesh... but as truly the life-giving and very flesh of the Word himself."

In response to the onset of the Lutheran Heresy, the 1551 Council of Trent affirmed the true nature of Holy Communion, restating that within the sacrament, "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained." The Catholic Church of today has

taken that passage from Trent and recorded it within the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Section 1374), thus maintaining the link the Church has held from its outset to the present day.

Despite consistently teaching belief in the Real Presence of the Eucharist for millennia, the Church has seen a steady decline in belief in the Real Presence among its Catholic faithful. A 2019 Pew Research poll found that among self-identified Catholics, only 31% believe that the Holy Eucharist is transubstantiated – that is, is actually Christ's body, blood, soul, and divinity under the forms of bread and wine. In addition to asking Catholics what they believe about the Eucharist, the survey also included a question that tested whether Catholics actually had knowledge of what the Church teaches on the subject. Most Catholics who believe that the bread and wine are symbolic do not know that the Church holds that transubstantiation occurs. Overall, 43% of Catholics

believe both that the bread and wine are symbolic and that this is the position of the Church. A further one-in-five Catholics (22%) reject the idea of transubstantiation, even though they know the Church's teaching. Even among Catholics who attended weekly mass, only 67% responded that they believed in the Real Presence.

To help explain and meditate upon the mysteries of the Holy Eucharist, the Church plans to bring the National Eucharistic Congress back to the United States for the first time in 83 years. The first International Eucharistic Congress owed its inspiration to Bishop Gaston de Ségur, and was held at Lille, France on June 21, 1881. From that event and its subsequent International Eucharistic Conferences sprang forth the National Eucharistic Congress, which has met in the United States a total of nine times. To facilitate ease of travel, most of America's National



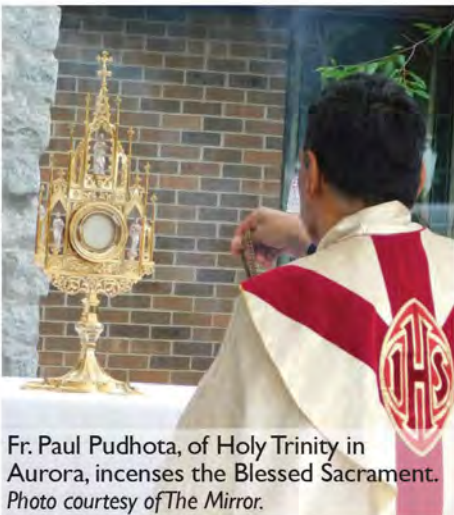
The Very Rev. Shoby Chettiyath, V.G., pastor of St. Francis of Assisi in Nixa, leads the Eucharistic Procession.

Photo courtesy of The Mirror.

Eucharistic Conferences have been hosted by cities in the Midwest, including the 1901 conference in St. Louis, Missouri. The last Eucharistic Congress held in the United States was the International Eucharistic Congress in 1976 which took place in Philadelphia. The upcoming 2024 conference is scheduled to take place in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Despite the frequency of these conferences near the beginning of its history, the 2024 National Eucharistic Conference will be America's first Eucharistic Conference in 83 years, and will culminate in a five-day event at Lucas Oil Stadium where organizers expect tens of thousands of pilgrims to be in attendance. After the commencement ceremony on the evening of the first day, each subsequent day of the conference will begin with morning mass and catechetical sessions, leading into afternoon breakout sessions, followed by dinner and general session speakers in the evening.

Event organizers have stated they want Catholics from all walks of life present at the conference in order to demonstrate the true universality of our Church community. Though the Lucas Oil venue is large, tickets are selling fast, so the Eucharistic Congress recommends purchasing individual or group tickets at their website, eucharisticcongress.org, well in advance. Looking beyond the Eucharistic Congress, if you want to be involved in promulgating belief in the Real Presence, you can discuss both the sacrament and the Church's history among your friends, family, or religious peers. Even simple conversations can cause others to understand the sacraments in a way they never have before,



Fr. Paul Pudhota, of Holy Trinity in Aurora, incenses the Blessed Sacrament. Photo courtesy of The Mirror.



NATIONAL Eucharistic Congress

THE FIRST NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS IN 83 YEARS

This is a pivotal moment in both American history and the legacy of the Catholic Church. We are expecting tens of thousands of pilgrims—but space is limited. Jesus Christ will be there. Will you?



“This Is My Body”

THE SHOCKING TRUTH

Jesus said, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.” This teaching was so shocking that many of his followers left at that moment! Jesus did not call them back to clarify, because he knew they understood correctly. He was actually telling them to eat his flesh and drink his blood.

As Catholics, we believe Jesus’ words literally, not symbolically. The substance of the bread and wine transform into the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ at every Mass. We call this miracle the Eucharist.



Scan to explore Church teaching on the Eucharist!

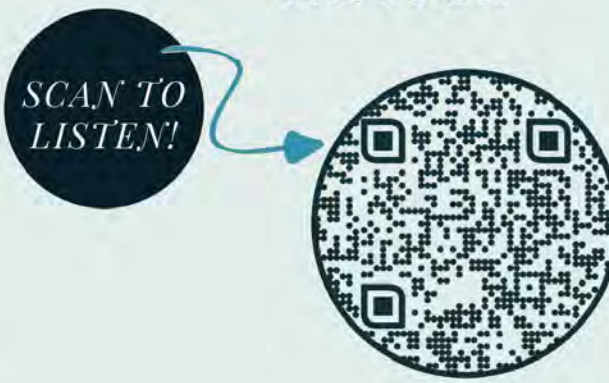
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MCC 2023 Virtual Annual Assembly

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The Missouri Catholic Conference is once again preparing to release a collection of podcasts this fall as part of its Virtual Annual Assembly. MCC hosts will sit down with speakers from across our state and nation to produce a collection of episodes focused on issues of interest and concern to Catholics. We hope you find these podcasts enlightening, challenging, and informative, and we encourage you to share your favorite episodes with family, friends, and fellow parish members. We are pleased to begin with a video message from Archbishop Rozanski of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, who reflects on these ideas and the call for us to engage in them.



MCC Welcomes (Back!) New Communications Director



Kathleen Lavery returns to the Missouri Catholic Conference as the Communications Director beginning October 2, 2023. She previously was the MCC's Communications Director from 2004 - 2009. Since that time, she served as the Publications Manager at the Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association and was the Communications/Outreach Coordinator at the Proto-Cathedral of St. Peter in Jefferson City, Missouri. She has more than 25 years of experience in Communications and Marketing. She holds an M.F.A. from Yale University School of Drama in Stage Management. Any questions, collaborative opportunities or ideas for MCC's publications can be sent to communications@mocatholic.org.



Join the Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network! (MOCAN)

Join the 10,000 + Catholic Missourians who make up the team of advocates who help the Catholic voice ring through the halls of the Missouri State Capitol. If you want to stay updated on pro-life legislation — or any of the many other legislative priorities the MCC advocates for — you will not want to miss the opportunity to join MOCAN.

If you're already a member, encourage your family, friends, and fellow parishioners to join! As MOCAN grows, so does the Catholic voice in Missouri's Capitol. Again: Visit mocatholic.org, send us an email at mocatholic@mocatholic.org, or text MOCAN to 50457 to join.

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