By Paula Wright  
Branson, MO

World Youth Day (WYD) is a worldwide encounter with the Pope celebrated around every three years in a different country. This year, 34 attendees from the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau will head to Lisbon, Portugal, Aug. 1 - Aug. 6, 2023, to embark with other young people in the festive gathering, focused on Jesus Christ, to share and deepen their faith and realize the universality of the Catholic Church. World Youth Day gives them the opportunity to share hope, prayer, and sacraments together. This year, over 400,000 youth from 183 countries have registered to attend.

Locally, participants will hail from Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Branson; St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Ozark; Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau; St. Henry Parish, Charleston; St. Agnes Cathedral, Springfield; St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, El Dorado Springs; St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Joplin; and St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau.

Additionally, a couple of attendees will join the group from the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Also joining the youth and their sponsors will be Sikeston’s Fr. Colby Elbert, who will attend as the group Chaplain; Lynn Melendez, MPS, Director of Evangelization, Family Life, and Youth Formation for the diocese; and her husband, world-renown singer and performer, Tony Melendez.

The diocesan WYD group will depart on July 26, flying from the St. Louis airport to Lisbon and spend two nights in Fatima close to the shrine. They will tour Fatima and have a stop at The Church of the Holy Miracle, also known as St. Stephen Church, located in the historic center of Santarém. Founded in the 13th century, the church was renamed The Church of the Holy Miracle after the Eucharistic miracle that occurred in 1266. The miraculous host remains stored in the temple and is a veneration pilgrimage for many.

Local pilgrims will ride by bus to the WYD festival location and will be ready for opening day on Aug. 1. The youth festival will include plays, adoration, confession, “Vocation Village,” music, and much more throughout the city. On the evening of Thu., Aug. 3, 86-year-old Pope Francis will welcome and celebrate Mass with all the attendees, after hearing confessions. On Fri., Aug. 4, the pope will lead all participants in praying the Stations of the Cross. Tony Melendez will also have a performance in the Youth Village on Aug. 4. He and seven or eight youth and young adults will be helping to lead various catechetical sessions on Wed., Thu., and Fri. Pilgrims will walk to the vigil site on Sat., Aug. 5, where they will spend the night outdoors.

“Everyone is assigned an area, but we try to get there early to claim a spot because space is limited,” said Lynn Melendez. “It is a lot of walking; you just have to grab your backpack and head out. It’s a wonderful event, and a great opportunity to engage with others from many different countries. Everyone exchanges stickers (highlighting where they are from) with one another to remember the time spent together.”

Pope Francis will again hear confessions and lead the Saturday prayer vigil. Then, everyone sleeps under the stars. On Sunday morning, Aug. 6, the pope celebrates the closing Mass, and then the group will walk back to their hotel.

“This will be the ninth or 10th World Youth Day event I have attended,” Lynn Melendez said. “Tony has been to each of the WYDs since 1991, except for the one held in Panama. They are a wonderful experience for those that attend. It is a long day, walking at least five miles a day because there are too many people for public transportation to support.

“But Saturday night, when the Monstrance comes out, candles are passed out, and all the youth drop to their knees...it is just beautiful,” said Lynn Melendez. ©TM
The Mirror recreates the wheel. Maybe we need to good news is that we do not have to Parish Pastoral Council Norms, the ask every parish to implement the new Springfield-Cape Girardeau and as I I recently studied the results of a study 'NEW' EVANGELIZATION in the city streets.

"In these days, it is our task to go to the foot of the Cross and stay with Jesus and Mary." T his verse was at the end of a small article from the Herald of the Gospel magazine, June 2023 edition. In the midst of all the various articles there was a little half-page notice entitled "Revival of the Faith in Berlin." It was a mere two columns, but it was the title and the photo of Adoration that caught my attention. The article stated that Berlin is known as the "atheist capital of Europe." Yet, through innovative evangelization, the faith is making inroads and growing.

In 2006, the Archdiocese of Berlin was going through a serious financial crisis when the parishioners of St. Clement Parish decided to hold perpetual Eucharistic Adoration: 24 hours a day, perhaps the only one in Berlin. What happened? The article says, "Large numbers of the faithful attended." Along with Adoration, they focused on doctrinal formation, Marian devotion, and the recitation of the rosary in the city streets.

‘NEW’ EVANGELIZATION I recently studied the results of a study As we strive to renew the vitality of our parishes here in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau and as I ask every parish to implement the new Parish Pastoral Council Norms, the good news is that we do not have to recreate the wheel. Maybe we need to revitalize some things that fell by the wayside while pondering new ways to reach out to others. The call of the New Evangelization is as old as the Gospel itself, when Our Lord commanded us to go out and to teach all nations. We must avoid any type of novelty or feel the need for relevance when it comes to passing on the faith. As we move forward, moving from "maintenance to mission," could it be that we just simply need to rediscover what we abandoned— for whatever reason—as a result of the aftermath of some of the changes that have occurred in the Church? The article I mentioned quoted a priest, who said, "Those faithful to Christ are surrounded by others who say we must abandon what Jesus taught us and what we have done for 2,000 years, and to update it for the 21st century." And then he offered the classic line I quoted above: "In these days, it is our task to go to the foot of the Cross and stay with Jesus and Mary." Being within the shadow of the Cross is a privileged place to be. Padre Pio gives a beautiful insight: "Beneath the Cross one learns to love." It may be some tragedy, some illness, or other devastation that brings us to the foot of the Cross. However, when we choose to stay at the foot of the Cross, uniting ourselves to Christ, we discover a God of love. The cross does not take away human suffering but rather gives it a deep meaning. The cross reminds us that God loves us so much that he held nothing back in giving us His Son. At weddings, I typically highlight the cross as a visual definition of how far love should go in married life—total love, unconditional love, a love whereby the spouse instinctively knows that he or she would lay down his or her life for the other. Whatever it is that brings us to the foot of the Cross, it becomes an opportunity for us to unite ourselves more intimately to Christ and it can become a blessing. If not, the tragedies or illnesses of life can pull us away from faith and lead us to question the existence of a loving God. The events of life can make us either "bitter or better." And when we choose the better, that means we are choosing to stand at the foot of the cross, where Padre Pio proclaims, "Beneath the cross one learns to love." Maybe Padre Pio learned that truth from the sufferings he had to endure in his own life. It can be a difficult lesson to learn, but, at the same time, so life giving.

GOD BLESS AMERICA The month of July is filled with beautiful feasts; St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Maria Goretti, St. Henry, St. Benedict, St. Kateri Tekakwitha St. Mary Magdalene, St. Ignatius of Loyola, and the Feast of Saints Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Of special concern is the Feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mother, and the grandparents of Jesus. “Grandparenting,” if that is a word, has changed over the past 50 years. For whatever reason, many grandparents today find themselves raising grandchildren. Special thanks to grandparents for all that they do. The Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, which, since it fell on a Sunday this year (July 16), was not celebrated. Still, praying the rosary at any time during July, would be a beautiful way to ask for the intercession of Our Lady on our country as we celebrate our independence. God Bless America!

O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment

O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine." 40

15TH ANNIVERSARY

FR. MAURICE CHUKWUKERE

Fr. Maurice Chukwukere will celebrate the 15th anniversary of his priesthood ordination on August 23. Fr. Chukwukere is Pastor of St. Mary Parish, West Plains; Sacred Heart Mission Church, Thayer, and is Administrator of St. Joseph Mission Church, White Church.

Happy Anniversary, Father Chukwukere!

COLUMNS

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

ANOTHER WALK THROUGH: ‘WALKING TOGETHER’
by Bishop Emeritus John J. Leibrecht

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.

July 21, 1989 A man was extolling what he considered the advantages of living in a small town. “For instance,” he said, “you never have to use your car’s turn signal because everybody knows where you are going.”

August 18, 1989 I was told at the Roaring River campsite that, immediately after Mass, we should go to the closing flag ceremony. Not knowing exactly where it would be held, I asked a little girl: “Where is the flag ceremony?” She told me: “At the flagpole.”

September 1, 1989 Even the downpour of rain couldn’t dampen the spirits of the people of St. Mary Parish at the anniversary celebration. Going out into the rain after Mass, one woman said to me, “Bishop, maybe God misunderstood when we prayed ‘may thy reign be eternal.’"
“En estos días, es nuestra tarea ir al pie de la Cruz y permanecer con Jesús y María”

E ste versículo estaba al final de un pequeño artículo de la revista Heraldos del Evangelio, edición de junio de 2023. En medio de los diversos artículos había una pequeña noticia de media página titulada “Renacimiento de la fe en Berlín”. Eran sólo dos columnas, pero lo que me llamó la atención fue el título y la foto de la Adoración. El artículo afirmaba que Berlín es conocida como la “capital atea de Europa”. Sin embargo, gracias a una revista católica, en 2006 la Arquidiócesis de Berlín atravesó una grave crisis financiera cuando los feligreses de la Parroquia San Clemente decidieron celebrar la Adoración Eucarística perpetua: 24 horas al día, quizás la única en Berlín. ¿Qué ocurrió? El artículo dice: “Asistió a un gran número de fieles”. Junto con la Adoración, se centraron en la formación doctrinal, la devoción mariana y el rezo del rosario por las calles de la ciudad.

LA “NUEVA” EVANGELIZACIÓN
Mientras nos esforzamos por renovar la vitalidad de nuestras parroquias aquí, en la Diócesis de Springfield-Cape Girardeau, y mientras pido a todos las parroquias que apliquen las nuevas Normas del Consejo Pastoral Parroquial, la buena noticia es que no tenemos que reinventar la rueda. Tal vez necesitamos revitalizar algunas cosas que se quedaron en el camino mientras reflexionamos sobre nuevas formas de llegar a los demás. La llamada de la Nueva Evangelización es tan antigua como el Evangelio mismo, cuando Nuestro Señor nos ordenó salir y enseñar a todos los pueblos. Debemos evitar cualquier tipo de novedad o sentir la necesidad de relevancia a la hora de transmitir la fe. A medida que avanzamos, pasando del “mantenimiento a la misión”, ¿podría ser que simplemente necesitemos redescubrir lo que abandonamos? (por la razón que sea) como resultado de las secuelas de algunos de los cambios que se han producido en la Iglesia?

El artículo que mencioné citaba a un sacerdote que decía: “Los fieles a Cristo están rodeados de otros que dicen que debemos abandonar lo que Jesús nos enseñó y lo que hemos hecho durante 2000 años, y actualizarlo para el siglo XXI”. Y luego pronunció la clásica frase que cité antes: “En estos días, es nuestra tarea ir al pie de la Cruz y permanecer con Jesús y María”. Estar a la sombra de la Cruz es un lugar privilegiado. El Padre Pío ofrece una hermosa visión: “Bajo la Cruz se aprende a amar”. Puede ser alguna tragedia, alguna enfermedad u otra devastación lo que nos lleve al pie de la Cruz. Sin embargo, cuando elegimos permanecer al pie de la Cruz, uníndonos a Cristo, descubrimos a un Dios de amor. La Cruz no quita el sufrimiento humano, sino que le da un sentido profundo. La cruz nos recuerda que Dios nos ama tanto que no se guardó nada al darnos a Su hijo. En las bodas, suelo destacar la cruz como definición visual de hasta dónde debe llegar el amor en la vida matrimonial: amor total, amor incondicional, un amor por el que el cónyuge sabe instintivamente que dará su vida por el otro. Sea lo que sea lo que nos lleve al pie de la Cruz, se convierte en una oportunidad para unirnos más íntimamente a Cristo y puede convertirse en una bendición. Si no, las tragedias o enfermedades de la vida pueden apartarnos de la fe y llevarnos a cuestionar la existencia de un Dios amoroso. Los acontecimientos de la vida pueden “amargarnos o hacernos mejores”. Y cuando elegimos hacernos mejores, eso significa que estamos eligiendo estar al pie de la Cruz, donde el Padre Pío proclama: “Bajo la cruz se aprende a amar”. Quizás el Padre Pío aprendió esa verdad de los sufrimientos que tuvo que soportar en su propia vida. Puede ser una lección difícil de aprender, pero, al mismo tiempo, muy vivificante.

DIOS BENDIGA A AMÉRICA
El mes de julio está lleno de hermosas celebraciones: santo Tomás Apóstol, santa María Goretti, san Enrique, san Benito, santa Kateri Tekakwitha, santa María Magdalena, san Ignacio de Loyola y la Fiesta de los santos Marta, María y Lázaro. De especial interés es la Fiesta de los santos Joaquín y Ana, padres de la Santísima Virgen Madre y abuelos de Jesús. “Ser abuelo” ha cambiado en los últimos 50 años. Por la razón que sea, muchos abuelos se encuentran hoy criando nietos. Un agradecimiento especial a los abuelos por todo lo que hacen. La Fiesta de Nuestra Señora del Carmen, que este año, al caer en domingo (16 de julio), no se celebró. Aun así, rezar el rosario en cualquier momento durante el mes de julio, sería una hermosa manera de pedir la intercesión de Nuestra Señora sobre nuestro país mientras celebramos nuestra independencia. ¡Dios bendiga a América!

“So, vamos a celebrar la semana de la independencia. ¡Dios bendiga a América!”

VEN Y VERÁS
Obispo Edward M. Rice

MONK
Cistercian

CONTEMPLATIVE
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A GRATEFUL CHURCH
celebrates and recognizes the following ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES in August:

PRIESTS:
Rev. Maurice Chukwukere, Aug. 23, 15 yrs.
Rev. Francisco ‘Paco’ Gordillo, Aug. 5, 8 yrs.

DEACON:
Deacon Michael Fritz, Aug. 12, 6 yrs.
Deacon James Walter, Aug. 12, 6 yrs.

THE MIRROR 3 The Mirro July 21, 2023
During the national three-year Eucharistic Revival, The Very Rev. Shoby Chettiyath, V.G., the diocesan Vicar General, will write a series of articles exploring the various Eucharistic Miracles of the World. A companion for readers in this series is, “The Eucharistic Miracles of the World,” an international exhibition designed and created by Blessed Carlo Acutis, the Servant of God. All rights reserved; used with permission. More information may be found at http://www.miracoleucaristici.org/en/liste/list.html.

Jesus said: “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. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

This Eucharistic Miracle occurred during the midnight Mass of December 8, 1991, at the Marian Shrine of Finca Betania in Cúa, Venezuela.

Father Otty, Chaplain of the Shrine, thus describes the event: “After having consumed one of the pieces of the large Host which I had divided into four parts, I returned them to the paten. A little later I looked down towards the paten and I could not believe what I saw: one of the pieces of the Host that I divided showed a red spot and from It a red substance began to emanate, similar to the manner in which blood escapes from a wound. After Mass, I took the Host and preserved It safely in the sacristy for posterity. I immediately verified that the blood of the priest did not have wounds from which the blood present in the Host could have flowed. Besides, from the analyses, the result concluded that the blood of the priest did not match the one of the Particle. The Host of the Miracle was subjected to some special studies, requested by the then Bishop of Los Teques, H. E. Most Reverend Pio Bello Ricardo, and the results confirmed that the blood was human blood of type AB positive which matches the one found in the cloth of the Shroud of Turin and in the Host of the Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano, that occurred in Italy in 1765 and analyzed by more than 500 commissions of the World Health Organization. Since then the Host has been an object of veneration and devotion on the part of thousands of pilgrims coming not only from Venezuela but from the whole world. It is possible to go to the convent of the Augustinian Recollects of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Los Teques to see the miraculous Host all the days of the year at any hour in their chapel devoted to Perpetual Adoration. (http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharist/mir/english_pdf/Betania.pdf).

Faith, of course, should not be based on miracles alone. Several of the recorded miracles are very old, and it may be possible to dismiss them. There is no doubt, though, that reports of these miracles have strengthened the faith of many in the instructions given by Christ and provided avenues for contemplation of the miracle that takes place at each Mass. When you see the Eucharist at the Mass, know of Jesus’ love for you: A love so great that he humbled himself to come to you in a piece of bread. Think about that the next time you witness the Consecration during the Mass. It is a beautiful and humbling moment.


**ADULT FAITH**

**EUCHARISTIC MIRACLE OF Betania Venezuela, Dec. 8, 1991**

**115TH ANNUAL Glennonville Picnic**

SAT., JULY 29, 2023

- Country Dinner with Fried Chicken, BBQ Pork, Homemade Desserts, Drinks and all the trimmings! **SERVING TIME: 11 am – 2 pm**
- Adults $15 | Children (6-12) $8.00
- Heartland Beauty Pageant
- Horseshoe & Cornhole Tournament
- Pedal Tractor Races
- Game Stand
- Baby Picture Contest
- Fish Pond
- Spin-the-Wheel
- Grab Bags
- Old Fashioned Picnic Races

**ALUMNI GATHERING**

FRI., JULY 28, 6:00 PM
at the KC Hall

Sponsored by St. Teresa Catholic Church
(573) 328-4544

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YOU BELONG HERE. Career Event

July 26 | 10 am-2 pm

Saint Francis Clinic
Poplar Bluff

sfmc.net/career-event
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Belleville, IL—July 28 through August 5, the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows celebrates the 80th Annual Healing and Hope Novena to Our Lady of the Snows, with nightly Masses at 7:30 p.m., in the Church of Our Lady of the Snows. We invite you to join us for nine evenings of Masses in which we will be guided by the ancient Marian hymn, “Mary the Dawn.” In its beautiful verses, we are reminded that Mary takes care of all our concerns by taking them to her Son, our Hope, and our Salvation. Information and registration is available at https://snows.org or call the Shrine at (618) 394-6276.

Belleville, IL—The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows will present the annual, “When Mental Illness Hits Home,” conference on Fri., Aug. 25 at the Shrine Visitors Center, focusing on “Cultivating Family Resilience: Enhancing Well-Being through Compassion, Communication, and Connection.” This conference is for friends and family members who journey with people with mental illness and for professions in the mental health field. Fee is $40 per person, with lunch included. Information and online registration is available at https://snows.org/ministries/spiritual-programs/ or call the Shrine at (618) 394-6281.

Cape Girardeau—Catholic Social Ministries Food Pantry will have a Yard Sale, Thu., July 27, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri., July 28, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sat., July 29, 7 a.m.-noon, in the gym of St. Mary Catholic Church. On Saturday, fill a bag with clothes for $1 while other items will be half-off. Items may be dropped off Mon., July 24-Wed., July 26, at the school gym. All proceeds will benefit the Catholic Food Pantry.

Diocesan wide—SAVE THE DATE! Diocesan Evangelization and Discipleship Summit, a day of prayer, formation, and inspiration, featuring Bishop Edward Rice, Jason Simon (President of Evangelical Catholic), and more, will be held Sat., Oct. 28, in Cape Girardeau, and Sat., Nov. 4, in Springfield.

Glennonville—The Glennonville Picnic will be held Sat., July 29 at Glennonville Park. An Old-Fashioned Country Dinner will be served from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., featuring southern fried chicken, bbq pork, potatoes, gravy, cole slaw, corn, green beans, and homemade desserts. Cost: adults-$15; children, ages 6-12-$8. Other activities include Miss Heartland Pageants, Horseshoe Tournament, games and grab bags for children, and old-fashioned picnic races.

Lebanon—St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, located at 345 Grand Ave, will have its annual Rummage Sale, Fri., Aug. 4, 7 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sat., Aug. 5, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., inside the air-conditioned parish hall located at 1796 N State Highway NN. Over 500 parish families with lots of donations! Saturday is bag day/half-price day. Something for everyone!

Ozark—St. Joseph the Worker Parish Council of Catholic Women will have its annual PCCW Garage Sale, Fri., Aug. 4, 7 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sat., Aug. 5, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., inside the air-conditioned parish hall located at 125 W Main St. Help for the office of this parish.

Scott City—St. Joseph School and St. Joseph CCW will have a Rummage Sale Thu., Aug. 10, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; Fri., Aug. 11, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; and Sat., Aug. 12, 7 a.m.-Noon, at the Scott City Knights of Columbus Hall, located at 28745 US Hwy 61.

Springfield—Holy Trinity CCW is seeking vendors for the annual Fall Bazaar which will be held Sat., Nov. 11, and Sun., Nov. 12. Vendors interested in participating should contact Tina Kile, Bazaar Chair, by Wed., Aug. 30. For more information or a vendor application, please contact Tina at (417) 827-3165 or ttile5401@gmail.com.

Springfield—Springfield Area Perpetual Adoration, hosted at Holy Trinity Chapel, has an urgent need of Adorers on Wednesdays, 2 a.m. & 3 a.m. Join our substitute list to experience the peace of adoration. For more information or to sign up, please contact Marilyn Gibson at (417) 224-4043.

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

Knights provide dinner for Camp Carlo

FEEDING THE CAMPERS—The various Knights of Columbus councils throughout southern Missouri do so much for our local communities! This group of Knights from St. Francis de Sales Parish, in Lebanon, recently provided dinner for Camp Re-NEW-All’s Camp Carlo last week in Conway, MO. (The Mirror)
The Body of Christ communicates scripturally. This is how Christ speaks and is presented to the world and to individuals so that the whole world might hear the summons of salvation (cf. Dei Verbum, No. 1). To encounter the Scripture rightly is to encounter Christ, to hear that summons clearly as a loving call to faith. What the Scripture does, to put it simply, is to introduce us to the real living Christ, the lover Christ.

But it’s important that the one we encounter is truly the scriptural Christ because we often like to choose our own Jesus. Why? We like the Jesus we like, often manufacturing a deity within our own realm of comfort. We either want a Jesus who doesn’t get onto us very much, who affirms us all the time; or conversely, we want a Jesus overly harsh, always punishing, judging and convicting, always beating us down. In different ways and for different reasons, we create these fictitious caricatures in our minds and call them “God,” worshipping these false images of Christ.

This has always been a danger. Such was Ludwig Feuerbach’s famously haunting suggestion, that God is merely “the dream of the human mind,” merely our own human power magnified and projected onto an image we call “God” (“The Essence of Christianity,” Prometheus, $13.99). That’s the mistake, that although God made us in his image, we so often try to remake God in ours.

We choose either an overly liberal Jesus or conservative Jesus, a Marxist or capitalist Jesus, a Republican or Democrat Jesus, a pacifist Jesus or a militaristic Jesus. Sometimes we’re a bit more sophisticated about it, seeking a “historical” Jesus; or, like when scientists create “scientific” images of what they think Jesus really looked like, we try to find some sort of empirical Jesus. Or, we choose a Jesus comfortably culturally recognizable, looking like us, such as the print of Warner Sallman’s Jesus which hung in many American homes in the 20th century. It’s a culturally recognizable, looking like us, Jesus, which — by the way — was the substance of a Moses-like fashion — delivering truth on a mountain, feeding wandering masses in the wilderness, and so on— inviting us to see Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament. We believe in the Jewish Jesus, the promised Messiah.

This is exactly how the Catholic Church understands the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. As Dei Verbum teaches, the purpose of the Old Testament is “to prepare for the coming of Christ” by means of prophecy and typology (No. 15). For example, Jesus in the Gospels is repeatedly portrayed in a Moses-like fashion — delivering truth on a mountain, feeding wandering masses in the wilderness, and so on— inviting us to see Jesus as the fulfillment of Deuteronomy 18:15, which — by the way — was the substance of Peter’s first preaching (Acts 3:20-23). The Hebrew Scriptures not only reveal God and teach us the ways of God, they also prepare us to recognize the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth. The Old Testament gives the story of Jesus its most fundamental web of meaning. This, as I said, is what we fully mean by saying we believe in Christ “in accordance with the scriptures” — not just what we learn of him from the New Testament but also what we understand of him in light of the Old Testament.

And it is this Christ — the Christ “in accordance with the scriptures” — that’s normative for Christians — not the Christ of mere history or scientific conjecture or personal preference. Ultimately, that’s because encountering Scripture is — as we’ll see — a mystical event and not an encounter with some dead and rather conflicted historical record or some compromised cultural artifact. It’s an encounter with the living Christ. This, by the way, is also why fundamentalism, which is a way of reading the Scriptures that is so mistaken the Catholic Church literally calls it “intellectual suicide,” is wrong (“The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church,” Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd., $20).

For fundamentalism suggests that a person can read the Scripture without the mediation of the Church and that the truth of the Scripture depends not upon the charismatic witness of believers but upon the absolute historical factuality of texts — texts that should supposedly be read literally in all details. This is to privilege a rather modern and scientific view of truth impossible to obtain and never genuinely entertained by the Catholic Church nor by any Christian, for that matter, prior to the modern age. But, as we’ll see, that’s only one problem with fundamentalism. The graver problem is that it misunderstands that one must always encounter the genuine Christ within the communion of believers, best within the communion of the Church and the Church’s tradition. We will touch on this more soon when we explore apostolic tradition.

By Fr. Joshua J. Whitfield

WHAT WE BELIEVE, PART 23:

Christ According to Scripture

By Fr. Joshua J. Whitfield

Showing Us How To Love

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.

“What We Believe, Part 23: Christ According to Scripture” by Fr. Whitfield is from simplycatholic.com, copyright © Our Sunday Visitor; all rights reserved, no other use of this material is authorized.
By Carl E. Olson

Drawing from exotic speculations based on heretical texts that were written long after the Gospels, many have falsely claimed throughout the ages that Mary Magdalene was a "goddess," was married to Jesus, and was intended by Him to be the leader of the Church. But that is not the real Mary Magdalene depicted in the Gospels and celebrated by the Church.

For a true portrait of this famous but misunderstood woman, let's start with the biblical accounts.

Seeking the Real Mary Magdalene
The four Gospels contain at least a dozen references to Mary from Magdala, a town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. She is described as a woman who had suffered from demonic possession and from whom Jesus had expelled seven demons (see Mk 16:9; Lk 8:2).

She is also prominently mentioned as one of the women who accompanied Jesus in His ministry (Lk 8:2). She was a witness of the Crucifixion (Mt 27:56; Jn 19:25), of Jesus' burial (Mt 27:61; Mk 15:47), and of the empty tomb (Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:10). After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to her alone at the tomb (Mk 16:9; Jn 20:1-18).

In the Western tradition, Mary Magdalene eventually became identified with the sinful woman of Luke 7:37-50 as well as Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus (see Lk 10:38-42; Jn 11). However, in the Eastern tradition, the three women were identified separately, with feast days on March 21 (the unnamed sinner), March 18 (Mrs. Verkade in Carmelite church in Dobling. (Sedmak/Getty Images)
Abuse allegations down, but challenges remain, says report

By Gina Christian

Abuse allegations against Catholic clergy and religious in the US declined last year, but challenges remain regarding protecting vulnerable adults and ensuring online safety, according to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The annual report issued by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University in July 2022 found that allegations reported to diocesan and eparchial offices decreased in 2021, with allegations made by adults citing abuse as occurring when the victims were under 18.

The report also noted that the decline in allegations was consistent with previous years and that the number of claims involving current minors was higher than the number involving former minors.

Vulnerable adults

The CARA portion of the report said that 194 responding dioceses and eparchies had judged 245 allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon to be credible. Of those, 20 allegations involved children who were under the age of 18.

The CARA portion of the report also noted that the number of claims involving current minors was higher than the number involving former minors.

Auditors pointed out an unevenness in the charter’s overall application, with “196 different implementations” of the document resulting from the various policies of dioceses and eparchies.

Another concern centers on the protection of “vulnerable adults,” a definition for which is not contained in the charter, said auditors.

A year after the charter’s most recent revision in 2018, Pope Francis issued the motu proprio “Vox Estis Lux Mundi” (“You are the light of the world”), outlining global legal procedures for how the Church should deal with clergy sexual abuse, including procedures for investigating bishops.

The document, implemented for a three-year experimental period beginning June 1, 2019, included the.
term “vulnerable person,” defined as “any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense.”

On March 25, 2023, Pope Francis published an updated version with the specific term “vulnerable adults,” without altering the previous definition. The revised text also was broadened to include investigations of leaders of Vatican-recognized international Catholic lay associations and movements.

Yet Suzanne Healy, chairwomen of the lay-led USCCB National Review Board, highlighted findings by StoneBridge in her remarks in this report, saying that while the charter addresses clerical abuse of children, “there is confusion in reporting matters pertaining to “Vos Estis Lux Mundi” and canon law regarding penal sanctions.

The board “recommends the pursuit of a separate auditable resource with specific guidelines for these adult and lay matters of abuse,” she wrote.

Non-compliant

The dioceses of Birmingham, Alabama; Lubbock, Texas, and St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands were each found non-compliant regarding Article 2 of the Dallas Charter, which in part specifies a required review board, comprised of mostly laypeople not employed by the diocese, that meets regularly and serves as a consultative body to the bishop. Each diocese subsequently corrected the deficiency.

For the Birmingham Diocese, the problem was one of timing, Donald Carson, director of communications and public relations, told OSV News. Two resignations due to health concerns and the transfer of a religious sister left three vacancies on that review board during the audit period. The seats “have since all been filled, bringing the number of representatives not employed by the diocese back in compliance with the requirements of the charter,” he said in an Email to OSV News.

In the Lubbock Diocese, COVID was at its height during the reporting period and had “stopped many areas of our work,” Lucas Flores, communications director, told OSV News in an Email, adding that the diocese had resumed review board meetings.

OSV News was awaiting a response from the Diocese of St. Thomas.

Gina Christian is a national reporter for OSV News. Follow her on Twitter at @GinaJesseReina.


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Melissa Ohden

is a survivor of a failed saline infusion abortion attempt. She has always believed that God had a specific purpose set out for her. Melissa is the Founder and Director of The Abortion Survivors Network, the only healing and advocacy organization for abortion survivors worldwide and The Education and Policy Center, which impacts policy issues relating to abortion and abortion survivors. Melissa and her team have connected with over 400 survivors. She is a frequent contributor to pro-life and conservative news outlets and a regular guest on radio and television programs around the world. She has testified before Congressional committees numerous times, lobbied for the pro-life case, and even met with the President in the Oval Office. Ohden is truly a voice for the voiceless.

All proceeds benefit Vitae Foundation, a national non-profit organization that facilitates research about life issues to create messaging strategies to share with others so that together, we can build a future where abortion is unthinkable.
World Youth Day is about Christ or it’s about nothing at all

POPE REGISTERS FOR WYD—Young people from Portugal joined Pope Francis on the balcony at the end of his Angelus on Oct. 23, 2022, and helped him be the first to register for World Youth Day 2023, in Lisbon, with the help of an iPad. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

By Father Patrick Briscoe, OSV News

World Youth Day (WYD) brings together young people from every corner of the globe to celebrate their Catholic faith. Away from home and buoyed by the witness of their peers, it becomes possible for many to have a transforming encounter with Jesus Christ. But it is not friends, travel or universal embrace of the human spirit that make WYD a life-changing, transcendent experience. Only Jesus Christ. But it is not friends, it becomes possible for them to celebrate their Catholic faith. Away from home and buoyed by the witness of their peers, it becomes possible for them to celebrate their Catholic faith.

In fact, ultimately, WYD cannot be about anything other than Christ the Lord. Even noble aims like service or expressions of diversity are insufficient organizational principles. And that is because, as Pope Francis has reminded us many times, the Church is not a mere bureaucracy. The Church is the People of God, the very body of Christ! And WYD, a visible and beautiful coming together of the Church, must have Christ as its center and focus. Otherwise, it’s not worth hosting.

‘HE IS COMING TO ME’

I’ll never forget the evening of worship that I was privileged to participate in as a newly ordained priest in Krakow. Hosted by the Knights of Columbus at Tauron Arena, over 20,000 young people gathered for catechesis, music, and Eucharistic adoration. The evening included a Eucharistic procession, which passed several times around the arena. Leading the procession, I recall the delight and emotion expressed by one pilgrim as we turned and began to head in her direction. Seeing the monstrance draw near, the young girl whispered just loud enough for me to hear, “He is coming to me.”

WYD serves as a catalyst for a more profound relationship with Jesus Christ. As young Catholics gather to worship, learn, and pray together, the joy and energy present opens hearts and minds to the reality of Christ’s presence. Engaging in spiritual exercises that might not be a regular part of parish life for many young Catholics, pilgrims are invited to experience the living presence of Jesus in a tangible way. They meet Jesus in a privileged way in the confessional, in the Eucharist, and in catechesis. This encounter fosters a deep sense of intimacy and love for Christ, often igniting a desire to seek him with passion and commitment.

FINDING IDENTITY IN CHRIST

For many young people, World Youth Day offers an opportunity to nourish their faith. That means, first and foremost, discovering their identity in Christ. In Krakow, Pope Francis pointed to the encounter Jesus had with Zacchaeus, urging young people to remember their identity as God’s beloved sons and daughters. The pope told us, “Jesus has taken upon himself our humanity and his heart will never be separated from us.”

The encounter with Jesus Christ, especially through the witness of the pope and other inspiring Catholics, reinforces the call to live a life centered on Christ. Through catechesis sessions, pilgrims receive guidance and inspiration, equipping them to face the challenges of the modern world with unwavering faith. I have seen over and over again how this encounter renews their commitment to be witnesses of Christ’s love in their communities and empowers them to live the Faith confidently.

ANSWERING THE CALL

When the focus is unabashedly on Christ, young people can hear the Lord’s voice more clearly and begin to know the plans of love he has for them. How many young people have discovered their vocation at WYD? How many have given their first “yes” to Christ to pursue his invitation to priesthood, religious life, or marriage?

If WYD is misunderstood as a global gathering to demonstrate diversity or human fraternity, it’s not worth the time or the money. But an event that proposes Jesus Christ to hundreds of thousands of young people who are dying from not knowing him? Now, that’s worth everything. ©CNS

Father Patrick Briscoe, O.P., is a Dominican friar and the editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

With doctor’s OK, pope says he is ready for WYD

Vatican City

With a green light from his doctor, Pope Francis has assured young people that he will be with them in Portugal for World Youth Day despite his recent abdominal surgery on June 7.

“Some think that because of the illness I won’t go, but the doctor told me that I can go, so I will be with you,” the pope said in a video message released June 22 for pilgrims traveling to Lisbon, Portugal, for World Youth Day (WYD) Aug. 1-6. In the video, filmed by Aux. Bp. Américo Manuel Alves Aguilar of Lisbon, the pope held up a backpack with the World Youth Day logo, saying “I am ready to go. I have everything in hand because I am looking forward to going.”

In a separate video, the pope spoke to the workers who are preparing the infrastructure that makes World Youth Day possible. While he acknowledged that workers “don’t seem like the main characters of World Youth Day,” he said they are the ones who hold the entire celebration in place. ©CNS

POPE READY: WORLD YOUTH DAY—Pope Francis spoke to young people in a video message released by the Vatican June 22, 2023, 40 days before World Youth Day gets underway in Lisbon, Portugal. World Youth Day will be held Aug. 1-6, 2023. (CNS screengrab/ Courtesy Holy See Press Office)

Catholic school leadership members return from Boston

Joplin, MO

Members of Notre Dame Regional High School, in Cape Girardeau, as well as members of Joplin Area Catholic Schools attended the annual “Partners in Mission—The National Advancement Summer Institute for Catholic Schools” conference, in Boston, June 23-June 27, the focus of which was on advancement and enrollment management strategies unique to the mission of Catholic education and today’s challenges.

“The four-day conference allowed members of our diocese to connect with one another as well as with 400+ Catholic school principals and advancement team members to learn about the best practices and techniques to drive revenue and advance Catholic education,” said Marjorie Comer, attendee, and Director of Advancement for Joplin Area Catholic Schools.

Funding grants from the diocesan Endowment Fund for Lay Leadership assisted participants with the costs associated in attending this conference. STM

ADMISSIONS & ADVANCEMENT TEAMS—Attendees from the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau of The National Advancement Summer Institute for Catholic Schools included: Mary Landreth, principal, St. Mary Catholic School, Joplin; Dr. Stephen Gilbreth, principal, St. Peter Middle School and McAuley Catholic High School; Dr. Emily Yoxard, Director of Schools, Joplin Area Catholic Schools (JACS); Marjorie Comer, Director of Advancement, JACS; Alex Jackson, Director of Advancement, Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau; Tim Garner, principal, Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau; Jordan Eastridge, Assistant Director of Advancement for Development Services and Communications, Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau; and Meg Garner, Assistant Director of Advancement for Enrollment Management, Notre Dame Regional High School, Cape Girardeau. (The Mirror)
Courage & EnCourage ministries launched in southern Missouri

Jackson, MO

In a letter dated June 26, 2023, Bishop Edward M. Rice recently appointed Deacon Al Stoverink of Immaculate Conception Parish, Jackson, MO, as Chaplain for the Courage and EnCourage Chapters of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau effective immediately. “There is a growing need for people to understand and respond in love and truth to those experiencing same-sex attraction and gender discordance in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church,” said Bishop Rice in the letter of appointment. “Parents and other family members and friends also need support as they respond to their loved ones.”

The Virtus Protecting God’s Children 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.dioscg.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Register-for-a-VIRTUS-withOnline-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 Page: www.dioscg.org/child-youth-protection/

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

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Courage & EnCourage ministries launched in southern Missouri

July 21, 2023

DIOCESAN NEWS

The Mirror 11
You did it! Lifehouse Capital Campaign is Complete in Cape Girardeau... THANK YOU!

Your kindness, generosity, and support have raised over $9,300,000 for our newest project: LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau! The capital campaign is complete with donations, pledges, and grants to make this incredible dream a reality! Thank you to our Capital Campaign chairs, Rick and Rhonda Cuba and Tedd and Laura Powers, for their remarkable work on this project.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of LifeHouse Crisis Maternity Home in Springfield and the year of construction in Cape Girardeau. A huge thank you goes to all the donors that helped raise the necessary funds to bring LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau to southeast Missouri!

“Through the grace of God, we have overcome many obstacles to the capital campaign,” said Rick and Rhonda Cuba, co-chairs of the Capital Campaign Committee. “People in southeast Missouri and around the country have opened their hearts to homeless pregnant women and their children through their generosity.”

The construction of the newest LifeHouse is no longer in its infancy. The underground plumbing and utilities are complete, the foundation and floors are poured, and the framing has begun. Also taking shape at LifeHouse are the administration offices, community room, and classroom. It’s exciting to watch LifeHouse going vertical! The construction team is making significant progress daily and is on track to finish by the end of February.

LifeHouse will be a safe place for homeless pregnant women with no place to call home and little hope for their babies’ futures. They will come to LifeHouse with backgrounds of abuse and neglect, addiction, trafficking, and poverty. They will be cared for and loved, connected to healthcare and mental-health counseling. Infant care, parenting, and other life skills are all a part of the program. A woman who comes to LifeHouse will have access to the education she needs to bring a healthy baby into the world whom she can love and care for and raise in a safe and loving home.

“Through this brick and mortar presence, the love of Christ will remain evident every day, with every service provided, every hand held, and with every heart led towards healing, said Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri’s Executive Director, Ken Palermo.

Just like LifeHouse in Springfield, every aspect of LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau is carefully designed to give women the best chance to be self-sufficient and successful. The LifeHouse program has had 10 years to grow into a proven model with 126 healthy babies born and saving the Springfield community an estimated $1,000,000+ in healthcare costs alone. The same thing will happen in southeast Missouri when LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau opens in early 2024. None of this would have been possible without your help. THANK YOU for your generosity...you have made LifeHouse in Cape Girardeau a reality!