In 1976 Cardinal Karol Wojtyla (St. John Paul II) addressed the U.S. bishops. He said, "We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has ever experienced. I do not think the wide circle of the American Society, or the wide circle of the Christian Community realize this fully. We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-church, between the Gospel and the anti-gospel, between Christ and the antichrist."

This confrontation lies within the plans of Divine Providence. It is therefore, in God's Plan, and it must be a trial which the Church must take up, and face courageously."

Bishop Sheen describes what is happening as follows: "We do not know what the future holds—whether the battle will be bloody or un-bloody. We only know that the world is beginning to polarize, (see Morning Glory Retreat, p. 4)"

On Sunday, May 15, 1983, Bishop Hurley called for the Re-Dedication of the Diocese to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the course of “Mary’s Hour”. The ceremony was held at Saint Sebastian's Parish in Sebastopol where Monsignor William Serado acted as the Delegate of the Bishop. I ask that in this 100th Anniversary Year, we again Re-Dedicate the Diocese to the Blessed Virgin Mary on Sunday, December 10, 2017. Rather than simply a one-day event I ask that every Parish participate in a thorough spiritual catechesis and preparation for this personal, parish and Diocesan Consecration. The date chosen, the weekend of December 9-10, falls between the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I envision that the Prayer of Consecration, following several months of preparation, would be recited in every Parish on the chosen day and that, at the Cathedral and in those parishes where it can be arranged, a special Marian Vigil would be hosted the evening of December 9, 2017. At the Vigil, which could last several hours, the entire twenty Mysteries of the Rosary as well as Marian Litanies could be recited.

On the weekend of December 9-10 I ask that the following Act of Consecration, which was used in the Diocese in 1983, be recited after all Masses.

Bishop Vasa's call to prayer includes very powerful parish retreat.

The years when St. Apollinaris took on "flagship status" were the years when Pat Granucci was at the helm.

Pat Granucci was in for a big surprise on the afternoon of March 16th when she walked into the Chancery meeting room for, what she thought, was another education meeting; one of the countless times she faithfully "stepped up" over her many years of service. Colleagues, family, and Diocesan School staff burst into a loud "Surprise" greeting as she stepped in, notebook in hand. Patricia Granucci is the 2017 recipient of The Bishop's Award for Excellence in Catholic School Education. Bishop Vasa, and (see Pat Granucci, p. 4)
A Call to Prayer

May 13, 2017 marks the 100th Anniversary of the beginning of the apparitions of Mary at Fatima. In order to properly honor this great event I call upon all in the Diocese to participate in a program for enriching our understanding and commitment to Marian Devotion. In each of our Parishes I ask that a team of Marian Promoters be established to sponsor and oversee one or more month-long (33 days) Marian Retreats using the program specifically designated for this purpose by Father Michael Gaitley, MIC. A supply of the materials necessary for 50-100 Spanish speaking participants and 50-100 English speaking participants, depending on the size of the Parish, will be provided to each Parish. Additional materials are readily available on a variety of Marian websites. These 33 Day Retreats, which call for one 90 minute meeting each week, led by a Marian Promoter, will serve as preparation for a personal as well as Parish and Diocesan Consecration or Entrustment to Mary.

One of my predecessors, Bishop Mark Hurley, called for the Re-Dedication of the Diocese to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This took place on May 15, 1983 at Saint Sebastian’s Parish in Sebastopol where Monsignor William Serado, acting as the Delegate of the Bishop, officiated at the Re-Consecration. I ask that in this 100th Anniversary Year, we again Re-Dedicate the Diocese and each Parish to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The plan is to have this re-dedication take place in every parish of the Diocese on Sunday, December 10, 2017. Rather than simply hosting a one day event I ask that every Parish participate in a thorough spiritual catechesis and preparation for this personal, parish and Diocesan Consecration or Entrustment. The date chosen, the weekend of December 9-10, falls between the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I envision that the Prayer of Consecration, following several months of preparation, would be recited in every Parish on the chosen day and that, at the Cathedral and in those parishes where it can be arranged, a special Marian Vigil would be hosted the evening of December 9, 2017. At the Vigil, which could last several hours, the entire twenty Mysteries of the Rosary as well as Marian Litanyes could be recited. While the re-dedication is planned for December, preparation by way of individual and group retreats at the Parish level can begin immediately.

Bishop Hurley wrote in 1983: “The faithful, to have a true, authentic, Christian life, must venerate Mary, the Mother of God. This is what is important: acknowledging her as our Model and as our Mother in the order of grace; acknowledging her role in being the Mother of our Redeemer, and her role in being united with the salvific will of her Divine Son; acknowledging her special intercessory role as the preeminent member of the Church and as the Mother of the Church. The veneration of our Lady of Fatima, our Lady of Guadalupe, and so on, is always purely optional, but the basic messages of all these apparitions are in accord with the truths of our faith.”

The goal of the year is not to place Mary in a position higher than Jesus but rather to help assure that a strong and suitable devotion to Mary be fostered in the Diocese. It is also necessary to recognize that Mary is the Mother of an evangelizing Church and so our prayers, entrusted to Mary, can be a great source of spiritual renewal, not only for us as individuals, but for our society as well. The message of our Lady at Fatima was simply a call to prayer; prayer for the strengthening of the family and thus the renewal of society. This is a need that is much greater now than it was in 1917 and so it is most appropriate that we, in this 100th anniversary year, rekindle our sense of Marian devotion and re-dedicate ourselves to that prayer which Mary herself asked us to pray, namely, the Holy Rosary and especially the practice of a daily Family Rosary.

We are reminded that one of the many ways of gaining a Plenary Indulgence, not only in this year of stronger Marian emphasis but every day of every year, is the recitation of the Holy Rosary either as a family or in public. Participation in the Parish Group Retreats which will be offered in every Parish is one way to ensure a deeper devotion to Mary, a greater commitment to the Rosary and a suitable preparation for the Re-Dedication in December.

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April 29, 1962

Rev. Msgr. James Pulpkamp
April 29, 1967

Rev. Robert Blake
April 23, 1977

Rev. Stephen MacPherson
April 5, 1986

Rev. Andrew Metcalf
April 5, 1986

Rev. Manuel Chavez
April 13, 1996

Rev. Aaron Bandanadam, MF
April 13, 2004

Prayer for Priests
Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priests. Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments. Help our priests to be strong in their vocation. Set their souls on fire with love for your people. Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom. Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel. Allow them to experience joy in their ministry. Help them to become instruments of your divine grace. We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest. Amen.
The Church and Society Need You, Pope Francis Tells Youth

Vatican City, Mar 21 (CNA/EWTN News) - On Tuesday Pope Francis released a video message to youth in advance of the next World Youth Day to be held in Panama in 2019. He said that like the Virgin Mary, they are needed, and they should not be afraid to leave their mark on the world.

“Like the young woman of Nazareth, you can improve the world and leave an imprint that makes a mark on history, your history and that of many others,” Pope Francis said in the message, released March 21. “The Church and society need you.”

“The genuine experience of the Church is not like a flash mob, where people agree to meet, do their thing and then go their separate ways.”

With your plans and with your courage, with your dreams and ideals, walls of stagnation fall and roads open up that lead us to a better, fairer, less cruel and more humane world.”

The message, made in advance of the annual diocesan-level “World Youth Day” which takes place on April 9 this year, reflects specifically on the spiritual journey pilgrims will take before reaching Panama, encouraging young people to cultivate a strong friendship with Our Lady, saying they “will not regret it.”

“Speak to her as you would to a Mother. Together with her, give thanks for the precious gift of faith that you have received from your elders, and entrust your whole life to her. She is a good Mother who listens to you and embraces you, who loves you and walks together with you,” he said.

The theme for the upcoming local World Youth Day is taken from the words of Mary in the Magnificat: “The Mighty has done great things for me” (Luke 1:49).

Mary “recognized the great things that God was accomplishing in her life,” gave thanks for it, and then put it into action, going to help her cousin Elizabeth, the Pope said. She “was not a young couch potato who looks for comfort and safety where nobody can bother them.”

“Dear young people, God is also watching over you and calling you, and when God does so, he is looking at all the love you are able to offer,” Francis said.

In anticipation of World Youth Day in Panama January 22-27, 2017, the Pope also released a longer written message to youth, reflecting on themes from the last international World Youth Day in Krakow in July 2016 and on the themes of each year’s meeting leading up to Panama.

Continuing the Marian themes, in 2018 the theme will be “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God” (Luke 1:49) and in 2019, in Panama, it will be “I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38), the Pope said.

Francis said that he hopes preparations for World Youth Day in Panama and for the Synod of Bishops in October 2018, “will move forward in tandem,” since the topic of the Synod will be youth, faith and vocational discernment.

At the Synod, “we will talk about how you, as young people, are experiencing the life of faith amid the challenges of our time,” the Pope said. “We will also discuss the question of how you can develop a life project by discerning your personal vocation...”

In discerning the plan God has for our lives, we can look to Mary, who was very young herself, as an example of the gift of faith lived out, he said. Referencing an address he gave at World Youth Day in Krakow, Francis said to not be afraid, for though we might think, “I am a sinner, what can I do?” the truth is that “when the Lord calls us, he doesn’t stop at what we are or what we have done.”

“On the contrary, at the very moment that he calls us, he is looking ahead to everything we can do, all the love we are capable of giving.”

How do we prepare to, like Mary, give this love? Pope Francis offered four practical suggestions. One, is to end each day doing an examination of conscience —reflecting on our day, remembering both “the good times and the challenges, what went well and those that went wrong.”

These can also be recorded in a journal if we like and is a good way of noticing what God is doing in our lives, he said.

Another suggestion the Pope made is to spend more time reading the Bible. If you, as young people, want to make your life a “gift for humanity” it is “essential to connect with the historical tradition and the prayer of those who have gone before you,” he said.

Doing lectio divina, a method of prayerfully reading the Bible and applying God’s word to your own life will help to “illumine your steps.”

Thirdly, Francis stressed the importance of going to Mass and frequent reception of the Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

And lastly, he said that young people must speak to and learn from the wisdom of their elders, especially grandparents or other relatives. “Do you realize how extraordinarily enriching the encounter between the young and the elderly can be?” he asked.

“Young people have strength, while the elderly have memory and wisdom.”

“The genuine experience of the Church is not like a flash mob, where people agree to meet, do their thing and then go their separate ways,” Pope Francis continued.

“The Church is heir to a long tradition which, passed down from generation to generation, is further enriched by the experience of each individual. Your personal history has a place within the greater history of the Church.”

Even young people should be mindful of tradition and the past, he said, though this is not the same as being nostalgic or remaining stuck on a certain period of history as being the best. One of the gifts of youth is questioning and dreaming about the future, he said.

“God came to enlarge the horizons of our life in every direction. He helps us to give due value to the past so as to better build a future of happiness.”

“Many people think that young people are distracted and superficial,” Francis explained. “They are wrong! Still, we should acknowledge our need to reflect on our lives and direct them towards the future.”

“When God touches the heart of a young man or woman, they become capable of doing tremendous things.”

❖
Hey Men, What are You Afraid of?

by Impact Man Ministries

Remember how the entertainment world went wild with characters like Dracula and Frankenstein? Remember the movie, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde? ... Rosemary’s Baby and The Exorcist? They’re called horror films. They all portrayed the face of evil as something fearful. Now the popular children’s entertainment features Ghostbusters and Star Wars.

Devils, demons, ghosts and monsters are quite entertaining, but unreal, they say. They tell our kids, all this Ghostbusters stuff and intergalactic warfare portrayed as Star Wars, is “pretend—make believe; so no need to be afraid” … of them. The media moguls will tell the kids whom they really should fear, who the real demons are.

First they entertain you with make believe demons and then they demonize authority figures in society and in the Church. The spirit of evil is and has always used terror tactics to stir hatred and rebellion against traditional authority. Sol Alinsky made his living as a “community organizer” stimulating class warfare as one of the masterminds of rebellion. His classic work published in 1971, Rules for Radicals“, acknowledges “the first radical known to man who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that he at least won his own kingdom—Lucifer.”

Satan clubs are popping up on college campuses. And they built a bigger-than-life statue of Satan in Detroit. Yet they say that Satan isn’t real. They tell us they use “Satan” as a metaphorical symbol to represent “the eternal rebel” who has the material guts to stand up against moral authority, especially in the traditional institutions of marriage and family. Especially the Catholic Church, whom Christ appointed to be the voice of moral authority in society.

Of course they zero in on instances of abuse to make their case and then they hammer away at all authority figures who dare oppose their progressive “PC” agenda. These are the social engineers who represent the “eternal rebel”. Now they are making their case to academia to attack “dominant” male authority in social institutions as “toxic masculinity”. Patriarchal male dominance, they say, is the cause of all our social woes.

They recruit atheists and scientists to say none of that “spirit” stuff is real; neither, they say, is heaven or hell. All that matters is “matter” – material things. And that’s all we are made of as humanoids, biological material without a spirit or soul – in other words, we are nothing but animals that need to be tamed to serve the masters. The contest everywhere in society is to take down the Top Dogs by demonizing moral commitment. To consecrate (be made holy) oneself to Jesus through His Blessed Mother has the character of taking a vow, so it shouldn’t be undertaken lightly nor for the wrong reasons. You undertake spiritual consecration because you want to grow in your relationship with Jesus. Saints throughout the life of the Church have recognized the importance of Mary as the best person to teach us about her Son, Jesus.

In his book Fr. Gaitley introduces us to four individuals not only renowned for their piety, but especially for their devotion to Our Lady: Saint Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa, and St. John Paul II. Through the writings of these spiritual leaders, we gain greater insights into Mary’s words and place in Holy Scripture and learn about her unique relationship with the Triune God, as daughter of God the Father, mother of God the Son, and spiritual spouse of God the Holy Spirit.

This movement is spreading like fire. It seems as the cedars of Lebanon tower above little shrubs. These great souls filled with grace and zeal will be as the cedars of Lebanon tower above little shrubs. They will surpass in holiness most other saints as much as the cedars of Lebanon tower above little shrubs. There is only one thing we do not know. There is only one thing that we do know: That is, that if truth wins, we win! And if truth ... Ah, but truth can’t lose!”

We are living in extremely trying times. Our hope is in turning to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and entrusting her with our lives and our families. In the early 18th century St. Louis Marie de Montfort wrote “True Devotion to Mary”. De Montfort predicted that after his death, his manuscript would be lost, in fact it was lost for 26 years. He went on to say that his manuscript would be discovered and published and that its Marian spirituality would help form some of the greatest saints in the history of the Church. De Montfort described the times that would come “would be more than ever perilous”. He said “...towards the end of the world, ...Almighty God and His holy Mother are to raise up saints who will surpass in holiness most other saints as much as the cedars of Lebanon tower above little shrubs.

These great souls filled with grace and zeal will be chosen to oppose the enemies of God who are raging on all sides. They will be exceptionally devoted to the Blessed Virgin. Illumined by her light, strengthened by her spirit, supported by her arms, sheltered under her protection, they will fight with one hand and build with the other.”

There is a wonderful new movement that is helping people to make the beautiful Marian Consecration as suggested by St. Louis de Montfort. This is a movement started by Fr. Michael Gaitley with his book called “33 Days to Morning Glory”. Fr. Gaitley says, “He wrote the book for one main reason: Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary is the ‘surest, easiest, shortest and the most perfect means to becoming a saint’, and there should be an easy and updated way to dive in to such a blessing.” He explains the title of the book, 33 Days is easy to understand as that is how long it takes to make this consecration. Morning Glory he explains those making the personal retreat will experience a new dawn dawning for them as they become a child of Mary. “The act of consecrating oneself to Jesus through Mary marks the beginning of a gloriously new day, a new dawn, a brand new morning on one’s spiritual journey.”

Father Michael Gaitley’s book, 33 Days to Morning Glory, is a do-it-yourself retreat guide which can be used with a group or on one’s own. Either way it is designed to take the reader step-by-step through preparation for spiritual consecration to Jesus through Mary and includes helpful information for study.

Although not widely known or practiced in recent years, spiritual consecration is not new or difficult. It takes 33 days, culminates on a Marian Feast day and requires proper understanding, preparation and
Finding God in All Things — Even Coffee

by Casey McCorry / Angelus News

Los Angeles, Calif., Mar 23 (CNA) – Any Yelp-savvy person looking for a coffee shop in the midst of the University of Southern California’s surrounding urban streets may be lured by extensive positive reviews and a four-and-a-half star-rating to a little café dozens of reviewers call “an oasis.”

Located behind St. Agnes Korean Catholic Church, the Ignatius Café is very easy to miss. Near the bustling intersection of Adams Blvd. and Vermont Ave., the café is gated discreetly behind hedges, making it easy to understand why countless reviewers have described it as “a hidden gem.”

The Ignatius Café is housed in a beautifully preserved turn-of-the-century home, which stands before blossoming rose bushes, with tables and umbrellas situated under vine arches. Fresh flowers sit on every table of the warmly-decorated house. The overwhelming aroma of the café’s fair trade Ethiopian coffee beans envelop customers in warmth, as cheery volunteers bustle around tables with the most painstakingly-created foamed barista achievements. This is not your average coffee shop. To quote one USC student, “It’s like pressing the pause button on life. Over coffee.”

But the real reason this isn’t your average coffee shop is the patent missionary focus of the café: the statue of Mary standing in gardens as overseer of the café, the church bells ringing on the hour in the background and the visibility of its white-collared founder busily managing the café and greeting every visitor with a luminous smile: Father Robert Choi.

When Father Choi’s superior sent him from Korea to work as a pastor in Los Angeles in 2010, he brought with him an extensive background in coffee brewing. Pour-over coffee had recently been introduced by Japan to Korea and was quickly gaining in popularity. Father Choi received certification and training from the elite Coffee Quality Institute, getting technical training on producing sustainable, high quality coffee while enhancing the livelihoods of the growers. This training equipped Father Choi with a passion for the craftsmanship, social consciousness and esteemed quality for which his café is now known.

As a Korean-speaking pastor with a new parish in a foreign country, Father Choi needed a way to engage his new community in a language he could speak. That’s where his old passion for coffee came in. Coffee would be his simple, humble manner of communicating a grand mystical love that a language barrier impinged him from telling. “The Church should be a place open for all and a method for connecting to the less fortunate. I created the Ignatius Café to fulfill this,” explained Father Choi. “I want it to be a place where anyone, regardless of their background, can come and rest. I want it to be a physical manifestation of the act of practicing love.”

Communicating this message of love was something St. Agnes Parish was more than eager to do. With his parish supporting him, Father Choi said setting up the café was not difficult. They set it up to rely solely on volunteers and accept payment in the form of donations. All proceeds are given to charities that support disadvantaged groups, including Catholic Relief Services, St. Jude Children’s Hospital, Sudan Relief Fund and many others. Interested parishioners go through a rigorous coffee education program and board exam. And then they go to work under the guiding mission of the café, inspired by its namesake, St. Ignatius of Loyola: “Find God in all things.”

It is this prayerful spirit that emanates from the café. You feel it in the deliberate and quiet contemplation of the elderly man hand-sorting coffee beans on the front porch of the café. It’s in the wee hours of every morning when Father Choi operates the café’s roaster. It’s in the sweat of the St. Agnes parishioner who painstakingly weeds the gardens. And it’s in the knowing compassion of a volunteer when a customer forgets their money.

“You can find faith within life and life within faith,” Father Choi said. “Christian life is not defined by finding God through exquisite works, but rather through ordinary instances.”

The “ordinary instances” that Father Choi created for have had an extraordinary impact. There have been café frequenters who became interested in Catholicism and were eventually baptized. There were lapsed Catholics who said the café played an integral role in restoring their faith. And the parish’s young adult community has steadily been growing inspired by the welcoming spot to meet. Most customers who come to the café, however, may not recognize the grand evangelizing mission, but may just remember it as a place where they felt at home, where they were loved.

“I love this place. The little ladies who work here are awesome!” one customer said. “You just feel so welcomed here! It feels like going to grandma’s house.”

“USC students, professionals, coffee connoisseurs and parishioners alike are given a moment of love in a cup of coffee.”

“Coffee is just a means. It’s a way for Father Choi to give people love,” one of the café’s volunteers, Jonathan Ko, said. “Love is what holds this place together. It’s the love the priest shows to the volunteers. And in turn the volunteers show love to the customers. And the customers’ donations impart love to the charity recipients.”

Father Choi has created a philosophy for the coffee creation process that he imparts to each one of his volunteers.

“There is a scientific aspect that cannot be ignored. But, ideally, we will integrate faith with science, prayer with skill and mind with theory,” said Father Choi. “One should approach life as they would for the extraction of a cup of coffee, unifying faith and life in one synonymous relationship.”

“Every time I brew a cup of coffee,” he added, “I am able to thank God, bless the farmers who reaped the crops and provide peace to the individual who drinks it. With this sentiment I am able to see God in all things.”

This story originally appeared at AngelusNews.com
Mary’s Army

by Chris Lyford

Though she was with me all along, I didn’t meet Mary ‘till I was about 25 years old. I had been a cradle Catholic, had my own colored-wooden rosary as a child, but somehow I was never really introduced to Our Lady until my mid-20s. On the other hand, I can look back and honestly say that she was with me my whole life. For sure my mother was a very good reflection of the Mother of God, in her kindness, clarity, and moral fortitude. It was the kindness I remember most.

On one occasion, I was a little 4-year-old, and was usually trailing right behind my Mom as we traveled along. On this day, I got distracted and lost sight of her. It was after Mass, and we were making our way out of the church, and I remember so looking forward to the one sacramental thing I could do; bless myself with Holy Water. Not lost on me now is the fact that I had developed a love for participating in my own little way in the Universal Church’s sacramental life, and that is really to my Mother’s credit. The architecture was completely enthralling to my little soul.

Our home parish was named St. Mary’s (no coincidence) and as many parishes did, boasted some pretty cool Holy Water fonts. They were essentially mid-sized statues of angels holding large half-shells. To me they were truly awesome! In my complete distraction as I finished my little blessing ritual, I came to the realization that I had lost sight of my Mom. People were closing in, and I felt like I was completely lost in the crowd. I froze. And cried. When I gathered enough composure to look up, the kind faces of my fellow Catholics were all trying to get me to just look up. My Mom was right there all along. As her face came into focus, she had this beautiful, loving smile, and she was saying “I’m right here honey, right here!” And everything was fine, and off we went.

Flash forward to 2017, and I hear my heavenly Mother in the same way. Life is hard. The challenges we face today seem to increase with each week that passes; headlines and news briefs all point to the gathering clouds of doom. We have all taken our eyes off Our Mother!

Though with a firm purpose now, she is still looking at each of us saying: “I’m right here little one, I’m right here!”

As individuals, and as a Diocese we have an opportunity to fix our gaze on her for good in an unparalleled way this year with Bishop Vasas call to Consecration. Give yourself to her completely, and she will give you to her Son completely. She is the surest way to Jesus, and that is all she wants; for every single person to know and experience the infinite love of her Son Jesus Christ. Her last words in all of scripture sum it up: “do whatever He tells you”. In other words, “now that you are looking at me, stop looking at me and look at my Son, and do whatever he tells you.”

It’s so simple. So why not try it? Take a look at the articles in this NCC and make plans to attend one of the “33 Day” retreats in your parish. In fact, why not join in the planning team for your parish now?

Talk to your Pastor. I guarantee it will change your life. It did mine. If we have battles to fight, there is no better warrior than Mary to follow. She will triumph. Follow her to Jesus, and everything will be fine, and off we’ll go!

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

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Name, hometown, and daytime phone number for verification required. Short letters only, no more than 150 words. Letters may be edited for clarity or space.

NOTE: Views of correspondents do not necessarily reflect those of this publication.

(Afraid, cont. from page 4)

authority.

Does it Matter What We Believe? … Or What We Fear?

God created the real world of what is seen and unseen. The bible teaches that the spirit world is real and the Book of Revelation is full of fearful images of beasts and monsters.

Men who are faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ need to believe but not be fearful because we have the promise of Christ’s victory over those beasts and monsters. From our baptism we have the Holy Spirit (formerly known as the Holy “Ghost”) who has already convicted the real devils and demons to eternal death in hell.

On the other hand those who deliberately turn from the truths of our faith or who fail to stand up for them should be very fearful of the eternal rebel who wants us all to accompany him in hell. Many of those folks don’t believe it, but the gospel truth is that, if they persist in their rebellion against God and in what He has revealed as the truth, they will one day face His judgment of eternal death in hell.

For the post-Vatican II approach is to shift emphasis on hell-fire and damnation. The post-Vatican II approach is to shift emphasis to the love and mercy of God. Instead of scaring the hell out of us the new approach is to portray God as one who wants to love us all into heaven. But don’t we need to hear both messages? They are both true.

If we truly love God as He truly loves us we would fear only one thing: offending God. The Church teaches us how to follow the rules and offers us grace in the sacraments to protect us from temptation and from offending God.

Jesus was anointed with full authority over heaven and earth—over the spirit world and the material world. By his authority he delivers men from our toxic internal demons of selfish pride, egoism and passions of the flesh. He sent the Holy “Ghost”, the spirit of divine love, to sanctify all human relationships with the authority of Truth, the mission of humble service and the power of self-giving love. Be not afraid; God’s perfect love casts out all fear.

We don’t hear much in the Church about spiritual warfare, but from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation, the Bible is all about an ongoing battle between the spirit of good and the spirit of evil, interacting with mankind and fighting for our souls. The very concept of “sin” depicts an ongoing war between body and soul, flesh and spirit. The mission of the Church on earth has traditionally called Christians to be Militant and to respect and defend authority; to stand against the real enemy, the eternal rebel who hides unseen in the spirit world but whose power is very visible.

Jesus wasn’t afraid of devils or demons; he knew them well and expelled them every time he had the chance. He didn’t flaunt his divinity, but by his divinity, becoming a man, he sanctified men in our masculinity to be soldiers for Christ; to join him in the battle against evil.

Jesus is calling the men of his Catholic Church to embrace our masculinity and to bravely stand up against the spirit of evil and to defend moral authority in our church, our families, workplaces and political communities.

IMPACTMAN MINISTRIES is responding to that call. Our apostolate is out to make an IMPACT for Christ and to engage other Catholic men to join us in the stand against evil as we band together to share and live our Catholic faith; to do what we can to make our own world a better and safer place for ourselves and our families; for our children and grandchildren.

If Not You, …When?
If Not Now, …When?

Now is the time, today is the day to make our mark for Christ, for our families, for His Church, for our community—forever. Amen.
My husband passed away recently after a long and difficult illness. As his primary caregiver, I asked for prayers—a lot! I never had any desire to go into any sort of medical profession—I knew I didn’t have the stomach for it—however, as his illness progressed, I found myself doing things that I swore I would never do without passing out, vomitng, etc. etc. So again— I asked for prayers—A LOT—and it was the grace of God that kept my children and I standing, and able to do whatever he needed. As I asked for prayers, I got a lot of kudos—you’re so strong, you’re so amazing, etc. etc. While those are always nice to hear, they were so undeserved. What my children and I did as we cared for my husband was not remarkable—it was just the right thing to do. Not just because we loved him, although that and his sweet nature made it much easier, but because compassion and kindness towards another suffering human being is the right thing to do. I firmly believe that there is nothing remarkable, nothing amazing about doing what is right. It’s just the right thing.

One of my colleagues is blogging about a program he is taking in Rome. In one of his most recent blogs he talked about how the implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People was an institutional change for the Church. He suggested that there also needs to be an individual, personal change within each Catholic. So many of you have jumped on board, have educat-ed yourself and worked so hard to protect the children of our diocese. Some, regretfully, while agreeing with the premise that all children deserve and should be protected from harm, have yet to take this out of their head as a concept, and absorb it into their hearts and beings. And that sort of individual, personal change is what is necessary to do the right thing.

I learned many things through my husband’s illness—but the key, the major thing I learned? That scripture from Philippians 4:13—”I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Yup, we can. When we have our hearts committed, with prayer, the grace of God is poured out so that we can do what is right—no matter how hard, no matter how awkward, no matter how uncomfortable.

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. Some dioceses have poster contest, or essay contests. I am asking this diocese to examine our hearts. Have you taken the concept of personal responsibility for the protection of all children (not just your own) out of your head, and fully absorbed it into your heart and being? Are you truly willing to commit to doing what is right, to speaking up, to looking out for all children? Because I know, with every ounce of my being (and based on my recent stress weight—it’s a lot of ounces!) that God will provide every grace you need to do what is right to protect children. Protecting all children—it’s the right thing to do.

Examine Our Hearts
by Julie Sparacio

Guarding the Vulnerable

Julie Sparacio is Diocesan Director of Child and Youth Protection.

Pope Francis Prays for Victims of Deadly London Attack
by Elise Harris

Vatican City, Mar 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - After four people died in an apparent terrorist attack in London yesterday, Pope Francis has voiced his sorrow and solidarity for the victims and their families, entrusting them and the nation to God’s mercy.

"Deeply saddened to learn of the loss of life and of the injuries caused by the attack in central London, His Holiness Pope Francis expresses his prayerful solidarity with all those affected by this tragedy," a March 23 letter signed by Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin read.

The Pope commended the souls of those who died "to the loving mercy of Almighty God," and prayed for "divine strength and peace upon their grieving families," while assuring of his prayer for the entire nation.

Francis’ letter comes the day after a deadly March 22 attack on London’s Parliament took the lives of four people.

During the attack, a car apparently plowed into pedestrians on Westminster Bridge before crashing into the fence surrounding the Parliament building. The assailant then attempted to enter the Parliament building with a knife, stabbing one police officer before being shot by other officers on the grounds.

According to the Guardian, four people were killed, including the police officer who was stabbed and one man believed to be the assailant. About 20 others were reported injured, some severely.

Nearby government buildings were placed on lockdown while authorities worked to ensure the safety of the area. Scotland Yard said the attack is being treated “as a terrorist incident until we know otherwise.”

The incident marks the first mass-casualty terrorist attack in Britain since the 2005 bomb attack on London that claimed the lives of 52 people when four bombers blew themselves up in the city’s public transportation system.

March 22 also marks the one-year anniversary of the Brussels airport bombings that left more than 30 dead and 300 injured. Those bombings were declared the deadliest act of terrorism in Belgium’s history.

The use of a vehicle as a weapon yesterday’s London attack is reminiscent of the methods used last year by terrorists in Nice and Berlin.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of West-minster, issued a March 23 statement to the priests and parishes of his diocese saying yesterday’s attacks “have shocked us all.”

“The kind of violence we have seen all too often in other places has again brought horror and killing to this city,” he said, and urged pastors to lead their people in prayer, particularly for the victims and their families.

He offered special prayers for victim Aysha Frade, who was killed by the car on Westminster Bridge and whose two young children attend the diocese’s St. Mary of the Angels Primary School.

He also offered special prayers for Frade’s husband and a group of French students who were injured in the attack, as well as police officer Keith Palmer, the officer who died, and his family.

"Let our voice be one of prayer, of compassionate solidarity and of calm," the cardinal said.

"All who believe in God, Creator and Father of every person, will echo this voice, for faith in God is not a problem to be solved, but a strength and a foundation on which we depend.”

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. Some dioceses have poster contest, or essay contests. I am asking this diocese to examine our hearts. Have you taken the concept of personal responsibility for the protection of all children (not just your own) out of your head, and fully absorbed it into your heart and being? Are you truly willing to commit to doing what is right, to speaking up, to looking out for all children? Because I know, with every ounce of my being (and based on my recent stress weight—it’s a lot of ounces!) that God will provide every grace you need to do what is right to protect children. Protecting all children—it’s the right thing to do.
• An introductory letter for all parishioners; Periodic Bulletin Messages; North Coast Catholic Articles.
• In the Diocesan Religious Education Program Special Catechetical Resources as well as occasional Marian Devotions will be featured.
• In our Catholic Schools a Program of Marian Catechesis as well as devotions will be prepared for the 2017-18 school year. (Preliminary Plans have already been discussed with the Principals of our Catholic Schools.
• In each of our Parishes I ask that a team of Marian Promoters be established to sponsor and oversee one or more month-long (33 days) Marian Retreats using the program specifically designed for this purpose by Father Michael Gaitley, MIC. A supply of the materials necessary for 50-100 Spanish speaking participants and 50-100 English speaking participants, depending on the size of the Parish, will be provided to the Parish. I would ask that the Parish provide additional materials if needed. Only one Group Leader Packet will be provided to the Parish since this is a resource that can easily be shared. Additional Leader Packets can be obtained by the Parish. The Retreats run for 6 to 8 weeks with most of the ‘work’ being done in private at home. Retreatants are asked to participate in a 90-minute meeting each week to discuss the readings for the week and to view the DVD. Parishes are encouraged to have multiple Groups participate in the Retreat with a variety of meeting times. Individual Groups may choose to celebrate private or personal Consecration events in preparation for the Parish and Diocesan Consecration on December 9-10.

Primary resources by Father Michael Gaitley, MIC — Limited number provided by the Diocese — Additional Copies can be obtained by the Parish:
• 33 Days to Morning Glory: A Do-It-Yourself Retreat in Preparation for Marian Consecration (Retreat Coordinator’s Guide and Retreat Companion – One or Two Copies per Parish - English Only)
• A Do-It-Yourself Retreat in Preparation for Marian Consecration (Participant Readings: 50-100+ for each Parish in English and 50-100+ for each Parish in Spanish)

33 Days Retreat Talks of Father Michael Gaitley. One or two DVDs for each Parish. Each DVD can be played in either English or Spanish (Spanish dubbing.

Other Resources not provided by the Diocese but recommended:
• Educational Pamphlet: I am the Lady of the Rosary, English and Spanish
• Fatima for Today: The urgent Marian Message of Hope, Fr. Andrew Apostoli, CFR (Ignatius Press)
• The Day the Sun Danced: The True Story of Fatima, Animated Children’s Movie (Includes Spanish language track) (Ignatius Press)
• Fatima Feature Films available from Ignatius Press; The 13th Day; Finding Fatima; and the EWTN Classic Documentary: Fatima (Hosted by Ricardo Montalban)

On the weekend of December 9-10 I ask that the following Act of Consecration, which was used in the Diocese in 1983, be recited after all Masses. Special attention could be given to any and all who participated in the 33 Days of preparation. Continued use of the 33 Days Retreat is encouraged for the balance of the yearlong Centennial Celebration of the Apparition of Mary at Fatima.

ACT OF CONSECRATION
O Mary, Virgin most powerful and Mother of Mercy, Queen of Heaven and Refuge of sinners: We, representing your Catholic people of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, consecrate ourselves to your Immaculate Heart. We consecrate to you our very being and our whole life; all that we have, all that we love, all that we are. To thee do we give our homes, our families, (our Diocese) and our country. We desire that all that is in us and around us may belong to you and that we may share in the benefits of your motherly blessing. Holy Mary, bring help to the miserable, strength to those who mourn. Plead the cause of the clergy, intercede for devout women and men. May all who pay homage to your Holy Name experience your powerful help. We fly to your patronage, O Holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen.

33 Days to Morning Glory can be used as a 6-8 Week Group Retreat
Retreat participants of the 33 Days to Morning Glory Group Retreat should meet once each week for 90 minutes. General Overview:
About 90 minutes (1½ hours) total time:
• 15-minute Opening with a 6-minute introduction talk on DVD
• 45-minute Small-Group sharing (drawing from the daily questions in the Retreat Companion)
• 30-minute talk on DVD that illustrates the key points of each week

This weekly format is based on your reading the appropriate section of 33 Days to Morning Glory first and then reading and answering the questions in the Retreat Companion that pertain to that section.

Group Retreat — Opening (15 Minutes)
Begin each session with the recommended prayers and then watch the 6-minute DVD introduction for that session.

Group Retreat — Sharing (45 Minutes)
If needed break into smaller groups and meet for a 45-minute discussion time that follows the small group session outlines at the end of each week. The group dynamic is perhaps the most important aspect of the retreat. Within a group setting, a true spirit of fellowship in Christ is fostered and developed. Without such friendship and fellowship in Christ, the isolated Christian may become paralyzed in his efforts at evangelization and stagnant in his faith. But with friendships in Christ, the members of his Mystical Body are connected in holiness to Christ and to one another in prayer and so are able to better receive his divine power! (see Mt 18:20). The friendships that you discover and nourish in your small group are important sources of support and encouragement on your journey to a deeper relationship with Christ.

Group Leaders: Be sure to read the Weekly Small Group Session Outline at the end of each week in the Retreat Companion before each gathering. There the preselected focus questions for each week are listed.

The prayer, personal-response questions, and petitions are provided in the Retreat Companion on the following pages:
• First Group Meeting outline pages 13-14. (Orientation and Introduction)
• Group Meeting at the end of Week One – Pages 38-39. (St. Louis Marie de Montfort)
• Group Meeting at the end of Week Two – Pages 62-63. (St. Maximilian Kolbe)
• Group Meeting at the end of Week Three – Pages 86-87. (St. Mother Teresa)
• Group Meeting at the end of Week Four – Pages 110-111. (St. John Paul II)
• Group Meeting at the end of Week Five – Pages 124-125. (Synthesis and review)

The group time is divided as follows:
• PRAYER: This is the given week’s prayer from the Retreat Companion. The group should pray it together.
• PERSONAL RESPONSE: Particular questions selected from the assigned readings for the week will be used for small-group sharing.
• PETITION: The Small-group Leader will recite the closing invocations of the Holy Spirit within the group, and the members respond.

Group Retreat — DVD (30 Minutes)
Following the small-group discussion and prayer, participants reconvene in the large group for 30 minutes of guided retreat by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, on DVD. Each session ends with prayer and Fr. Michael’s invitation to make the insights gained and lessons learned a part of one’s spiritual life. After the DVD, the Retreat Coordinator may make announcements and briefly introduce the topic for the upcoming week and its corresponding prayer. The DVD can be set to be played in either English or Spanish.

For more information on hosting a 33 Days Retreat go to: https://www.alloheartsfair.org/assets/leaders/resources/33tmg/retreat-coordinator-guide.pdf
Pope Clears Way for Canonization of Fatima Visionaries

by Else Harris

Vatican City, Mar 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - On Thursday Pope Francis approved the second and final miracle needed to canonize Blessed Francisco and Jacinta Marto, two of the shepherd children who witnessed the Fatima Marian apparitions.

The Pope approved the miracle in a March 23 audience with Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, during which he advanced six other causes, approving one other miracle, two causes for martyrdom and three of heroic virtue.

In addition, the Pope also approved a positive vote from members of the canonization causes for six martyrs who are already Blessed, but do not yet have a second miracle attributed to them.

However, the most significant of the causes approved is that of Francisco and Jacinta Marto. With the approval of the second miracle, the two may now be canonized Saints. It is likely Pope Francis will preside over their canonization himself while in Fatima May 12-13 for the centenary of the apparitions.

Francisco, 11, and Jacinta, 10, were the youngest non-martyrs to be beatified in the history of the Church.

The brother and sister, who tended to their families’ sheep with their cousin Lucia Santo in the fields of Fatima, Portugal, witnessed the apparitions of Mary, now commonly known as Our Lady of Fatima.

The brother and sister, who tended to their families' sheep with their cousin Lucia Santo in the fields of Fatima, Portugal, witnessed the apparitions of Mary, now commonly known as Our Lady of Fatima.

Pope John Paul II beatified Francisco and Jacinta May 13, 2000, on the 83rd anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady at Fatima, teaching us that even young children can become saints.

In addition to Francisco and Jacinta, the Pope also approved a miracle for Bl. Angelo da Acri, a Capuchin priest who died in October 1739, allowing for his canonization.

Causes for martyrdom approved by the Pope – meaning they can be beatified – include Fr. Giuseppe Maria Fernández Sánchez and his 32 companions, who were priests and coadjutor brothers of Congregation of the Mission, as well as six laypersons from the Association of the Miraculous Medal of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who were killed in hatred of the faith in 1936 during the Spanish Civil War.

Another martyrdom cause approved by the Pope was that of Servant of God Regina Maria Vattalì, a Poor Clare nun killed in hatred of the faith in 1995.

The martyrs who were already Blessed but may now be canonized based on the Congregation’s vote are: Andrea de Soveral and Ambrogio Francesco Ferro, diocesan priests, and Matteo Moreira, layman, killed in hatred of the Faith in Brazil in 1645, and Cristoforo, Antonio and Giovanni, teenagers, killed in hatred of the Faith in Mexico in 1529.

He also declared the heroic virtue of the following people: Daniele da Samarate, a Capuchin priest; Macrina Raparelli, founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Basiliane Daughters of St. Macrina; and Daniela Zanetta, a laywoman.

The Secret to Converting Your Friends and Family

by Annabelle Hazard, for Catholic Stand

There’s someone out there you want to see safely home in the Catholic Church, right? Someone you know would be the next St. Augustine, if he found truth and decided to work for truth for the rest of his life. You’ve been evangelizing to him by buying books and videos, posting articles on social media, even speaking directly on the stuff he’s missed. Still, he’s unmoved, probably accused you of judging. So, you’re about ready to give up.

Please don’t!

Instead, work harder and change tactics. The thing about conversion is that it isn’t entirely up to you. The timing and the manner is purely an act of God’s grace. However, there are things you can do to cooperate and further God’s Will of performing miracles in changing hearts behind the scenes. Here are five secrets to converting your family and friends:

1. The Rosary. Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Supremi Apostolatus Officio declared the Rosary as an effective spiritual weapon against the evils afflicting society. St. John Paul II in Rosarium Virginis Mariæ emphasized the importance of a family Rosary for the spiritual safety of its members when he said “the family, the primary cell of society, increasingly menaced by forces of disintegration on both the ideological and practical planes, so as to make us fear for the future of this fundamental and indispensable institution and, with it, for the future of society as a whole. The revival of the Rosary in Christian families… will be an effective aid to countering the devastating effects of this crisis typical of our age.” Catholic speaker and author Kathleen Beckman attributes her son’s conversion with the daily Rosary during Eucharistic Adoration, as a deliverance prayer.

2. The Divine Mercy conversion prayer: “O blood and water, which gushed forth from the heart of Jesus.” Jesus made a promise to St. Faustina in her Diary: “When you say this prayer, with a contrite heart and with faith on behalf of some sinner, I will give him the grace of conversion.” Our parish has been saying this prayer at every Mass and our priest can verify the return of fallen away Catholics to Church.

(see Converting Friends & Family, p. 16)
One of my favorite lines when it comes to suffering and grief comes from the eminent C. S. Lewis in his work, A Grief Observed: “Talk to me about the truth and grief comes from the eminent C. S. Lewis in his work, A Grief Observed: “Talk to me about the truth of religion and I’ll listen gladly. Talk to me about the duty of religion and I’ll listen submissively. But don’t come talking to me about the consolations of religion or I shall suspect that you don’t understand.”

Addressing suffering, whether as a writer or as a friend, can be difficult as it is easy to be perceived as uncaring if we don’t honor the reality of people’s pain. On the other side of the spectrum, however, we must not forget about Christian hope. With this balance in mind, here’s my take on how Lent can be a time for you to help others process their suffering, while both acknowledging it as real as well as approaching it with tremendous hope.

All of us have experienced (or are experiencing) suffering. Whether or not you would classify it as severe or minor is immaterial. The point is we all suffer. It is simply part of life. While this may seem like an obvious point to many readers, my experience with patients has shown me time and again that human beings tend to believe that they are the only ones who suffer. This simply is not true, and that fact can bring great comfort to people. However, our suffering always takes on different forms just as all people experience and we must honor it as not being an expression of weakness. Rather, we should recognize that expressing suffering takes immense courage since the sufferer must humble themselves by expressing human frailty.

What can you do if you find your friend or a family member in such a situation? To be blunt, religious axioms rarely work with suffering. Saying, “trust in God,” or “His will be done,” usually makes the person feel rejected and misunderstood. At times it can even lead them to feel shameful! It would be better if you seek to simply be with them (add it to your list of things to do this Lent). Go to a movie, have dinner together, or just sit there as they cry. As relational beings we seek human encounters more than anything else. Advice (while having an appropriate place) is counterproductive when a person is in the throes of suffering.

As Scripture tells us, there is a time for everything under Heaven, in the same way there is a time for those suffering to realize that they have the opportunity unite our sufferings and grief to Christ’s suffering on Calvary and begin to come out of isolation. Lent is just such a time as the entire Church moves towards Good Friday with the expected joy of Easter Sunday. I am never one to rush a person through their grief, but enabling others to give into despair is never the answer. God seeks our good, and as He says in Jeremiah: “I will turn their mourning into joy, I will show them compassion and have them rejoice after their sorrows (31:13).” Suffering does not have the last word. As both a therapist and a human being I have seen firsthand how even in the darkest of nights, with Christ we can find the dawn. If you know others who are suffering this Lent, do not hesitate to “be Christ” to them, accompanying them in their pain, but also standing as signpost for the hope that comes when we give our sorrows to the Lord.

William T. McKenna, M.S. is a Pre-Doctoral Resident in Clinical Psychology at Catholic Charities with the Diocese of Arlington. He recently completed his coursework for his doctorate at the Institute for the Psychological Sciences, now Divine Mercy University. Divine Mercy University offers graduate programs in psychology and counseling, both online and onsite in the greater Washington, DC area. Visit divinemercy.edu for more information.

April 7: St. John Baptist De La Salle

William T. McKenna, M.S.
Hanna Boys Center
“Haven of Hope” (Part One)

Written by Brian Farragher, Executive Director of Hanna Boys Center

This is the first in a three-part series about Hanna Boys Center, a residential treatment center for at-risk youth in Sonoma, California. Part one covers the history and program that has served boys and their families for more than 70 years. Parts two and three will discuss the changes in care over the years, the launch of the Hanna Institute, and with it, the extended reach of Hanna’s treatment program to a wider audience.

For more than 70 years, Hanna Boys Center has helped young men whose lives have been impacted by trauma and adversity find healing and chart a new life course. The school opened in Menlo Park in 1945 after three influential members of the Catholic community – San Francisco Archbishop John J. Mitty; Msgr. William Flanagan, the director of Catholic Charities for the San Francisco Diocese; and Father William O’Connor, assistant director – developed a plan to help war orphans and other rejected young men. In 1949, the school moved its 25 residents to its current Sonoma County location, a 160-acre campus originally consisting of a chapel, three cottages, an office, a dining room, a gymnasium, swimming pools, a convent and four classrooms. It was named The Archbishop Hanna Center for Boys after Edward J. Hanna, the third archbishop of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

Today, Hanna continues to serve as a “haven of hope” for 100 young men who have faced significant trauma in their lives. Each year, the Center receives hundreds of inquiries from parents, families and guardians of troubled, abused and neglected boys. The boys must apply for admission, with the support of their families or guardians, and commit to staying at least one full school year – the average stay is 18 months. Once enrolled, boys receive full-time residential treatment and educational services, in addition to access to health care, sports, and vocational opportunities.

Over the years, Hanna has helped more than 4,500 young men overcome their past behavioral problems using a combination of faith, education and a caring environment. The ultimate goal for staff, educators, counselors and support teams is to transform these young men into functional, productive members of society. Hanna boys come mostly from Northern California, with a few from as far away as the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest. They are among the millions of children in America who have grown up in traumatic environments and extreme adversity. Hanna’s boys are looking for stability and healing, and our program provides a safe place for them to recover, learn and grow. The faculty and staff at Hanna Boys Center are committed to empowering these at-risk teens with the skills and tools they need to overcome their neglectful or abusive pasts and successfully transition to life after high school. As an institution steeped in the Catholic tradition, faith is a cornerstone of our program. Hanna is not trying to convert the boys to Catholicism, but rather to instill a practical sense of spirituality that boys can lean on and use no matter what faith tradition they may pursue. Practicing spirituality helps boys grapple with some of life’s bigger questions while helping them understand and respect their neighbor and their community. When young men come to Hanna, they at once feel the emphasis on being a well-rounded individual, with staff and programming to help them on their quest for optimal spiritual, as well as physical health.

From an academic perspective, Hanna has a fully-accredited high school for grades eight through 12, led by a principal and 18 full-time, specially trained teachers. Archbishop Hanna High School provides an academic program built around the needs of each boy, because not everyone learns the same way. Each boy receives an educational assessment once they arrive at the Center. We identify strengths and challenges and build a plan that is specific to each. The boys receive personal attention from teachers and full-time, in-residence professionals who provide academic support. For many of our boys, this is the most attention anyone has ever shown for their education and wellbeing.

Beyond faith and education is the individual care each boy receives to address the personal trauma they have endured. In the residence halls on campus, the boys live with four youth counselors, who are overseen by a coordinator. Each boy also is assigned a caseworker who helps them develop personal goals and a treatment plan focused on their individual needs and concerns, whether they struggle with anxiety, depression, anger, substance abuse, learning disabilities or some other challenge. We work to make sure every aspect of our boys’ lives is given the attention it deserves.

The structure and care provided by Hanna Boys Center have changed thousands of lives, and it continues to evolve in response to recent studies about the impact of trauma and the adversity on brain development and the long-term health and well being of those affected. A previous executive director of Hanna was once quoted as saying, “Every boy at Hanna is a gift, and it is our job to do the best we can with what we’ve got while the boy is here. We are not the final authors to his story.” Ultimately, it is our boys’ resilience and motivation that bring about the positive changes in their lives; Hanna is here to provide the environment, tools and love that ensure their success.

In part two of this series, we will discuss recent studies that have impacted how Hanna Boys Center approaches treatment for its troubled teens, and how this care is helping the boys author the next chapters in their stories. For more information: www.hannacenter.org

Brian Farragher, M.B.A. Executive Director Brian has the distinction of becoming the fourth executive director during Hanna Boys Center’s 70 years of service. He was welcomed to Hanna Boys Center on April 25, 2014.
Here’s A Way to Learn More About Mary, Queen of Heaven

by Maggie Maslak

Charlotte, N.C., Mar 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - A new, epic narrative about the life of Mary, Queen of Heaven has just been released with the hope of drawing individuals closer to the Mother of God during the upcoming 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima.

“We wanted to tell the story of Fatima. But, what the story of Fatima is really is the story of a battle,” Rick Rotondi, Vice President of New Business at Saint Benedict Press, told CNA.

“That battle goes a long way back to the very beginning of the Bible, with enmity with the serpent. It’s a long story and that’s what we are trying to tell: the battle that Our Lady is engaged with in modern times,” he continued.

The new program is titled Queen of Heaven: Mary’s Battle for You and was released by Saint Benedict Press only a few weeks ago. The video series is broken down into eight different segments, in a documentary-style format and is hosted by Leonardo Defilippis, a Shakespearean actor and founder of St. Luke Productions.

Throughout the segments, over a dozen theological experts such as Tim Staples, Fr. Dominic Legge, Dr. Carrie Gress, and Fr. Chris Alar weigh in on the life of the Mother of God. The videos also take viewers around the country to places like the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the World Apostolate of Fatima Shrine, and the St. John Paul II National Shrine, where parts of the program were filmed.

The program was created for group study in parishes, where individuals can come together and learn more about the Queen of Heaven as a parish. However, individual study is possible through the use of DVDs.

“As you go through the program, you are learning about the richness of the Marian devotions and how to incorporate them in your life. That full experience is reserved for the parishes, but individuals will have access to the DVD content and a book,” Rotondi said.

Rotondi, who is also one of the script writers and developers for the program, noted that the whole series took about nine months to complete, and is a unique program unlike any other.

The release of the series at the beginning of March “was very deliberate,” Rotondi explained, saying that the centenary of Our Lady of Fatima was the driving force behind its debut.

“Seventy-five percent of the content is a study of Mary in the Bible and Mariology, the study of Marian doctrine, and even Our Lady of Lourdes and Guadalupe. Twenty-five percent is Fatima,” Rotondi stated.

Since its release only a few weeks ago, Saint Benedict Press has received positive feedback about the series, and they hope it continues to grow.

As you go through the program, you are learning about the richness of the Marian devotions and how to incorporate them in your life.

“It’s in a number of parishes currently, and we are getting very favorable responses,” Rotondi said.

Moving forward, the material for Queen of Heaven is also going to be available in a Spanish edition this summer, and DVDs will be released later this year. A book will also be published this May.

Rotondi believes that the goal behind this new series is “to have a deeper love of Our Lady,” and he hopes this program will be able to draw individuals closer to the Mother of God.

“Our Lady always brings us to her Son. I think a lot of people who will watch this love our Lord already, but may have not yet considered Our Lady in these ways,” Rotondi said.

“The greatness of Our Lord is also revealed fully when you realize what a beautiful Queen he has.” ♠

April 4: Feast of the Annunciation

Save the Date

Garde este fecha

Santa Rosa Religious Education Congress
Congreso de Educación Religiosa de Santa Rosa
Saturday, August 19, 2017
Sabado, 19 de Agosto 2017
Cardinal Newman High School
Santa Rosa

• Registrations begins July 1, 2017.
• Mailings go out in June 2017.
• If you wish to receive the brochure, please send us your name, email & mailing address.
• El registro comienza 01 de julio de 2017
• Folletos salen en junio.
• Si desea recibir el folleto, por favor envíenos su nombre, dirección de correo electrónico y dirección postal.

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Diocese of Santa Rosa Department of Religious Education
(707) 566-3366 dre@srdiocese.org

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Julie Sparacio, Director
Child and Youth Protection
707-566-3309
jsparacio@srdiocese.org

Here’s A Way to Learn More About Mary, Queen of Heaven

by Maggie Maslak

Charlotte, N.C., Mar 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - A new, epic narrative about the life of Mary, Queen of Heaven has just been released with the hope of drawing individuals closer to the Mother of God during the upcoming 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima.

“We wanted to tell the story of Fatima. But, what the story of Fatima is really is the story of a battle,” Rick Rotondi, Vice President of New Business at Saint Benedict Press, told CNA.

“That battle goes a long way back to the very beginning of the Bible, with enmity with the serpent. It’s a long story and that’s what we are trying to tell: the battle that Our Lady is engaged with in modern times,” he continued.

The new program is titled Queen of Heaven: Mary’s Battle for You and was released by Saint Benedict Press only a few weeks ago. The video series is broken down into eight different segments, in a documentary-style format and is hosted by Leonardo Defilippis, a Shakespearean actor and founder of St. Luke Productions.

Throughout the segments, over a dozen theological experts such as Tim Staples, Fr. Dominic Legge, Dr. Carrie Gress, and Fr. Chris Alar weigh in on the life of the Mother of God. The videos also take viewers around the country to places like the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the World Apostolate of Fatima Shrine, and the St. John Paul II National Shrine, where parts of the program were filmed.

The program was created for group study in parishes, where individuals can come together and learn more about the Queen of Heaven as a parish. However, individual study is possible through the use of DVDs.

“As you go through the program, you are learning about the richness of the Marian devotions and how to incorporate them in your life. That full experience is reserved for the parishes, but individuals will have access to the DVD content and a book,” Rotondi said.

Rotondi, who is also one of the script writers and developers for the program, noted that the whole series took about nine months to complete, and is a unique program unlike any other.

The release of the series at the beginning of March “was very deliberate,” Rotondi explained, saying that the centenary of Our Lady of Fatima was the driving force behind its debut.

“Seventy-five percent of the content is a study of Mary in the Bible and Mariology, the study of Marian doctrine, and even Our Lady of Lourdes and Guadalupe. Twenty-five percent is Fatima,” Rotondi stated.

Since its release only a few weeks ago, Saint Benedict Press has received positive feedback about the series, and they hope it continues to grow.

As you go through the program, you are learning about the richness of the Marian devotions and how to incorporate them in your life.

“It’s in a number of parishes currently, and we are getting very favorable responses,” Rotondi said.

Moving forward, the material for Queen of Heaven is also going to be available in a Spanish edition this summer, and DVDs will be released later this year. A book will also be published this May.

Rotondi believes that the goal behind this new series is “to have a deeper love of Our Lady,” and he hopes this program will be able to draw individuals closer to the Mother of God.

“Our Lady always brings us to her Son. I think a lot of people who will watch this love our Lord already, but may have not yet considered Our Lady in these ways,” Rotondi said.

“The greatness of Our Lord is also revealed fully when you realize what a beautiful Queen he has.” ♠

April 4: Feast of the Annunciation

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Today when technology penetrates our lives in so many ways and materialism exerts such a powerful influence over us, Cardinal Sarah presents a bold book about the strength of silence. He says the pervasive noise of the modern world makes seeking moments of silence both harder and more necessary than ever.

Silence is the indispensable doorway to the divine, explains the Cardinal. He addresses the questions: Can those who do not know silence ever attain truth, beauty, or love? Do not wisdom, artistic vision, and devotion spring from silence, where the voice of God is heard in the depths of the human heart? After the international success of God or Nothing, Cardinal Sarah seeks to restore to silence its place of honor and importance.

GOD OR NOTHING

Cardinal Robert Sarah

“God or Nothing, Cardinal Sarah seeks to restore to silence its place of honor and importance.”

“A strong Church leader in a time of confusion offers thoughtful insights on the challenging issues of the day – from the culture to the family.”

— Raymond Arroyo, NY Times Best-Selling Author, EWTN Host The World Over

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Cardinal Gerhard Muller

Cardinal Müller, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has a unique perspective on the worldwide state of the Church, and the most pressing theological and moral questions of our times, which he answers in this interview in clear, inspiring terms, as did his predecessor Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in The Ratzinger Report.

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Creator and Host, Catholicism film series

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Baltimore Mourns Cardinal Keeler, Former Archbishop

by Adelaide Mena

Baltimore, Md., Mar 23 (CNA/EWTN News) - Cardinal William Henry Keeler, who was Archbishop of Baltimore from 1989 to 2007, has died at the age of 86, archdiocesan officials say.

He died early in the morning of March 23 at St. Martin's Home for the Aged in Catonsville, Maryland, a home administered by the Little Sisters of the Poor.

The cardinal’s funeral Mass will be held March 28 at Baltimore’s Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, after which his body will be interred in the basement crypt at the city’s Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore said in a statement that getting to know Cardinal Keeler was one of “the great blessings in my life.”

Archbishop Lori added that after he was appointed Archbishop of Baltimore in 2012 “I became more aware than ever of his tremendous ministry in the City of Baltimore and in the nine Maryland counties that comprise the Archdiocese.”

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. bishops’ conference, also offered his "prayers of gratitude for Cardinal Keeler's return to the Lord he so dearly loved," in a statement.

"As a priest, Bishop of Harrisburg, and Archbishop of Baltimore, the Cardinal worked to bring the hope of Christ to people's lives. He also built bridges of solidarity to people of other faiths as a leader in ecumenism and interreligious affairs," Cardinal DiNardo continued.

"Cardinal Keeler was a dear friend. The most fitting tribute we can offer is to carry forward his episcopal motto in our daily lives: 'Do the work of an evangelist.'"

Cardinal Keeler was a dear friend. The most fitting tribute we can offer is to carry forward his episcopal motto in our daily lives: ‘Do the work of an evangelist.’

Cardinal Keeler was born in San Antonio, Texas March 4, 1931. After growing up and attending Catholic schools in Pennsylvania, he joined the seminary and then attended the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained there as a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg in 1955, at the age of 24.

During the Second Vatican Council, Fr. Keeler served as secretary to Bishop George R. Leech of Harrisburg. He was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Harrisburg in 1979, and in 1983 became bishop of the same diocese. In 1989 he was named the 14th Archbishop of Baltimore, the oldest diocese in the United States.

Archbishop Keeler was also elected as president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1992, where he helped coordinate 1993’s World Youth Day celebrations in Denver, Colorado. Archbishop Keeler was appointed a cardinal by St. John Paul II in 1994.

He retired in 2007, at the age of 76.

Cardinal Keeler was very involved in both interreligious and ecumenical activities, as well as the pro-life movement.

At the USCCB, he served as the moderator for Catholic-Jewish relations as well as the Chair for the Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs between 1984 and 1987. He served on the International Catholic Orthodox Commission for Theological Dialogue, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches over the years. He also served twice as the Chair of the U.S. Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

In Baltimore, Cardinal Keeler worked hard to secure funding for at-risk children and youth to attend Catholic schools in the archdiocese. Today, the fund that bears his name has awarded over 16,500 scholarships and has raised more than $70 million dollars in funding.

Other efforts of Cardinal Keeler include his hosting of both Sts. John Paul II and Mother Teresa of Calcutta during their visits to Baltimore, and his efforts (see Cardinal Keeler p. 24)
The National Council of Catholic Women, established by the U.S. Catholic Bishops, will celebrate its 97th year of serving the Church and communities since its founding March 4, 1920.

Historic milestones in the NCCW history include: A White House reception for delegates from the first NCCW Convention in 1921, address by President Dwight D. Eisenhower at the 1954 Convention in Boston, Mother Teresa's first trip to the United States in 1960, and NCCW's presence at the historic signing of the Equal Pay for Equal Work Bill in 1963 with President John F. Kennedy.


The U.S. Catholic bishops created the National Council of Catholic Women to give women a unified voice, a program of service and a vehicle for collaboration. NCCW’s mission is to act through its members to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. For more information on resources or membership, go to the website at www.nccw.org.

Good Friday Collection to Benefit The Holy Land
On Good Friday, a pontifical collection is taken up in every parish in the United States. Catholics will gather to contribute to the annual collection with the proceeds supporting ministries and works in the Holy Land, largely under the direction of the Franciscans. The Pontifical Good Friday Collection is providing humanitarian aid to Christians and others who have disrupted by the war in Syria.

Vatican Information Service recently stated Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, addressed a letter to all bishops worldwide in view of the collection for the Holy Land.

“Presently, there are millions of refugees fleeing Syria and Iraq, where the roar of arms does not cease and the way of dialogue and concord seems to be completely lost. Senseless hatred seems to prevail instead, along with the helpless desperation of those who have lost everything and have been expelled from the land of their ancestors. If the Christians of the Holy Land are encouraged to resist, to the degree possible, the understandable temptation to flee, the faithful throughout the world are asked to take their plight to heart.”

The Pontifical Good Friday Collection offers a direct opportunity for parishioners to be witnesses of peace. Their support is a sign of Christian unity, which helps protect the Holy Places and supports Christians in the Holy Land. This annual Pontifical Good Friday Collection unites all Christians with the Holy Land.

The Pontifical Good Friday Collection supports parishes, Catholic schools and religious education in the Holy Land. The Pontifical Good Friday Collection also preserves the sacred shrines for pilgrims and provides assistance, including housing and food, for the poor and needy.

The Custos of the Holy Land, Father Francesco Patton, OFM, said, “It is important that the Christians all over the world support the church in the Holy Land, so we can continue our work.”

Last year’s Good Friday Collection provided support for the Holy Land in these ways:

- Provided emergency funds to the people in Syria and Iraq
- Supported 29 parishes, four homes for orphans, three academic institutions
- Helped keep 16 schools open for over 10,000 pre-K through grade 12 students
- Funded university scholarships for 295 students
- Provided 398 homes benefitting Christian families
- Helped rehabilitate over 100 homes for Christians families
- Provided senior care facilities in Bethlehem and Nazareth
- Created more than 1,500 jobs in the Holy Land
- Preserved 74 sanctuaries and shrines from the life of Jesus and the prophets
- Supported over 100 men preparing to be priests or brothers

For more information, please contact Ariana Cassard via email at communications@myfranciscan.com or call 410-740-5009.

Pope Francis’ schedule for Fatima visit released
by Elise Harris
Vatican City, Mar 20, 2017 (CNA/EWTN News) - On Monday, the Vatican released the official program for Pope Francis’ two-day visit to Portugal in May, where he’ll celebrate the centenary of the Fatima Marian apparitions and make a brief stop at an air base to meet the country’s president.

Francis will likely make a stop at his favorite Roman basilica, Saint Mary Major, sometime before leaving Rome at 2 p.m. May 12.

He’ll land at the air base in Monte Real around 4:20 p.m. local time, where he’ll be greeted by an official welcoming ceremony and meet with the president of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, before making his way to Fatima.

After his meeting with the president, the Pope is scheduled to stop by the chapel of the air base for a moment of prayer before boarding a helicopter that will take him to the Fatima’s multi-use stadium.

From there, he’ll hop inside an open car and drive to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima. Once he arrives around 5:30 p.m., Pope Francis will head to the Chapel of the Apparitions inside the sanctuary, where he’ll recite a prayer.

He’ll then bless the candles in the chapel and offer a special greeting, marking his first public speech of the trip, before praying the rosary with faithful.

The next day, May 13, which marks the first apparition of Mary to the three shepherd children Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, Francis will meet with Portugal’s Prime Minister António Costa at the city’s Casa “N.S. do Carmo” hotel-convent.

Francis will then head to the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary in Fatima, which sits next to the official Shrine, to say Mass. After the celebration, he’ll greet sick and disabled persons who are present.

Lunch will then be served with the Portuguese bishops at the Casa “N.S. do Carmo” before the Pope heads back to the Monte Real air base for his official farewell ceremony.

He’s scheduled to leave around 3 p.m. local time, arriving to Rome’s Ciampino airport around 7 p.m. local time. As usual, he’ll likely pay another visit to the basilica of St. Mary Major to pray and leave flowers before heading back to the Vatican.

Of all Marian apparitions, those relating to Our Lady of Fatima are among the most famous. On May 13, 1917, siblings Francisco and Jacinta Marto—age 9 and 7—and their cousin, 10-year-old Lucia dos Santos, took their sheep to graze near the Portuguese town of Fatima when they saw a figure of a woman dressed in white and holding a rosary.

After this first appearance, the Virgin Mary then appeared to the children on the 13th of every month from May until October. The message of the Fatima apparitions can be summarized primarily as a call to repentance and prayer.

In 1930, the Catholic Church proclaimed the supernatural character of the apparitions and a shrine was erected at Fatima. It was visited by Pope Paul VI May 13, 1967, and later by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

St. John Paul II had a particularly strong devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. After a harrowing assassination attempt in 1981, he credited his survival to her miraculous intervention. As a sign of his gratitude, he placed the bullet from the failed assassination in her crown.

“Pray for the brother who shot me, whom I have sincerely forgiven. United to Christ, as a priest and victim, I offer my sufferings for the Church and the world,” Pope John Paul II said on that occasion. ✝
3. **Fasting:** Jesus taught in scripture Mark 9: 29, that there are certain demons in our lives that can “only be driven out by prayer and fasting.” The USCCB’s Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence stresses that “the need for conversion and salvation is unchanging, as is the necessity that, confessing our sinfulness, we perform, personally and in community, acts of penance in pledge of our inward penitence and conversion.” The same statement places first priority to abstinence from meat every Friday, but also, fasting includes self-denial like giving up tasty deserts, a favorite beverage, TV, internet, shopping. If you want proof of the effectiveness of fasting, look no further. The recent Supreme Court decision affirming religious freedom was a direct result of the USCCB’s campaign on penance and fasting.

4. **Redemptive Suffering.** Redemptive suffering is the teaching that human suffering, when accepted and offered up in union with the Passion of Jesus, can remit the just punishment for one’s sins or for the sins of another. St. John Paul II wrote in Salifici Doloris “In bringing about the Redemption through suffering, Christ raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption. Thus each man, in his sufferings, can also become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ.” Pope Pius XII’s Encyclical on the Mystical Body revealed that the salvation (and conversion) of many souls depends on the prayers and voluntary penances offered by the Mystical Body for that intention. If you offer up your suffering, inconveniences and frustrations for the conversion of sinners and unite it with the Eucharist (the commemoration of the suffering of Christ), you can atone for the sins of others and give souls the opportunity to be opened up for grace to set in. “Suffering,” said St. Therese, “converts more souls than sermons.”

5. **Marian Pilgrimage.** Pilgrimage is a personal act of devotion and sacrifice. Pilgrimage sites abound in devotion and sacrifice. Pilgrimage places: models and nobility turned nuns, new agers turned Catholics, Atheist turned believers, “converts more souls than sermons.”

Indeed, as we witnessed during the past election cycle, those who have publicly opposed same-sex marriage for any reason are now framed as “haters”, “homophobes” or “anti-gay,” even when the person targeted has no record of animus or discrimination toward homosexuals, beyond the fact that they adhere to biblical teaching on marriage.

Liberals also attacked opponents of the Health and Human Services contraceptive mandate for conducting a “war on women.” Likewise, it’s rare for progressives to acknowledge the legitimacy of free exercise rights when the issue hinges on access to abortion, birth control, or bathroom rights for “transgender” students.

“We are likely to see pitched battles in courts and Congress, state legislatures and town halls,” said Alito, as he referenced Hobby Lobby’s legal challenge to the HHS mandate. “But the most important fight is for the hearts and minds of our fellow Americans. It is up to all of us to evangelize our fellow Americans about the issue of religious freedom.”

Avocati Christi, the organization that sponsored the justice’s address, helps Catholic lawyers and judges “learn about the Catholic faith and Catholic social teaching and to help them integrate these into their life and practice.”

The professional organization is an initiative of St. Paul Inside the Walls, a program of evangelization sponsored by the Diocese of Patterson, New Jersey.

Justice Alito’s reflections on emerging threats to religious freedom mark a growing awareness that Catholics and Christians no longer feel at home in their own country.

This is the topic of Philadelphia Archbishop Charles Chaput’s Strangers in a Strange Land: Living the Catholic Faith in a Post-Christian World.

Similar themes are explored in Rod Dreher’s The Benedict Option, which outlines an array of political, moral and cultural problems faced by religious believers and then offers practical strategies for living an authentic Christian life and for making church outreach more vibrant and effective.

Ross Douthat, in a column that addresses the gathering storm for Christians, presented Dreher’s discussion as a good starting point: if every Catholic high school or college were one degree less secularized and worldly; if every Protestant megachurch were one degree more liturgical and theological; if not every Catholic but more Catholics became priests and nuns; if not every Christian family but more Christian families decided to have a third child or a fourth or fifth; if not every young Christian but more young Christians looked at working-class neighborhoods as an important mission field; if Catholics and Protestants alike could imitate even part of Mormonism’s dense networking … all this would be a form of the Benedict Option in action, and both the churches and the common culture would be better for it. ❖

(Converting Friends & Family, cont. from page 9)

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5. Marian Pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is a personal act of devotion and sacrifice. Pilgrimage sites abound in graces. If your future, St. Augustine likes travel, bring him along on a Marian pilgrimage. There is a plethora of conversion stories through Mary’s intercession in pilgrimage places: models and nobility turned nuns, new agers turned Catholics, Atheist turned believers, drug addicts turned sober, actor turned reverent (that would be Jim Caviezel). If however, only you get the chance to go, pray for the graces from Mary’s intercession to live a life that will be an evangelization tool in and of itself. St. Louis de Montfort wrote: “[Mary] attained an immense and inconceivable degree of grace. So much so, that the Almighty made her the sole custodian of his treasures and the sole dispenser of his graces. She can now ennable, exalt and enrich all she chooses. She can lead them along the narrow path to heaven and guide them through the narrow gate to life.”

Conversion can occur immediately or gradually, during one’s life or the moment before his death. Your prayers and sacrifices for conversion of souls are always in God’s Will and will bear fruit at the appropriate time. So, don’t give up on your friends and family. Convert them in secret. ❖
Insides That Didn’t Decompose—And Other Stunning Facts About Oscar Romero

by David Ramos and Elise Harris

San Salvador, El Salvador, Mar 24 (CNA/EWTN News) - In his role as Vicar General, Monsignor Ricardo Urioste was one of the closest collaborators of Oscar Romero, the archbishop of San Salvador who was martyred for the faith in 1980 and beatified two years ago.

And this monsignor has some stories to tell.

Among the most fascinating involve details surrounding the day Romero was killed, what the late archbishop really thought about the controversial and problematic Liberation Theology, and the fact that the martyr’s insides hadn’t decomposed when they were exhumed three years after his death.

Archbishop Romero was brutally killed while celebrating Mass on March 24, 1980 - a time when El Salvador was on the brink of civil war. In February 2015, Pope Francis officially recognized his death as having been for hatred of the faith and gave the green light for his beatification.

Msgr. Urioste, who currently heads up the Archbishop Romero Foundation, said that during the time the martyr lived, whenever “he preached, spoke, was a pastor, they accused him of being communist, Marxist, a pollutant, and a thousand things.”

However, he noted how after 12 years of extensive study on the life and writings of the archbishop, the Vatican never found anything that supported these claims.

In an interview with CNA, Msgr. revealed some of the lesser known facts surrounding the new blessed, as well as his continuing legacy on the Church and the world at large.

What happened on the day Archbishop Romero died?

Msgr. Urioste can easily recall the day that Archbishop Romero was killed, saying that it was “an ordinary day of work” for him.

In the morning the archbishop had a meeting with a group of priests, and then they ate lunch together. After the meeting he went to confession with his usual confessor, which was a priest named Fr. Segundo Ascué.

Once he confessed, Archbishop Romero went to celebrate a 6 p.m. Mass in San Salvador’s hospital of Divine Providence, which was staffed by nuns. The Mass, Mons. Urioste recalled, had been widely publicized throughout the diocese.

While he was celebrating Mass in the hospital’s chapel, the archbishop was shot in the chest from outside.

Msgr. Urioste said that after getting a phone call informing him of what happened, “I immediately went to the hospital, and he was already taken to the polyclinic. A television set arrived, they interviewed me, and after I went to the hospital where he was.”

He recalled how as the sisters were going to embalm Archbishop Romero’s body, he told them “please be careful not to drop his insides anywhere, but that they pick them up and bury them, and they did, burying them in front of the little apartment he had in the hospital where he lived.”

Three years later, on the occasion St. John Paul II’s visit to the country, the nuns of the hospital “made a monument to the Virgin in the same place where we had buried (Romero’s) insides.”

“When they were digging they ran into the box and the plastic bag where they had placed the insides, and the blood was still liquid and the insides didn’t have any bad smell,” he revealed.

“I don’t want to say that it was a miracle, it’s possible that it’s a natural phenomenon, but the truth is that this happened, and we told the archbishop at the time (Arturo Rivera y Damas), look monsignor, this has happened and he said ‘be quiet, don’t tell anyone because they are going to say that we are our inventions,’” he said.

However, “Pope John Paul II was given a small canister with Archbishop Romero’s blood,” he noted.

Msgr. Urioste recalled that when John Paul II arrived to San Salvador, the first thing he did “was go to the cathedral without telling anyone. The cathedral was closed, they had to go and look for someone to open it so that the Pope could enter and kneel before the tomb of Archbishop Romero.”

John Paul II asked during his visit that no one manipulate the memory of Archbishop Romero, Msgr. Urioste recalled, and lamented how “they politicized him.”

“The left had politicized him, putting him as their banner. And the right politicized him, saying things that are untrue about the bishop, that are purely false, they denigrated him.”

One of the things that the Church in El Salvador wants, Msgr. Urioste said, is that “the figure of the archbishop, known now a little more than he was before, is a cause for reflection, a motive for peace, a motive for forgiveness, a motive for reconciliation with one another, and that we all have more patience to renew ourselves and follow the paths that Archbishop Romero proposed to us.”

“I think that (Romero’s) figure is going to contribute a lot to a better meeting and reconciliation in El Salvador,” he said.

What Archbishop Romero really thought about Liberation Theology

Despite the many accusations leveled against the archbishop of San Salvador, his Vicar General said that Romero “never had a Marxist thought or Marxist ideology in his mind.”

“If there had been, the Vatican, which has studied so much, would not have beatified him, if they had found that he had Marxist interests.”

The real backbone of his closeness to the poor, he said, was the Gospel and the teaching of the Church.

“He was a servant of the Gospel, he never read anything from Liberation Theology, but he read the Bible.”

Msgr. Urioste noted that the archbishop’s library, “had all these books from the early Fathers of the Church, from the current Magisterium of the Church, but (he) never even opened any of the books from Liberation Theology, or Gustavo Gutiérrez, or of anyone else.”

“He read the Bible and there he encountered a Jesus in love with the poor and in this way started walking toward him,” he said.

What set Archbishop Romero apart.

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of Archbishop Romero was “his great sense of work. He was an extremely hardworking man and devoted to his work day and night – until midnight and until dawn,” Msgr. Urioste said.

He recalled how the archbishop would begin to prepare his Sunday homilies the day before, and would always include three reflections on the Eucharist. When Romero preached, he made frequent reference to the Fathers of the Church, based his comments on Church teaching and related his thoughts to the country’s current reality.

“A homily that doesn’t have this relation with what is happening sounds the same here as in Ireland, in Paris, as anywhere,” the priest said.

He recalled how in Romero’s time the government was “a ferocious military dictatorship, which had ‘national security’ as its theme.”

Everyone who either sided with the poor or expressed concern for them “was accused of being communist, they were sent to be killed without thinking more. There were 70 thousand deaths like this in the country at that time,” Msgr. Urioste noted.

“The social economic reality was a lot of poverty, of a great lack of unemployment, of low wages.”

Ultimately, Archbishop Romero’s beatification, the monsignor said, is “a triumph of the truth.”

It is a triumph, he said, of the truth of “who Archbishop Romero really was, what he did, how he did it, from the Word of God, from the Magisterium of the Church, in defense of the poor, who were the favored ones of Jesus Christ and who were also the favored ones of Archbishop Romero.”

April 29: St. Catherine of Siena
El 13 de Mayo del 2017 marca el 100 aniversario del comienzo de las apariciones de la Virgen María en Fátima. Con el fin de honrar adecuadamente este gran evento, convoco a todos en la Diócesis a participar en un programa para enriquecer nuestra comprensión y compromiso a la Devoción Mariana. Les pido a cada una de nuestras parroquias que establezcan un equipo de Promotores Marianos para patrocinar y supervisar por uno o más meses de duración (33 días) Retiros Marianos utilizando el programa diseñado específicamente para este propósito por el Padre Michael Gaitley, MIC. Se suministrará a cada parroquia el material necesario para 50 a 100 participantes en español y en inglés, dependiendo del tamaño de la parroquia. Se pueden encontrar materiales adicionales en una variedad de páginas marianas en el internet. Estos Retiros Marianos de 33 días, los cuales deben ser de 90 minutos cada semana, conducido por un Promotor Mariano, servirán como preparación personal así como para la Parroquia y Consagración Diocesana.

Desde el Obispo

Mons. Robert F. Vasa es el sexto obispo de la Diócesis de Santa Rosa en California.

Para cada parroquia se puede obtener una Indulgencia Plenaria, no sólo en este año, la recitación del Santo Rosario ya sea en familia o en público. La participación en los retiros de grupo parroquial que serán ofrecidos en cada parroquia es una forma de garantizar una profunda devoción a María, un mayor compromiso con el Rosario y una preparación adecuada para la re-dedicación en Diciembre.

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**Un llamado a la oración**

by Fr. William Saunders, EWTN

Dear Fr Saunders, one of the devotions in our parish every Lent is the Stations of the Cross. Could you please tell me the origins of this devotion?

Since Lent is a penitential season of preparation for Easter, the Stations of the Cross, which follow the path of Christ from Pontius Pilate’s praetorium to Christ’s tomb have been a popular devotion in parishes. In the 16th century, this pathway was officially entitled the “Vía Dolorosa” (Sorrowful Way) or simply Way of the Cross or Stations of the Cross.

This devotion has evolved over time. Tradition holds that our Blessed Mother visited daily the scenes of our Lord’s passion. After Constantine legalized Christianity in the year 312, this pathway was marked with its important stations. St. Jerome (342-420), living in Bethlehem during the later part of his life, attested to the crowds of pilgrims from various countries who visited those holy places and followed the Way of the Cross.

Interestingly, St. Sylvia, in her “Peregrination ad loca sancta” (380), in which she described in great detail various religious practices, did not mention a particular practice or set of prayers for following the stations; however, this omission does not entail that pilgrims did not in fact follow the Way of the Cross.

Actually, the devotion continued to grow in popularity. In the fifth century, an interest developed in the Holy Land could do so in a devotional, spiritual way in their hearts. For instance, St. Petronius, Bishop of Bologna, constructed a group of chapels at the monastery of San Stefano, which depicted the more important shrines of the Holy Land, including several of the stations. (The same notion inspired the building of the Franciscan Monastery in Washington, where one can visit and see reproductions of the Bethlehem Chapel, the tomb of our Lord, and

(see The Cross p. 20)
Señor. Pasaba horas pensando en Dios, por lo que siempre fue considerado como un contemplativo. Sus restos fueron trasladados posteriormente al ex convento de San Francisco, actualmente Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de Tlaxcala.

Antonio y Juan nacieron en el pueblo de Tizatlán, entonces parte del señorío de Tlaxcala. Educados primero por franciscanos y luego por dominicos, los niños recolectaron idólos en poblados de la región para luego destruirlos. Los pobladores de la región los sorprendieron y mataron a ambos niños con palos.

Su precoz vocación de eremita fue reconocida en el decreto de heroicidad de virtudes, según el cual después de las apariciones “se escondía detrás de los árboles para rezar solo; otras veces subía a los lugares más elevados y solitarios y ahí se entregaba a la oración tan intensamente que no oía las voces de los que lo llamaban”.

La vida de Jacinta se caracterizó por el Espíritu de sacrificio, el amor al Corazón de María, al Santo Padre y a los pecadores. Llevada por la preocupación de la salvación de los pecadores y del desagravio al Corazón Inmaculado de María, de todo ofrecía un sacrificio a Dios.

Sacerdote advierte sobre las 2 grandes seducciones que distraen al hombre de buscar a Dios

ROMA (ACI) – “El gran circo mediático” que gira continuamente alrededor de los hombres con imágenes y sonidos seductores para alejarlos de sí mismos y de la realidad no debe motivar al cristiano a “encerrarse en una torre inaccesible”, sino a asumir el desafío de mostrar la presencia activa de Dios también en el mundo de hoy, afirmó el sacerdote jesuita Benjamin González Buelta.

“Nuestro reto no es huir de la realidad, sino acercarnos a ella con todos nuestros sentidos bien abiertos para mirar y contemplar, para disolver las escorias de las apariencias seductoras, y ver, sentir y gustar la realidad, percibiendo en lo más profundo de ella la presencia activa de Dios que nos ama con una creatividad infinita, para que nos encontremos con Él y trabajemos juntos por su reino”, señaló.

El sacerdote, autor de varios libros, hizo esta exhortación en su artículo titulado “La seducción del mundo y la seducción de Dios”, publicado en el número 4002 de la revista Jesuita La Civiltà Cattolica.

En su texto, el P. González Buelta indicó que de acuerdo a los sociólogos “vivimos en una cultura de la seducción”; y que tras la caída de las grandes utopías de la época moderna –capitalismo y socialismo–, un “sentido de desilusión ha llenado los espacios de la sociedad postmoderna”.

“Ante el vacío interior y la pérdida de la dimensión trascendente de la vida, que nos hacen sentir huérfanos, han surgido dos grandes proyectos vanos para encontrar a ‘algo más’: uno el mundo y la seducción de Dios”, continuó. “El milagro que permitirá la canonización de ambos pastorcitos es la curación de un niño brasileño.

Los hermanos Francisco y Jacinta fueron beatificados en el año 2000 por el Papa San Juan Pablo II. Junto con su prima Lucía, fueron testigos de las apariciones de la Virgen María en Cova de Iría, en Fátima, entre mayo y octubre de 1917. Francisco tenía nueve años, Jacinta siete y Lucía diez.

En total, la Virgen se les apareció 6 veces. En la tercera aparición, el 13 de julio, la Virgen les reveló el Secreto de Fátima. Según las crónicas, Lucía se puso pálida y gritó de miedo llamando a la Virgen por su nombre. Hubo un trueno, y la visión terminó.

Durante el periodo de tiempo en que se produjeron las apariciones, los tres niños tuvieron que hacer frente a las incomprensiones de sus familias y vecinos, y a la persecución del gobierno portugués, profundamente anticlerical. Pero aceptaron esas dificultades con fe y valentía: “Si nos matan, no importa. Vamos al cielo”, decían.

Tras las apariciones, los tres pastorcitos siguieron su vida normal, hasta la muerte de Francisco y Jacinta.

Francisco mostró un espíritu de amor y reparación para con Dios ofendido, a pesar de su vida tan corta. Su gran preocupación era “consolar a Nuestro Señor”. Pasaba horas pensando en Dios, por lo que siempre fue considerado como un contemplativo.

El Papa Aprueba Milagro Que Hará Santos A Pastorcitos De Fátima Francisco Y Jacinta

VATICANO (ACI) - Los pastorcitos de Fátima, Francisco y Jacinta Martos, serán declarados santos pronto luego que el Papa Francisco aprobase este jueves el decreto que reconoce el milagro atribuido a la intercesión de ambos hermanos, que junto a Sor Lucía fueron testigos de las apariciones de la Virgen en Portugal en 1917.

El Vaticano informó que el Pontífice recibió al Prefecto de la Congregación de las Causas de los Santos, Cardenal Angelo Amato, y aprobó la promulgación del decreto que reconoce “el milagro atribuido a la intercesión del Beato Francisco Marto, nacido el 11 de junio de 1908 y muerto el 4 de abril de 1919, y de la Beata Jacinta Marto, nacida el 11 de marzo de 1910 y muerta el 20 de febrero de 1920”.

El milagro que permitirá la canonización de ambos pastorcitos es la curación de un niño brasileño.

Los Niños Mártires De Tlaxcala En México Serán Canonizados

REDACCION CENTRAL (ACI) - El Papa Francisco aprobó hoy la canonización de Cristóbal, Antonio y Juan, los “Niños Mártires de Tlaxcala” asesinados por odio a la fe en México entre 1524 y 1527.

Según informó la Oficina de Prensa de la Santa Sede, el Santo Padre aprobó “los votos favorables de la Congregación para la canonización” de los tres mártires mexicanos.

Cristóbal, Antonio y Juan fueron beatiﬁcados el 6 de mayo de 1990, en la Basílica de Guadalupe de Ciudad de México, por San Juan Pablo II.

Cristóbal nació en Atlhuaiztla, en el actual estado mexicano de Tlaxcala, en el entonces Virreinato de Nueva España. Fue hijo del cacique Acxotetcatl.

El niño fue educado por los frailes franciscanos que evangelizaban la región, entre 1524 y 1527. Tras bautizarse, exhortaba a su padre y a su familia para que dejaran la embriaguez y la adoración de ídolos, causando la ira de su progenitor. A los 12 años, producto de los golpes y quemaduras provocadas por su padre, Cristóbal murió.

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other important shrines of the Holy Land.)

In 1342, the Franciscans were appointed as guardians of the shrines of the Holy Land. The faithful received indulgences for praying at the following stations: At Pilate’s house, where Christ met His mother, where He spoke to the women, where He met Simon of Cyrene, where the soldiers stripped Him of His garments, where He was nailed to the cross, and at His tomb.

William Wey, an English pilgrim, visited the Holy Land in 1462, and is credited with the term “stations.” He described the manner in which a pilgrim followed the steps of Christ. Prior to this time, the path usually followed the reverse course of ours today—moving from Mount Calvary to Pilate’s house. At this time, the reverse—going from Pilate’s house to Calvary—seems to have taken hold.

When the Moslem Turks blocked the access to the Holy Land, reproductions of the stations were erected at popular spiritual centers, including the Dominican Priory at Cordova and Poor Clare Convent of Messina (early 1400s); Nuremberg (1468); Louvain (1505); Bamberg, Fribourg and Rhodes (1507); and Antwerp 1520. Many of these stations were reproduced by renowned artists and are considered masterpieces today. By 1587, Zuallardo reported that the Moslems forbade anyone “to make any halt, nor to pay veneration to [the stations] with uncovered head, nor to make any other demonstration,” basically suppressing this devotion in the Holy Land. Nevertheless, the devotion continued to grow in popularity in Europe.

At this time, the number of the stations varied. William Wey’s account has 14 stations, but only five correspond to our own. Some versions included the house of Dives (the rich man in the Lazarus story), the city gate through which Christ passed, and the house of Dives (the rich man in the Lazarus story), which correspond to our own. Some versions included the house of Dives (the rich man in the Lazarus story), where Christ met His Blessed Mother; Simon of Cyrene helps to carry the cross; Veronica wipes the face of Jesus; the second fall; Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem; the third fall; Jesus is stripped of His garments; Jesus is nailed to the cross; Jesus dies on the cross; Jesus is taken down from the cross; and Jesus is laid in the tomb.

Because of the intrinsic relationship between the passion and death of our Lord with His resurrection, several of the devotional booklets now include a 15th station, which commemorates the Resurrection. A plenary indulgence is granted for those who piously exercise the Way of the Cross, actually moving from station to station where they are legitimately erected and while meditating on the passion and death of our Lord (“Enchiridion of Indulgences,” No. 63).

Those who are impeded from visiting a church may gain the same indulgence by piously reading and meditating on the passion and death of our Lord for one-half hour. The continued importance of the stations in the devotional life of Catholics is attested by both Pope Paul VI, who approved a Gospel-based version of the stations in 1975, and Pope John Paul II, who has also written his own version.

Fr. Saunders is president of the Notre Dame Institute and associate pastor of Queen of Apostles Parish, both in Alexandria, VA.

Article from the March 10, 1994 issue of Arlington Catholic Herald
A veteran Vatican official praised EWTN foundress Mother Angelica as a pioneer of the New Evangelization, saying the way in which the Church speaks to the men and women of today wouldn’t be the same without her influence.

“I think Mother Angelica was a New Evangelizer ante litteram (before her time),” Monsignor Graham Bell told CNA. An official of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization who has spent around three decades in Rome, Msgr. Bell said that while St. John Paul II coined the phrase some 30 years ago, Mother Angelica had been an active player “long before.”

“She just fits into that so well, because why do we have the New Evangelization? Not because the Gospel is new – the Gospel is ever-new, but it’s also unchanging, and the ‘new’ in the New Evangelization is essentially seeking to find new languages with which to communicate the Gospel to the men and women of our time.”

Mother Mary Angelica of the Annunciation founded EWTN in 1981, and it has since become the largest religious media network in the world. She died March 27, 2016 after a lengthy struggle with the aftereffects of a stroke. She was 92 years-old.

Mother Angelica, Msgr. Bell said, was able to talk about even difficult or sensitive topics in a meaningful way that always brought people “back to the center, which is Christ.”

Here is CNA’s full interview with Msgr. Bell:

One of the reasons I wanted to speak to you about this is because of the frequent remarks you’ve made in the past about Mother Angelica and what she accomplished. Why is she such a striking and important person for you?

I came to Mother Angelica not through her television programs, but maybe at the beginning of the 2000s, there was a craze—maybe it was more popular then, I’m not sure, but there was a kind of podcast craze, and what EWTN did at that time is they would put out Mother Angelica live as a podcast, I couldn’t see how people were reacting in the studio to what she was doing, but this great humanity came out. I think Newman got his motto from Saint Francis de Sales, and I think Francis de Sales said heart speaks to heart, whereas the tongue just hits the ear. You always had the impression with Mother Angelica that her heart was behind what she was saying. It struck people as true because she recognized it as true, and I think this is a phenominal gift. It’s a gift every preacher should seek to have, but it’s also a gift that every Christian should seek to have. This phenominal capacity to communicate and to communicate the unchanging truth of the Gospel in a way that’s relevant for men and women today, and that’s an art, it’s a grace.

Do you think this is a reason she’s been so attractive and appealing to so many people?

Yes, I do. Because language changes, and it changes now at a greater pace than it’s ever changed, and Mother Angelica in my opinion was able to bridge the gap. Sometimes the institutional Church isn’t good at speaking to people, but I think Mother Angelica, first of all with her many books, and then when she got the television and radio thing going, she was capable of bridging that gap. I can think of many things she said about people with addictions, you know? Sometimes the Church isn’t good at doing that, but she was good at looking at things which were difficult to talk about, but talking about them in a way that was very, very meaningful and always bringing people back to the center, which is Christ. I listened to all of her podcasts, and I just thought it was phenomenal. It certainly helped me in my preaching, and also helped me in the living of my priesthood.

In view from your position on the Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, how do you think Mother Angelica has influenced the New Evangelization? Clearly she’s been a huge personality.

I think Mother Angelica was a New Evangelizer ante litteram (before her time). I think John Paul II coined the expression himself in 1979 when he was in Poland, and what Mother Angelica had been doing long before that was certainly New Evangelization, certainly. She just fits into that so well, because why do we have the New Evangelization? Not because the Gospel is new, the Gospel is ever-new, but it’s also unchanging, and the “new” in the New Evangelization is essentially seeking to find new languages—I use the term language in the extended sense – with which to communicate the Gospel to the men and women of our time, who obviously have to hear the Gospel in a language which can understand. But the thing about Mother Angelica is, it was never the case of communicating a content which really didn’t concern her. Her communicating the Gospel was she was really communicating a part of herself, because Christ was so much a part of her and a part of her religious vocation. In communicating Christ through television, through radio, through her many books, she was actually communicating a part of herself, she was so identified with Christ, and I think that’s the heart of the New Evangelization. Obviously another thing I think is very close to the heart of the New Evangelization is the whole question of witness. Because how did Jesus communicate the Gospel to his disciples? He is the Gospel in himself and in his person. It was done through what he said and what he did, and what he said and what did find their center in his very person. So it must be for those who witness to the Gospel. It’s not enough just to speak about Christ, and it’s not enough just to do good works. There has to be a relationship so that what we say is explained by what we do, and what we do is explained by what we say. And I think in Mother Angelica, as in the great saints, this is exemplified, this is exemplified very, very strongly.

A lot of people see the impact she had specifically in the Church in the United States and say that she changed the Church in the U.S. during a really critical time, but we also see that this is spreading very internationally. With your experience and in your time following EWTN, how do you see that she’s influenced culture even here in Europe?

Mother Angelica, it must never be forgotten, was a woman religious. And women religious have a very, very important role to play in the New Evangelization and in the Church generally, because people react so favorably to them, because they express the maternity of the Church in a way in which priests and men religious really aren’t capable of doing. Mother Angelica, I think, is exemplary in this, and in her clarity of identity. What you see is what you got, there was no mystification there. You saw this nun with her habit, and she was always the same, the message was always the same, and this sense of authenticity I think absolutely captivates people. And I think that’s a big part of her secret and why she’s so popular. It’s this capacity of expressing maternity in an age in which maternity is not very fashionable.

(see Mother Angelica, p. 24)
April 5th
Catholic Cursillo Fellowship Gathering
Want a Catholic friend? Come join us. Develop friendships, enjoy singing and fellowship, hear how other Catholics are living their life of holiness and pray as a group before the Blessed Sacrament. Fellowship gatherings of Catholics are held twice a month. Catholic Cursillo is a movement within the Catholic Church based on friendship. We would love to be your friend. Join us on April 5 from 6-8 pm at St. Eugene's Faith Room in Santa Rosa. For further information call Debbie Simonson at 707-763-7165 or 904-463-1070.

April 6th
Chrism Mass
Cathedral of St. Eugene on Thursday, April 6, 2017, at 5:30 p.m.

April 7 - 9
Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat
Do not continue to live in shame, fear or numbness: Rachel’s Vineyard heals hearts broken by abortion. rachelsvineyard@gmail.com (707) 967-1101
March 15th (deadline) From St. Mary’s Arcata
Graduating High School Seniors with an Italian background are invited to apply for a $400 scholarship offered through the Italian Catholic Federation. Please apply online at www.icf.org. Deadline is March 15th, 2017. Questions? Call Rosemary at 845-0136.

April 8th
“Joy,” A Marriage Enrichment Group at St. Eugene
If you’re a married couple in your 20s, 30s or 40s, join us for a marriage enrichment program on the second Saturday of each month from 2-3:30 pm at St. Eugene’s Cathedral in the youth room (you can enter through the gym). Our next meeting is on Saturday, April 8th and we will provide childcare. If you plan to bring children please let us know in advance how many and the ages of your children. At our monthly Joy group, we pray together, discuss practical marriage advice, and allow couples a chance to reconnect in the midst of busy schedules. Please contact Erik and Stephanie Bjornstrom at 510-566-6641 or ebjornst@gmail.com for more information. God bless your marriages and families!

April 15th
Catholic Cursillo Fellowship Gathering
Want a Catholic friend? Come join us. Develop friendships, enjoy singing and fellowship, hear how other Catholics are living their life of holiness and pray as a group before the Blessed Sacrament. Fellowship gatherings of Catholics are held twice a month. Catholic Cursillo is a movement within the Catholic Church based on friendship. We would love to be your friend. Join us on April 5 from 6-8 pm at St. Eugene’s Faith Room in Santa Rosa. For further information call Debbie Simonson at 707-763-7165 or 904-463-1070.

April 30th
Natural Family Planning Class
You are invited to put some “spring” in your marriage by going to the next Natural Family Planning class on April 30, 2017 from 7-9pm. Visit www.ccil.org to register for the English class in Santa Rosa. Questions? please call 707-542-3635.

Every Saturday
Morning of Prayer at St. Helena Catholic Church, St. Helena. 9 -10am, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual confessions; daily Mass at 10am followed by the Rosary. All are invited to begin their weekend with some quiet time before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Come for all or part of the morning.

Oakville House of Prayer (Carmelite Monastery)
Morning Of Recollection every first Saturday of the month; Spiritual Talk 9-10am; Confessions 10-11am; Mass 11am.
Bible Study Tuesdays with Father Michael Buckley, O.C. D. 8:30, following the 8am Mass.
Confessions (English)
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10-12pm, 3-5pm, 8-9pm
Confessions (Spanish)
Wednesday 10-12pm, 3-5pm, 8-9pm
20 Mount Carmel Drive, Oakville, CA 707-944-2454
www.oakvillecarmelites.org

To have your calendar event listed please email us! Srdiocese1@gmail.com
On Saturday, March 25, 2017, on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, Bishop Robert F. Vasa presided at a Mass of Dedication at the Cathedral of St. Eugene in Santa Rosa. This ceremony was held to consecrate the two new altars that were recently installed due to the renovation of the sanctuary. Both altars are works of art. The older, high altar, made of Sienna and Carrera marble with a colorful baldacchino that has mosaic tile artwork showing the glory of Christ’s Ascension into heaven, was rescued from a 100 year old church that was slated for demolition. The church of the Ascension of the Lord was located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and, in its day, was a marvel to behold. It seated 1,300 people and was located in a thriving, working class town. As often happens, demographics change, numbers decrease and buildings fall into disrepair. This is what happened at Ascension Parish. Not wanting to see a sacred object profaned, and seeing the value of what was being discarded, Fr. Frank Epperson, Rector of the Cathedral, purchased the high altar, baldacchino and communion rails and brought them to their new home on the other side of the country. Brought to St. Eugene’s in pieces, in two large trucks in October of 2014, they had to be reconstructed in their new home, piece by piece. For this daunting task, we were blessed to have MCI, Inc. and its amazing crew of marble masons led by Darryl Gentry. They did a spectacular job of reconstructing and rebuilding these venerable objects.

In addition to this “new old” altar, St. Eugene’s has been blessed with a brand new main altar which was hand-crafted by local artisan, Patrick Arend who is a master carpenter/cabinet maker. Mr. Arend, a parishioner at St. Apollinaris Church in Napa, has also crafted beautiful altars for St. Francis Solano parish in Sonoma and the Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa. The appreciation we have for the time, talent and love that he put into this new altar cannot be adequately expressed.

The faithful packed the Cathedral to be a part of this once in a lifetime ceremony. In his homily, Bishop Vasa quoted the prologue of St. John’s gospel: “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God … and the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.” He went on to remind us that in a way, Mary, the Mother of God, was the first altar of the New Testament, in that she offered the sacrifice of herself and of her Son, as he died on the Cross. The altar is not only a table for a Paschal Banquet but is also a table of sacrifice. A unique table on which the sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated in mystery and the table at which we gather to give thanks to God and to receive the good gifts and graces which we need to carry out God’s work in the world. It is worthy of dignity and of respect, for at the Consecration, the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the Christian’s life, is conferred. Bishop Vasa then went on to explain the various rituals of this special Mass of Dedication and why they are important. First, the Litany of the Saints is sung, asking all of the saints to gather with us and pray that the altar be blessed. Second, the deposing of the relics in the altar. The ritual tells us, “the triumphant victims come to the throne of God. Fifth, the placing and lighting of the candles on the altar, signifying that from this place the light of Christ must shine and that we must spread this light in our lives and bring that light to a darkened world. Finally, the altar is clothed in clean, white linen as is befitting a banquet from which we receive the sacred Body and Blood of the Lord.

Arend, a parishioner at St. Apollinaris Church portrayed through bricks and mortar the mystery of salvation. ‘This is the Anointed One. Fourth, we place incense on the altar, so that in a sense, the altar is Christ. It is the Anointed One. Fourth, we place incense on the altar, a sign that Christ’s sacrifice that is perpetuated here in mystery ascends to God as an odor of sweetness and also that our prayers rise up pleasing and acceptable to the throne of God. Fifth, the placing and lighting of the candles on the altar, signifying that from this place the light of Christ must shine and that we must spread this light in our lives and bring that light to a darkened world. Finally, the altar is clothed in clean, white linen as is befitting a banquet from which we receive the sacred Body and Blood of the Lord.

After the Mass of Dedication, Fr. Epperson, under whose vision and direction this all came to be, was asked why he undertook such a major renovation as this. He stated that, “St. Eugene’s is the Cathedral of the Diocese of Santa Rosa. When it was originally built, it was built to be a neighborhood church, not a cathedral, so it never really had the beauty, the dignity that the seat of the Bishop should have. I sought to give it the beauty and the dignity that it deserved as the Cathedral Parish.” He continued, “There is also a much deeper reason, though, for undertaking this renovation and that has to do with the primacy of beauty in worship. A quote that I have come to live by, having to do with the importance of beauty in a church says, ‘Just as a sacrament is a visible expression of an invisible reality, so a sacramental architecture portrays through bricks and mortar the mystery of salvation.’ This is what I wanted to attain in the Cathedral. That sense of transcendence, of taking us out of our everyday world, with all of the worries and cares that ‘the world’ entails, and transporting us upward. We need to look upward when we worship. During the Consecration, the Sanctuary is filled with a myriad of angels. This is where we must look – at the re-presentation of the Sacrifice of Calvary and heaven. Those of us still on this earth need to be mindful of those angels and of all the saints that have gone before us and who are now assisting us in our journey to heaven. Being still tied to earth, we human beings rely on symbols and signs to assist us in fully worshipping God. This is why visuals like stained glass, a grand altar and baldacchino and other sense stimulants are important. They assist us and remind that there is a much different (much better) world waiting for us!” When asked if there is ever a time to look outward and not just upward, Fr. Epperson explained, “Definitely! It is when we put our Faith into action that we look outward and perform the corporal works of mercy that are demanded of us as Christians.”
I don’t know about that, about what impact she’s made here. I think she’s made a positive impact to the extent that I think women religious always make a positive impact. When women religious are faithful to their vocations and faithful to the Church, they always make an impact, and I think the history of the Church demonstrates this. I wouldn’t be able to say what her impact has been on the various dicasteries. Certainly I do consider her one of the forerunners of the New Evangelization, and it would be difficult to imagine the New Evangelization without figures like her. I think one of the keys to the success of the New Evangelization will be how we can involve women religious in this project. I think the more we involve them, the more the New Evangelization will be successful.

So in your opinion, aside from EWTN, what do you think is the core of the legacy she has left that and that we’re continuing to see grow?

I would say this very, very humble, that I think today in the Church we are very much concerned, I would even say obsessed, by the question of communications, because we want to keep up with the times and we realize that this is very, very important; communications are a very important part of how the modern world works, and it’s important that the Church should be there. But what we must never forget, in my opinion, is that content always has a primacy over the technical aspect. The technical aspect is actually wonderful, but if you’ve got nothing to communicate it’s completely useless, and I think Mother Angelica, she wasn’t just the person who founded this fantastic, hotshot television network that was financed completely by the people who listened to it. It wasn’t just that. It was the fact that she always put content first, and I think that’s a great part of her legacy. But I also think another equally important part of her legacy is the eternal truth of our Catholic faith. It always has been and always will be until Christ comes again, it’s a question of how is she, and I think the most of the latter half of her life she was bedridden. And sometimes you wonder what did God want from her in that time? What was her vocation in that time? That’s very difficult to discern.

It was striking to me that the culmination of those last few years and then to pass away on Easter after what I understand were very excruciating last days. There was clearly something at work …

Her oneness with Christ … Another chap who greatly influenced me when I was listening to Mother Angelica about 10-12 years ago was Father Benedict Groeschel, because he had Sunday Night Live. That would come out as a podcast and I would download that too. He is another one, I think they’ll both be saints. With Benedict, I know something happened at the end of his life, but that will be forgotten. In fact, it should probably be forgotten right away, because I don’t think he said what he was intending; an old man—and a young man—can make mistakes. But I am convinced that both of them will be beatified, I’m absolutely convinced.

Would you say that part of the appeal and effectiveness of how she communicated the Gospel and the Resurrection had to do with how she experienced it in her own life?

Yeah. She suffered. I can’t remember all the details of her biography, but I know early on in her life she had a serious medical conditions, and these were overcome and they were overcome through prayer. She might also have been the subject of a miracle, thinking about her very early life before she decided to become a nun. And then all through her life she battled through ill health. One of the things that makes her so authentic is that when you listen to—one of the things I used to love about EWTN was listening to all the podcasts, and you could hear her coughing, and she would put a cough sweet into her mouth, and if you look at the big, sleek media operations like the BBC, you very rarely hear people coughing and at EWTN you could hear all this, and it was so human. With technology, I think a television lens transforms everything, and it really is—if it’s the great observer, it’s also the great betrayer because you look at these television studios and how they come through the lens of the camera, but when you actually go there and you see how they’re built with all the cables everywhere that people never see, and the lighting makes it seem much bigger than it is, it’s smoke and mirrors, it really is from start to finish. You never got that impression with EWTN. You got the impression that here’s a lady in her parlor, speaking to you in your parlor, that’s what it came across as. So she coughed, and she put in a cough sweet and it was wonderful.

Did you ever get to meet her personally?

I didn’t, no. I always used to ask—sometimes we got people coming up from EWTN—I would always ask how is she, and I think the most of the latter half of her life she was bedridden. And sometimes you wonder what did God want from her in that time? What was her vocation in that time? That’s very difficult to discern.

So in your opinion, aside from EWTN, what do you think is the core of the legacy she has left that and that we’re continuing to see grow?