



THE BEACON

JANUARY 7, 2021



THE AWARD-WINNING
NEWSPAPER OF THE
R.C. DIOCESE OF
PATERSON, N.J.

A CALL FOR PRAYER
AND FASTING ON THE
3 ANNIVERSARY
OF ROE V. WADE



BEACON PHOTO | JOE GIGLI

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY Bishop Sweeney stands with the “Three Kings” (from left) Yahir Pomales, Cesar Barrantes and Ethan Zepeda, all eighth-grade students at St. Gerard Majella School in Paterson, prior to the start of Mass Jan. 3. The Bishop celebrated two Masses in St. Gerard Majella Church on Sunday, one in English and one in Spanish, to mark the Feast of the Epiphany. (Story, more photos on page 6.)

Secular Franciscans bring farm-to-table produce to the hungry at local food pantry

Note: This is the first of a two-part series on ways the Diocese is responding to the Pope Francis’ encyclical Laudato si’.

By **MICHAEL WOJCIK**
NEWS EDITOR

LITTLE FALLS Without realizing it, clients of the Consumer Choice Food Pantry at the Father English Community Center in Paterson, have been enjoying some organic farm-to-table produce — thanks to the Secular Franciscans of the Most Holy Name Fraternity of the Third Order here.

Over the last year, the food pan-

try, part of diocesan Catholic Charities, has accepted small shipments of organically grown vegetables, fruit and eggs from farms in New Jersey, donated and delivered by Secular Franciscans. They continue to deliver dozens of pasture raised eggs twice monthly and will resume shipments of vegetables and fruit during the farms’ 24-week growing season from early June to November — part of their new effort to get involved in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), coordinated by Jim Andreano, a Secular Franciscan.

The fraternity’s latest project also has a spiritual purpose: to live out the principles of “Laudato Si’: on Care for Our Common Home,” an encyclical by Pope Francis. Written in 2015, the document emphasizes the interconnectedness of social, economic and environmental justice — including feeding the underprivileged and supporting local environmentally sustainable farms — in building and protecting the earth, Andreano said.

“With this, we have a two-fold mission: to support people on small farms who are being kind to the earth by using sound growing techniques — not using pesticides and not over tilling the soil — and supporting the Father English Center in helping to feed the people of Paterson,” Andreano said. “This project has succeeded beyond our imaginings,” he said.

The fraternity’s Integrity of Creation Committee purchased “shares” — percentages of the yield of farms that participate in the Bloomfield-Montclair CSA throughout the season. The cost of the

CATHOLIC CHARITIES ON 7

SECULAR FRANCISCANS ON 6

Catholic Charities remains a constant source of help and hope as the pandemic continues

By **CECILE PAGLIARULO**
REPORTER

PATERSON COVID-19 has reshaped the world. Life has changed yet there has been one constant source of help and hope that has remained the same. Catholic Charities agencies in the Diocese of Paterson have persevered thanks in part to its employees, volunteers and benefactors and have continuously served the most vulnerable in the Diocese, who have been impacted significantly by the pandemic.

“In my six months as Bishop of Paterson, I have learned of the rich history of Catholic Charities in our Diocese, of Catholic Family and Community Services, Straight and Narrow, and the Department for Persons with Disabilities. Many have said that we are living in historic times, as we have lived through the pandemic during this year. Catholic Charities in our Diocese, especially the people who make up Catholic Charities, the staff, volunteers and donors have been a brilliant

and beautiful light, shining in these darkest of times. During this year, Catholic Charities has added another beautiful page to its history and the history of our Diocese,” Bishop Kevin Sweeney said.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began last March, all three departments of Catholic Charities — Catholic Family and Community Services, Department for Persons with Disabilities and Straight and Narrow — have remained opened. The work at the agencies is considered essential and Catholic Charities has worked to ensure its service recipients and employees remained safe as many health and safety guidelines were put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

With several residential programs and inpatient rehabilitation facilities, Catholic Charities regularly tests its staff, practice social distancing, enhanced and increased cleaning protocols and have set up quarantine sites and will continue to be diligent in these practices.

Due to closures of many businesses, families faced

Long Valley parish hosts witness talks on vocations

By **MICHAEL WOJCIK**
NEWS EDITOR

LONG VALLEY As a young boy, Father Joemin (Jayke) Parinas, parochial vicar of Our Lady of the Mountain (OLM) and St. Mark the Evangelist parishes here, couldn't hear a call to the priesthood from God over the din of his many pets that included dogs, cats, parrots and hamsters. Instead, this self-described "animal lover" wanted to become a veterinarian in his native Philippines.

But God finally did make his call to Father Parinas loud and clear — and persistent — through the many detours in his early life in the Philippines — from three years working in the "real world" and dating a serious girlfriend to doubts about continuing his chosen vocation to the priesthood. He told his vocations story at a forum last month at OLM Church, "Hearing God's Call." Joining him that morning were two other men connected to OLM and St. Mark's who shared very different calls to a vocation: Deacon Jim Jones, a permanent deacon of the two parishes, and Starli Castanos, a second-year theology student at Immaculate Conception Seminary in South Orange. He is helped financially by the Long Valley Knights of Columbus, which includes St. Luke Parish also in town and sponsored the forum.

"A lot of the experiences that I've had, as well as my formation, have made me the person I am today. I am always in formation even as a priest, asking the Lord 'Where am I going?'" said Father Parinas, who arrived in the U.S. in 2016 to complete studies to become a diocesan priest. Bishop Sweeney ordained him to the priesthood with four other men on Aug. 1 in his first ordination class



STARLI CASTANOS

as Bishop of Paterson. "Being a priest is not an easy task. We must sacrifice many things. International priests such as me are called to leave our families at home to follow in the footsteps of Jesus," he said.

The three men spoke from the ambo of OLM Church after the parish's first Saturday Celebration with includes 9 a.m. Penance, 9:30 a.m. rosary and Adoration and 10 a.m. Mass. A small congregation listened while practicing social distancing and wearing face masks. Others watched the event from home through livestreaming on OLM's web site, <https://ourladyofthemountain.org>. The speakers talked about how they heard and acted on God's call and gave advice about how people can listen to God's invitation to a particular vocation.



DEACON JIM JONES

"There is constant noise — so many voices influencing us. One voice needs to be heard: the voice of God," said Father Parinas who was appointed to OLM and St. Mark's in September. "Your vocation, whether it's as a priest, religious, married or single, is the way God calls you to serve him — all the time," he said.

Father Parinas spoke about coming from a typical Filipino family that attended Mass,



FATHER JAYKE PARINAS

prayed together and was active in their parish. Their pastor used the young boy's love of pets to impart the faith to him through stories such as Noah and his Ark. Not sure about continuing his formation to the priesthood, the young man worked in management for three years after having graduated from college seminary.

"I was in love with my girlfriend but there

LONG VALLEY PARISH ON 8

Christmas Sharing Fund donations received this week:

\$500

In memory of my beloved parents; Pope St. John Paul pray for us, lost souls, the marginalized, the sick and those who cared for them.

\$100

Eleanor Latoracca, Clifton; In memory of my son, John Latoracca.

James Dye, Randolph; In memory of Sylvia and James Dye, Carol Costabile, Josephine Maiorino.

Uglione and Guagliari family, Wayne; In memory of our families and friends.

Joseph and Susan Sacino, Lake Hopatcong; In memory of Jack Whalen Avery, a kind and generous man, and Theresa Paruolo, a loving woman.

Thaddeus Kobylarz, Morristown.

In memory of the deceased members of my family.

In memory of our parents.

In memory of members of Laskowski family, Kashaba family; Robinson family; Dodetta family and Batch family.

In memory of Pierina and Antonio Speziale.

Anonymous (5): Brookside,



Flanders, Lake Hopatcong, New Providence, Towaco.

\$75

Jim Grabianowski, Butler; In memory of mom and dad.

In memory of the Rupprecht family.

Anonymous (1): Clifton.

\$50

Thomas Burke, Newton; In memory of the deceased members of the Burke and Finley families.

Susan Giordano, Mount Arlington; In memory of my husband, Dennis Giordano, who enjoyed a good cup of coffee. To the gentlemen in Kelleher apartments.

Joseph and Diane Stella; In memory of Stella and Bisig family.

A.K. LaBar, Vernon; In memory of Charles and Frances Lewandowski, Carl

J. Lewandowski, Richard S. LaBar Sr.

Joe Hessler, North Haledon; In memory of John Deold cousin, Patricia Csirip aunt.

Rich and Genevieve Ferrara, Lincoln Park; In memory of Rose Mingione, Anne Buscena, Louis Mingione, Albert J. Ferrara, Michael Pignatello Sr.

Rosa Mennella, Hawthorne; In memory of Mannella, D'Acostino, Julian, Pierascenzi and Mellone families.

In memory of my parents.

In memory of my parents Peter and Petrita, purgatory souls, Isaias and wife, Carmelo, William, Eliezer, Radolo, Rene, Pedrita, Dahlia, my grandparents.

In memory of Jessie and John Daly, Edith and Ed Harrison.

Anonymous: Hackettstown.

\$40

Gerardo Berardi, Cedar Knolls; Pray for those impacted by COVID-19.

\$25

Barbara Laudi, Montville; In memory of Patricia Gadosky.

Al Juskus, Hopatcong; In memory of Rosemarie, from all your family. Juskus family.

Celine Behnke, North Haledon; In memory of Thomas Behnke, Ed Lockowitz, Behnke, Dolan and Heitzman families.

Marie Yadlon, Wharton; In memory of Bob Yadlon.

Roger and Irene Devos, Randolph; In memory of Emily and Roger Devos, Mary and John Glemba, Madeline Nicole Laha.

Frank Sturm, Hopatcong.

In memory of Charles Wydallis.

\$20

Laxons and Marottas, Totowa; In memory of Joseph and Frances Cascone.

Correction: \$25

Joyce Hogan, Wayne; In memory of Daniel Gurcak.



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Life: Some Thoughts on a Sad Anniversary

This Jan. 22 will be the 48th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion on demand in our country. As we speak about and experience political and other divisions, I am not sure if there has been any issue that has been more divisive on the national and many other levels of society over these past 50 (plus) years.



BISHOP KEVIN J. SWEENEY

As I write at this time, I would like to share with you a few things that I have learned from the abortion debate:

1. As Disciples, as Catholic Christians, part of living our baptismal call is being a “faithful citizen.” While it is a mistake to attempt to impose our faith or deeply held beliefs on any person or on society, our faith (the Gospel and Magisterium) must guide our participation in striving for the common good, especially in a democracy.

2. We must ask ourselves, “What is our responsibility when our government passes an unjust law?” Pages and pages have been and could be written on this subject and we all need to realize people of good will can have legitimately differing opinions, especially when it comes to approach. Personally, while realizing that it is far from a perfect comparison, I do not believe that we can ignore the lessons of history, particularly in the tragic case of slavery in our country, which teaches us there have been times when an intrinsic evil has been accepted as the law of the land. We have a responsibility, with a well-formed conscience, to resist and do all that we can to change an unjust law.

3. Women and Men — Is abortion a women’s issue or an issue of women’s rights? I believe that it would be disrespectful to fail to acknowledge that many see abortion or the, so called, right to choose or to privacy as a women’s rights issue. As a man, a celibate, and a bishop, I offer these thoughts with humility and with a sincere respect for a person of good will who would disagree. As Catholics, along with many others, we believe that life begins at conception. However, there is also a preponderance of scientific, genetic and biological evidence to argue that the question of when life begins is not a matter of religion or faith, but of proven and accepted science. If we, as a society, believe in the inalienable rights of every human person and that the first of those rights is life, then those rights should be acknowledged as including protection for every human person.

4. Changing a Law v. Changing Hearts — I am convinced that, if we approach the abortion debate with yelling, screaming and accusation, only trying to prove that those who disagree with us are wrong, then we will never accomplish our true goal of promoting and recognizing the dignity and value of every human life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death. Rather, I believe, that we must begin (each day) by examining our own consciences and prayerfully ask the Lord to guide our thoughts, words and actions.

I realize that these thoughts barely scratch the surface of a complex issue that is so much more than a debate (religious, political or otherwise). I also realize and encourage us all to remember that many women, couples and families may be in need of healing after having had an abortion, whether recently or many years ago. There is support and

many resources are available for those who may seek this healing. You can go to our diocesan website, click on Diocesan Offices (Respect Life), and find information on *Rachel’s Vineyard*. There are also many resources available for those who may find themselves in a crisis pregnancy. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops suggesting that all dioceses have a *Walking with Moms in Need* program, which offers assistance to moms pre-birth, through birth and following. We are currently working on a “Directory of Services — *Walking with Moms in Need*” that will be on our diocesan website and available to parishes in the coming weeks.

Even though we are in a “New Year,” we are still dealing with the global pandemic, COVID-19, and the accompanying protocols and restrictions, so, like so much in 2020, our commemoration on the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision will be different this year. Along with Cardinal Tobin, I have joined the bishops of our state in calling for a day of “Prayer and Fasting” on Friday, Jan. 22.

The Right to Life March, which is usually held in Washington, D.C., will be held virtually this year on Friday, Jan. 29. We will have more information and details on all of this in next week’s edition of *The Beacon*, in communication with our parishes and through social media.

As we enter into this year of 2021, perhaps many will recall 2020 as a year when we were reminded that life is truly a gift and, at times, it is a very fragile gift. As we will commemorate the sad anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision, I ask that all in our Diocese come together in prayer that we may have a greater respect for the dignity and value of every human person. Let us re-dedicate ourselves, our families, our parishes and our communities to witness and act on behalf of Life and look forward with hope to a day when all will respect and protect the Gift of Life.

A Call for Prayer and Fasting on the Anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Jan. 22, for an End to Abortion

We, the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey, ask Catholics and people of good will to join us on Friday Jan. 22, the 48th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, in a Day of Prayer and Fasting to end abortion.

As we mark this tragic event in our nation’s history, we remember the millions of lives lost to abortion and pray for the mothers and fathers left to suffer the tragic effects.

The Catholic Church is committed to

protecting all life from conception to natural death. We will work vigorously to ensure the laws of our state and country protect and defend the intrinsic dignity of all people.

We humbly implore our Blessed Mother under her title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas and Protectress of the Unborn, to intercede on our behalf that these efforts to end abortion are guided by mercy, compassion, and above all charity.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop, Archdiocese of Newark

Most Reverend James F. Checchio
Bishop, Diocese of Metuchen

Most Reverend David M. O’Connell, C.M.
Bishop, Diocese of Trenton

Most Reverend Kurt Burnette
Bishop, Eparchy of Passaic

Most Reverend Dennis J. Sullivan
Bishop, Diocese of Camden

Most Reverend Yousif Habash
Bishop of Our Lady of

Most Reverend Kevin J. Sweeney
Bishop, Diocese of Paterson

Deliverance of Syriac Catholic
Diocese



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Daily Scripture Readings

WEEK OF 1/10/21

The Baptism of the Lord

1: Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 55:1-11 2: Acts 10:34-38 or 1 Jn 5:1-9

3: Jn 3-14-21

Mon. Heb 1:1-6 / Mk 1:14-20

Thu. Heb 3:7-14 / Mk 1:40-45

Tue. Heb 2:5-12 / Mk 1:21-28

Fri. Heb 4:1-5, 11 / Mk 2:1-12

Wed. Heb 2:14-18 / Mk 1:29-39

Sat. Heb 4:12-16 / Mk 2:13-17



Bishop Sweeney celebrates Mass on New Year's Day, marking the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God



VERNON Bishop Kevin Sweeney celebrated Mass on New Year's Day marking the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God in St. Francis DeSales Church in the McAfee section of the township Jan. 1.

The history of St. Francis Parish began when St. Monica Parish in Sussex established a mission in McAfee in 1963, and a former school was purchased on Route 94 and renovated into a church. In 1965 St. Francis became a mission of the new parish, Our Lady of Fatima in Highland Lakes. Bishop Rodimer advanced the mission to parish status in 1979. A new church was built on Route 517 in 1986.



SAFE AND STRONG TOGETHER

Creating a safe environment for all your healthcare needs. That was our mission before the pandemic. That was our mission during the pandemic. That remains our mission...today and every day.

What You Need to Know About Returning to Healthcare Services

We want to assure you that our hospitals, doctors' offices and services are safe, open and available to you. For your continued good health and ongoing protection, we have made several modifications and enhancements at all of our facilities:

Separate COVID-19 Units: patients testing positive for COVID-19 are separated from other patients in designated units.

Screening: all patients' temperature screened upon entry; every employee screened at start of work day

Hygiene Stations: at all entrances offering complimentary masks, hand sanitizer and precaution information

Social Distancing: redesigned public entrances to ensure a protective flow and distancing in all areas

Clean Environment: all facilities cleaned and disinfected continuously, following strict procedures and guidelines

St. Joseph's Health

If you have questions about an upcoming visit or procedure, please call and speak with a patient navigator anytime between the hours of 8:00 am - 6:30 pm at (833) 913-2758.

Sponsored by The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

NEW YEAR'S DAY
Counterclockwise from right: The Bishop blesses Fernan Rendon and Kelly Erazo and their children, Peter Pagano and Daniel and Trinity Rendon. Parishioners in prayer at Mass. Knights of Columbus Council No. 2716 at the processional. The Bishop delivers his homily. Father Christopher Barkhausen, pastor, thanks the Bishop for his visit. Thao Barrett with her children Melissa and Jayden at Mass.



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Patricia Ann (née Sokerka) Hassert, 66

CLIFTON A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 in St. Philip the Apostle Church here for Mrs. Patricia Ann (née Sokerka) Hassert, 66, of Wayne who passed away on Jan. 1.

Born in Passaic, Mrs. Hassert was raised in Clifton and had lived in Wayne since 1988. She was a member of Clifton High School class of 1972 and earned her bachelor's degree from Seton Hall University, South Orange, in 1976. She had been employed for more than 20 years as an administrative assistant with the Wayne Board of Education where she cared deeply about the students, parents and staff as if they were her second family. She was an active parishioner of St. Philip the Apostle.

Mrs. Hassert had been involved in and was active with

the Ryerson School P.T.O. in Wayne when her children attended the school. When her children were growing up, she always managed to get all four of them to all of their sports and activities be it baseball, soccer, hockey or cheer. She never missed any one of their games or events and always made sure they were there on time. She had a never-ending passion for hockey, especially the New York Rangers, and also for University of Notre Dame, particularly its football team. She loved going to Aruba for a week with her beloved husband, Dave. She looked forward every year to the annual pierogi-making party with her family for their Christmas Eve gathering, which she loved hosting. Above all, she always put others before herself. The love for her husband, children, grandchildren, were beyond measure.

Mrs. Hassert was predeceased by her parents, Andrew R. (1968) and Emily (née Adamkovic) (2004) Sokerka, and a baby sister, Mary (1948).

She is survived by her beloved husband of 44 years, David Hassert, of Wayne; by her four loving and devoted children: Jeffrey Hassert of Wayne; Timothy Hassert and his wife, Rebecca, of Clifton; Matthew Hassert and his wife, Kimberly, of Belleville, and Lindsay Hassert and her boyfriend, Marc Leech, of Riverdale; by her four dear siblings: Richard Sokerka and his wife, Linda, of Mine Hill; Barbara DiDonna and her husband, Nicola, of Clifton; Albert Sokerka and his wife, Veronica, of Woodland Park, and Andrea Fenelon and her husband, Thomas, of Clifton; and by her two adored and cherished grandsons, Andrew Francis and Colin Timothy Hassert, both of Clifton. Mrs. Hassert is also survived by her many loving nieces and nephews. Finally, she had a love like no other for her two granddogs, Yogi and Tucker.

The funeral Mass will be livestreamed from St. Philip's. Those attending the Mass must wear face masks and social distancing protocols must be followed.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions to: Cystic Fibrosis Foundation-N.J. Chapter (www.cff.org), 111 Littleton Rd., Suite 221, Parsippany, N.J. 07054.

In Memoriam

In your prayers, remember these priests and permanent deacons of the Paterson Diocese who died during January:

† Rev. John B. Bennett, Jan. 1, 1940.
 † Rev. Msgr. Louis Biesiada, Jan. 1, 2004.
 † Rev. Bernard Feeney, Jan. 1, 2001.
 † Rev. Bernard Justen, SDB, Jan. 2, 2007.
 † Rev. Jerome Gallagher, OFM, Jan. 3, 1996.
 † Deacon Marcel Kennedy, Jan. 3, 1996.
 † Rev. John J. Kinta, Jan. 3, 1984.
 † Rev. Sylvan McGarrigle, OFM, Jan. 3, 1977.
 † Rev. Callistus Smith, OFM, Jan. 3, 1974.
 † Rev. Michael Bolan, Jan. 4, 1983.
 † Rev. Regis Duffy, OFM, Jan. 4, 2005.
 † Deacon James P. Morris, Jan. 4, 2011.
 † Rev. Alan Lyman, OFM, Jan. 5, 1974.
 † Rev. Valentine Long, OFM, Jan. 6, 1998.
 † Rev. Geoffrey Lortyer, Jan. 6, 1998.
 † Rev. Aquilin Sendelbach, OSB, Jan. 6, 1971.
 † Rev. William Major, OFM, Jan. 7, 1971.
 † Rev. Msgr. Edward J. Scully, Jan. 7, 1975.
 † Rev. Laslo Vas, Jan. 7, 2018.
 † Rev. Louis Hamm, OFM, Jan. 8, 1988.
 † Rev. Msgr. John J. Dauenhauer, Jan. 9, 1954.
 † Rev. Joseph J. Spielman, Jan. 9, 1943.
 † Deacon Edward J. Lally, Jan. 9, 2018.
 † Rev. John J. Duggan, Jan. 10, 1945.
 † Rev. Desmond O'Connor, SPS, Jan. 10, 2018.
 † Rev. Cornelius Kelly, OFM, Jan. 11, 2004.
 † Rev. Michael Walsh, Jan. 11, 2007.
 † Rev. Leo F. Lenihan, OFM, Jan. 12, 1970.
 † Rev. Timothy P. Monahan, OFM, Jan. 13, 1972.
 † Rev. Didacus Roberto, Jan. 13, 1951.
 † Rev. Msgr. Stanley Zawistowski, Jan. 13, 1996.
 † Rev. Philip Kennedy, OFM, Jan. 14, 1996.
 † Rev. William McGavin, OFM, Jan. 14, 1996.
 † Rev. Jeremiah C. O'Riordan, Jan. 14, 2012.
 † Rev. Eugene Catanzaro, OSFS, Jan. 15, 1989.
 † Deacon Calvin P. Norris, Jan. 15, 2001.
 † Rev. Msgr. Carmel J. Scanlan, Jan. 15, 1952.
 † Rev. Msgr. Peter T. Werne, Jan. 15, 1951.
 † Rev. Damien A. Wenzel, OFM, Jan. 16, 1962.
 † Deacon Vincent Hanwacker, Jan. 17, 1999.
 † Rev. Donatus Taglienti, OFM, Jan. 17, 1992.
 † Rev. James Doherty, Jan. 18, 1984.
 † Rev. Cassian Kirk, OFM, Jan. 18, 1986.
 † Rev. Sebastian P. Joseph, OSB, Jan. 19, 1971.

† Rev. Edward Russok, SDB, Jan. 19, 1963.
 † Rev. Robert Nee, OFM, Jan. 19, 2011.
 † Rev. Alfred Metzger, O. Carm., Jan. 20, 2004.
 † Rev. Edward Ruddy, Jan. 20, 2003.
 † Rev. John Frega, OFM Cap., Jan. 21, 1998.
 † Rev. Edward M. Pickett, S.J., Jan. 22, 1964.
 † Rev. John J. Quinlan, Jan. 22, 2011.
 † Rev. Msgr. Christian D. Haag, Jan. 24, 1999.
 † Rev. Anselm Murray, OSB, Jan. 25, 1994.
 † Rev. Joseph E. Snyder, Jan. 25, 1941.
 † Rev. Thaddeus Michota, Jan. 26, 1977.
 † Deacon Frank J. Padden Jr., Jan. 26, 2002.
 † Deacon Albert P. Klose, Jan. 26, 2012.
 † Rev. Felix L. Perlo, Jan. 28, 1954.
 † Deacon Peter J. McNally, Jan. 28, 2007.
 † Rev. Felton Robertson, Jan. 29, 1999.
 † Rev. Gerald B. Kanzic, Jan. 29, 2018.
 † Rev. Lawrence Callaghan, Jan. 31, 1986.
 † Rev. Gerard McGlynn, OFM, Jan. 31, 1956.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for January 10, 2021

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7/ Mark 1:7-11

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Cycle B: the Messiah's traits. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

CHOSEN ONE	HEARD	STREET
BRUISED	REED	DIMLY BURNING
EARTH	COASTLANDS	TEACHING
LIGHT	EYES	BLIND
PRISONERS	DUNGEON	I AM NOT
WORTHY	TO STOOP	THONG
SANDALS	BAPTIZED YOU	SERVANT

NO REED OR WICK

D E E R W O R T H Y K L
 U I K T O S T O O P S I
 O E M N O E G N U D R G
 Y N A L N A M M N O E H
 D O J S Y H E A R D N T
 E N S A S B L I N D O E
 Z E E N K T U L W K S A
 I S Y D S L R R C C I C
 T O E A R T H E N I R H
 P H O L N A N A E I P I
 A C H S E R V A N T N N
 B R U I S E D T H O N G

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On the Feast of the Epiphany, St. Gerard Parish welcomes Bishop Sweeney



PATERSON The parish community of St. Gerard Majella here welcomed Bishop Sweeney during his pastoral visit Jan. 3. The Bishop celebrated two Masses — one in English and one in Spanish — marking the Feast of the Epiphany.



GIFTS OF THE MAGI
Clockwise from top left: Bishop Sweeney delivers his homily. Gifts representing gold, frankincense and myrrh from the Three Kings are placed at the Nativity scene in the church. Vocationist Father Leo Antony, pastor, distributes Holy Communion. Parishioners pray the Our Father. Filippini Sister Jo-Ann Pompa, principal of St. Gerard Majella School, presents parishioners with gifts after Mass.

BEACON PHOTOS | JOE GIGLI

Food pantry: Secular Franciscans bring farm-to-table produce to the hungry

FROM 1

shares was \$720 for the vegetables, \$345 for the fruit and \$120 for the eggs. In addition, some members of the CSA, an organization that supports local organic farms, were so touched by the Secular Franciscans' efforts that they bought additional shares to be donated to the food pantry. Sometimes, the fraternity received some leftover produce from people who did not take their shares, Andreano said.

So far, the project has netted about \$5,000 worth of food, donated by both the Secular Franciscans and the CSA members, Andreano said.

As part of this project, also inspired by the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, Secular Franciscans coordinate the pick up of the produce, which is transported from the farms to a house in Cedar Grove, one of the CSA's three pick-up spots. The vegetables and eggs come from Circle Brook Farm in Andover while the fruit comes from Tree-licious Orchards in Port Murray. Then fraternity members deliver the food to Carlos Roldan, director of the Father English food pantry, for distribution to clients there, Andreano said.

CSAs are not co-ops and have no wholesalers or distributors. All of the money from the shares goes directly to the farmers who grow or raise the food, according to the website of the Bloomfield-Montclair CSA, <https://bloomfield-montclaircsa.org>, which has 200 members.



Two Secular Franciscans, Jody Pihokker and Maddi Romaine, are among those involved in the weekly pick-up for the fraternity.

"Our fraternity has not only discussed the principals of *Laudato si'*, but also we are doing something to bring the pope's encyclical to life and that is so rewarding. I am pleased with everyone's response. I'm grateful that our Franciscan family is playing a small role in providing some relief to the food insecurity that the pandemic has brought to so many people in the Paterson community," said Pihokker, who noted that the need for food at the Father English pantry has increased significantly since the start

FARM FRESH Jim Andreano, Betsy Saksen and Irene De Bernardo, members of the Most Holy Name Fraternity of the Third Order Secular Franciscans in Little Falls, examine farm-fresh eggs that the order donated to the Consumer Choice Food Pantry at the Father English Community Center in Paterson. Last year, the fraternity started donating organically grown and raised vegetables, fruit and eggs from New Jersey farms to the food pantry.

of the COVID-19 pandemic. "In the 92 years since the founding of our fraternity, we continue to bring Jesus' message to the world," she said.

With this project, the fraternity has responded to Pope Francis' challenge in the encyclical that speaks loudly in the world in crisis today: "A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings ... Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society" (91). The pope also echoes the words of St.

Francis of Assisi — the patron of the fraternity — writing, "When we can see God reflected in all that exists, our hearts are moved to praise the Lord for all his creatures and to worship him in union with them" (87).

Today, fraternity members, who hail from around the Diocese and beyond, continue to live out St. Francis' spirit and energy. They conduct monthly virtual gatherings, which include spiritual formation, in the midst of COVID-19 social-distancing protocols. Over the years, the Secular Franciscans have focused their prayers and actions to help address the plight of immigrants who seek refuge, the homeless who need food and support, unjust racial unrest and of the looming ecological crisis, Andreano said.

Romaine called the fraternity's involvement with the CSA project "a heartfelt privilege for us to be even a small part of this effort to help our sisters and brothers in Christ."

"If we can make someone's day a little healthier and brighter, then we can feel like we are a part of the solution," Romaine said.

"The food has always been really fresh. We give it away the next day. The people love it," Roldan said

[For information on the Secular Franciscan life visit: <https://mostholynamesfo.wordpress.com/> or email Joe Wickham at jdwickhamofs@optimum.net]

Catholic Charities: Remaining a constant source of help and hope as pandemic continues

FROM 1

financial distress and this year, Catholic Charities has helped more people than ever before in its 80-year history.

Scott Milliken, CEO of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Paterson, said, “We have given out over 1.5 million pounds of food and over \$2.5 million in emergency support to those most in need. In November, we helped more people than any other month before, giving out food to 26,500 children, women and men.”

Individual donors, foundations and businesses have helped raise more than \$500,000 for COVID-19 relief to purchase PPE, give out food, provide emergency support and help its programs adapt to a changing world.

Catholic Charities have pivoted many of its programs to provide support safely, efficiently and to help the many who are in need. Non-essential staff has been working in a hybrid fashion, the food pantries have delivered food to seniors and those who are homebound. Its Early Learning programs, at-risk youth programs and DPD Gruenert Center are virtual. Working with its many partners from around the state, Catholic Charities is also providing crisis counseling to those emotionally impacted by this pandemic.

“We experienced personal losses, including family members of employees, volunteers and friends. Beloved Department for



BEACON ARCHIVE | JOE GIGLI

PROVIDING HOPE In August, Bishop Sweeney presented Straight and Narrow with a check for more than \$319,000. This was raised from last year’s Bishop’s Annual Appeal and is being used to help rebuild Straight and Narrow’s facility at 410 Straight Street in Paterson that suffered a devastating fire.

Persons with Disabilities volunteer, Martin Addison, died on April 29 at just 44 years old. We continue to pray for Martin’s family and all of those impacted by COVID-19,” Milliken said.

On July 1, Bishop Sweeney was ordained as the eighth Bishop of Paterson. His first visit was in August when he presented a check for \$319,000 toward rebuilding costs of Straight and Narrow’s halfway house, made possible through the Bishop’s Annual Appeal. In September, the Bishop did a full tour of Catholic Charities agencies. “We were proud to welcome Bishop Sweeney with open arms and give thanks to Bishop Emeritus Serratelli for his many years of leadership,” Milliken said. “Bishop Sweeney has been kind, active and involved with Catholic Charities, visiting nearly all of our programs, meeting many of our staff and service recipients and attending our board meetings.”

Earlier in the year, Catholic Charities

held its largest fundraiser in its history with the annual Murray House Dinner-Dance. More than 1,000 guests joined the Murray Family and the Department for Persons with Disabilities Family at the 50th Annual Murray House Dinner Dance on Feb. 16 at the Brownstone in Paterson.

Later in the year, large-scale events were transitioned to virtual formats including the Veterans Stakeholders breakfast, the Wiegand Farm Golf Classic, the Caritas Gala and the Memorial Mass.

On Aug. 26, the campus at the Gov. Paterson Towers was renamed the Rev. Msgr. Herbert K. Tillyer Campus for Senior Living. Msgr. Tillyer currently serves as Board President of Catholic Charities and is the only person to serve on the board for each of its three agencies. The former Gov. Paterson Towers provide support for senior citizens, many of whom are assisted by Catholic Charities.

Throughout 2020, Catholic Charities continued to strengthen its partnership with Catholic Charities USA. In February, Brian Corbin, Catholic Charities USA vice president, visited Paterson to lead the organization in a strategic planning session that brought leadership from all of its programs and each of the three agencies together.

While Catholic Charities is serving so many needy in the Diocese, it has continued to offer support to its sisters and brothers from around the country. In September, upon hearing about the devastation in Louisiana due to Hurricane Laura, it sent four staff members to Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana to lend a helping hand with recovery efforts.

During the holidays, Catholic Charities has helped feed more than 7,000 families and gave out more than 5,000 gifts, mostly to children.

Milliken said, “It is always difficult to find the words in how we can best express our gratitude for the truly humbling way so many have supported Catholic Charities. We cannot thank everyone enough for the support during this unprecedented time. Together, and in spite of a global pandemic, we accomplished some amazing things.”

Catholic Charities witnesses outpouring of generosity during the Christmas season

By **CECILE PAGLIARULO**
REPORTER

CLIFTON Christmas 2020 may be over and the Church will soon be back to Ordinary Time on its liturgical calendar, but the generosity of so many around the Diocese and beyond has left a smile on the faces of the many in need served by Diocesan Catholic Charities during the holiday season.

“Catholic Charities is proud to provide help and create hope for thousands of people in need throughout the year, especially during the Christmas season,” said Scott Milliken, CEO of Catholic Charities of the Paterson Diocese. “This Christmas season was the most unusual in recent memory as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact us all.”

More than 5,000 presents were given to children, families and individuals in need to its three agencies — Catholic Family and Community Services (CFCS), the Department for Persons with Disabilities (DPD) and Straight and Narrow (SN). This is in addition to the hundreds of hours of volunteer service and thousands of pounds of food contributed to Catholic Charities.

Its three food pantries were able to provide more than 2,000 individuals or families with food, including turkeys and chickens for Christmas dinner. This food is made possible through donations by individuals, service groups and businesses. November was Catholic Charities biggest month in its 80-year history serving more than 26,000 people.

The Beacon Christmas Sharing Fund, which has shared the stories and Christmas wishes of service recipients for more than 35 years, has actually raised more money this year than the previous year, even in spite of the coronavirus pandemic. In total \$750,000 was raised during these three and a half decades.

Several Knights of Columbus councils purchased presents or gift cards for DPD group homes and donations of non-perishable food, personal care and cleaning items for Catholic Charities Food Pantries.

While some groups were able to support the organization as they normally do, others had to pivot to follow COVID-19 safety measures.

A group of Christmas angels visited DPD Barnet House in Pompton Lakes on Dec. 21, including students from DePaul Catholic High School’s football team, Immaculate Heart Academy in Washington Township, Don Bosco Prep in Ramsey and students from the College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts. The angels, led by longtime DPD volunteer, Diane Macchia-Hanson, brought gifts, treats and sang carols outside

CHRISTMAS SEASON ON 9



GIVING BACK In September, upon hearing about the devastation in Louisiana due to Hurricane Laura, Catholic Charities sent four staff members to Catholic Charities of Southwest Louisiana to lend a helping hand with recovery efforts.

Bishop Sweeney visits St. Francis of Assisi Parish on Feast of the Epiphany

HASKELL Bishop Sweeney celebrated the vigil Mass Jan. 2 marking the Feast of the Epiphany or Three Kings Day at St. Francis of Assisi Church in the Haskell section of Wanaque.

The parish's history began in 1905 when the Franciscans from Butler began celebrating Mass in Wanaque and a mission church was built near the paper mill. The mission was raised to parish status in 1945 and a new church was built in 1951. The Franciscans turned over administration of the parish to the Diocese in 1990. The parish marked its centennial celebration in 2005.



BEACON PHOTOS | JOE GIGLI



WE, THREE KINGS
Clockwise from far left: Father Greg Golba, pastor, welcomes the Bishop to the parish. The Bishop delivers his homily. Martha Biaccio at Mass. Father Golba with Dorothy and Dom Cortellesa. The Bishop gives Holy Communion to Tony Mazza.

Long Valley parish: Hosts witness talks on vocations

FROM 2

was a missing piece in my heart. I asked God for a sign," said Father Parinas whose friend asked him to apply to the Paterson Diocese in the United States. He received that sign when he became one of the few men accepted into the program. "I told my girlfriend and she said it was OK to become a priest," he said.

In contrast, Deacon Jones heard his call later in life, which led to his studying to be a permanent deacon of the Diocese and being ordained in 2015. He credits his ability to hear and respond to his vocation to the following three factors:

- A desire to serve, from having volunteered as a lighting designer and stage manager in community theater to being eager to help friends. This often included moving furniture as he was "the one with the pickup truck."
- Good people around him. His parents brought up his sisters and him to attend Mass and pray at night. A sister's late fiancé helped him chart his long-term career path. He also called his wife, Cindy, the "guiding light" of his life.
- Peace and quiet. "Calm down and listen carefully. God doesn't shout. He doesn't give specific instructions but he gave me a path — a calling. I knew that I wanted to be up there with the priest [on the altar]," he said.

Now in seminary, Castanos felt a call to priesthood as a child in his native Dominican Republic. Influenced by the faith of his grandparents, he was an altar server at his

home parish. At age 5, he moved with his family to the U.S. and then at age 11, to different section of Paterson, where he joined St. Anthony Parish. He also received encouragement from Bishop Serratelli and Father "Junior" Flores, St. Anthony's parochial vicar at the time, who now serves in the Camden Diocese. He also had attended the diocesan summer "Quo Vadis Days" vocations retreat for young men.

Castanos answered the call by entering St. Andrew's College Seminary in South Orange. He felt the call grow stronger on a visit to the Church of the Annunciation in the Holy Land when he received a response to a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He anticipates being called to ordination as a priest of the Diocese in 2023.

"We are called [as priests] from among men to give our lives for the sake of the Gospel. We must be ready for trials and struggles. My formation and support from you, my family and many good priests and religious have made an indelible mark on me. I thank you," Castanos told the audience.

After the three talks, Father Marcin Michalowski, pastor of OLM and St. Mark, called the forum was "perfect for Advent," which was made possible by Mary's saying "yes" to God's call to bear our Savior.

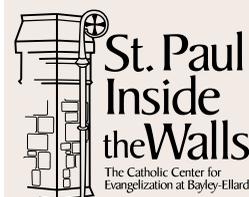
"God is calling us by name to something special to do his work. It was great to hear three different stories from three different people who heard Jesus' voice in very unique ways," Father Michalowski said.

WHAT TO DO

IN THE DIOCESE OF PATERSON

1/21 Virtual Reflection. St. Thomas Parish Spiritual Direction Ministry, Bloomfield; 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 7-9 p.m. Journey of the Magi, poem by T.S. Eliot presented by Anna Graziano. Reflect on the similar challenges in life as many struggle to open our hearts and lives, to rebirth, to the Light, to Jesus during the time of pandemic. (201) 213-5095.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ONE WAY

New to *One Way*? No problem! All are welcome to this online track of *One Way*, our intermediate course in discipleship. This month's topic is *Church: Your part in the structure and mission of the Kingdom*. Please register in advance to receive the login information.

First class begins on **Wednesday, Jan. 13, at 7:30 p.m.**

Sign up here: <https://insidethewalls.org/one-way-18plus>

We also offer an *in-person* track for young adults ages 21-39 on **Sunday mornings**. For more information on the young adult track, visit: <https://insidethewalls.org/one-way-registration>

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

Natural Family Planning is the most effective,

natural, healthy and inexpensive system to integrate into a couple's routine to both achieve or postpone pregnancy. Throughout the year, we offer classes on two different methods of Natural Family Planning. Register by visiting: insidethewalls.org/nfp

The next class in on the Creighton Method and will be held on **Saturday, Jan. 16, from 10 a.m. – noon.**

BEING SINGLE, BEING FAITHFUL

Whether single by choice or by circumstance — never married, widowed, divorced, or separated — we must live every "single" day to the fullest. We can find fulfillment in Christ and His Church by embracing the opportunities in the Church for spiritual growth, meaningful service and a sense of community. <https://insidethewalls.org/being-single-being-faithful-35>

Saturday, Jan. 23, 10 a.m. – noon

CATHOLICISM FROM SCRATCH ON ZOOM

Self-contained sessions focusing on the basics of Catholicism for those who need a brush-up, those who missed it the first time around or those who never heard it before. Signup at <https://insidethewalls.org/catholicism-from-scratch>

2021 schedule of free programs: **Jan. 23, Feb. 27, April 24** on Saturday mornings, from 10 a.m. – noon on Zoom.

MARCH FOR LIFE

March for Life is the largest pro-life event in the world. This peaceful gathering of hundreds of thousands is a powerful witness to the truth concerning the greatest human rights violation of our time, legalized abortion on demand. This year we will be marching *virtually* as a diocese. Please spread the word. For more information: <https://marchforlife.org/>

WWW.INSIDETHEWALLS.ORG

Christmas season: Catholic Charities witnesses outpouring of generosity

FROM 7

of the home.

Delbarton High School's annual Christmas giving endeavor was held to benefit children in Catholic Charities Early Learning programs. Volunteers and service recipients remained socially distant to spread joy while staying safe.

"Christmas during the COVID-19 pandemic has been anything but ordinary. Extraordinary times call for creative thinking and planning. This year, Delbarton School in Morristown compiled toys into individual, bright red Santa sacks, tied up in white ribbon with the name of each child, family and program for our preschools. It was an amazing act of kindness and ingenuity," said Sister of Charity Maureen Sullivan, pastoral care director for Catholic Family and Community Services.

At the Department for Persons with Disabilities, the agency continues to work diligently to keep individuals in its group homes and supervised apartments safe. Joanna Miller, executive director of the Department for Persons with Disabilities, said, "This Christmas season, the residents of the Department for Persons with Disabilities had many celebrations within their group homes with their fellow house mates and staff, in place of any large scale gatherings. We continue to find unique ways to engage the people we serve and during the Christmas season we held several celebrations via video conference and even welcomed Santa via a drive-through visit."

Catholic Family and Community Services' Christmas Blessings Project is a massive undertaking that begins in October with more than 20 parishes and 7 community schools/agencies. Kind donors contrib-

uted more than 1,600 gifts to children, adults and seniors participating in CFCS' programs. This year, Catholic Charities provided gifts with some changes. Most of the gifts in 2020 were gift cards due to safety, limited space and limited volunteers. Members of the Christmas Blessings committee sorted the presents/gift cards and assured there were enough for the many we serve.

Just in time for Christmas, Catholic Charities USA awarded Catholic Charities, Diocese of Paterson with a \$10,000 grant through their CCUSA Francis Cares Eviction Prevention Fund. This fund, jointly created by CCUSA and the Felician Sisters of North America, will help those in extreme danger of becoming homeless this winter.

Each year, the Bishop of the Diocese of Paterson hosts a Christmas Eve blessing at Straight and Narrow for those receiving inpatient rehabilitation services. Bishop Kevin Sweeney looked to continue that tradition, but because of the pandemic and visiting restrictions in place, Catholic Charities recorded a Christmas blessing that was broadcast to all clients of the agency.

Throughout the Diocese, families have also supported the three agencies of Catholic Charities purchasing gifts, collecting food and more to help those most in need. Local businesses and community groups held fund drives as well as toy and food drives.

"I am very blessed and was happy to give back through donations of food and toys this Christmas season. The individuals who come to my business were uplifted to help those at Catholic Charities and responded generously to our outreach," said Giorgio Biancamano, owner of Blue 42 in



GIFTS FOR CHRISTMAS A minivan packed front to back with gifts from St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Butler. These gifts of toys supported children in Catholic Charities five Early Learning programs in Paterson.

Elmwood Park.

For the second year, Holiday Hope NYC, a grass roots nonprofit organization purchased large-scale gift items for DPD's residential programs including furniture, exercise equipment and televisions.

"The birth of Christ brings us great joy.

Thousands of individuals volunteered, donated to or supported Catholic Charities this Christmas season — a true sign of God's love for all! On behalf of all of those helped at Catholic Charities, thank you to everyone who thought of us during this special time of year" said Milliken.



FOR THE YOUTH Karen Abrams and her family purchased and handed out 60 hot, 4-course meals, catered by Corrado's Family Affair, to those served by Catholic Charities At-Risk Youth Programs.




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Martyr for religious freedom

The Pew Research Center recently reported that government restrictions on religion worldwide (and in the U.S.) are at their highest point since 2007. This is a grave threat not only to our religious freedoms but also to human rights.

Globally, religious freedom protects human dignity, promotes security and supports American national security.

Here in our own nation anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism are increasing. Worship is called “non-essential” and churches are unnecessarily restricted in the number of people allowed to attend services by state government leaders. On college campuses, the existence of faith-based groups is being challenged and some are being called on to disband. The new administration has promised that one of its first priorities is to enact what will be a rights-crushing Equality Act that will further diminish religious freedoms.

Our Founding Fathers knew that religious freedom was necessary for each of us and ensured that the role of government was to protect that freedom. That is why it is in our First Amendment.

The importance of religious freedom was the focus of a proclamation issued at the White House Dec. 29 praising St. Thomas Becket, the English archbishop who was martyred 850 years ago after conflict with King Henry II over the rights of the Church.

“Before the Magna Carta was drafted, before the right to free exercise of religion was enshrined as America’s first freedom in our glorious Constitution, Thomas Beckett gave his life so that, as he said, ‘the Church will attain liberty and peace,’” President Donald Trump wrote in the proclamation.

“To honor Thomas Becket’s memory, the crimes against people of faith must stop,



RICHARD A. SOKERKA

prisoners of conscience must be released, laws restricting freedom of religion and belief must be repealed, and the vulnerable, the defenseless and the oppressed must be protected. As long as America stands, we will always defend religious liberty.”

“When the Archbishop refused to allow the King to interfere in the affairs of the Church, Thomas Becket stood at the intersection of church and state. That stand, after centuries of state-sponsored religious oppression and religious wars throughout Europe, eventually led to the establishment of religious liberty in the New World,” Trump’s proclamation said.

On Dec. 29, 1170, knights supportive of King Henry murdered Becket at Canterbury Cathedral, shortly after the bishop had prayed vespers.

“Thomas Becket’s martyrdom changed the course of history. It eventually brought about numerous constitutional limitations on the power of the state over the Church across the West. In England, Becket’s murder led to the Magna Carta’s declaration 45 years later that: ‘[T]he English church shall be free, and shall have its rights undiminished and its liberties unimpaired.’

“Thomas Becket’s death serves as a powerful and timeless reminder to every American that our freedom from religious persecution is not a mere luxury or accident of history, but rather an essential element of our liberty. It is our priceless treasure and inheritance. And it was bought with the blood of martyrs,” the president added.

“A society without religion cannot prosper. A nation without faith cannot endure — because justice, goodness and peace cannot prevail without the grace of God,” the proclamation stated.

In 2021, much like St. Thomas Beckett did, we need to stand up and defend any action by individuals or government leaders that in any way impinge on our constitutional right to religious freedom.

‘Tremendo home run!’

To the Editor:

A special “well done” to our new bishop, Bishop Kevin J. Sweeney, for his first front-page mega article, “What is Christmas all about?” [The Beacon, Dec. 24.]

It addressed the concerns affecting many Catholics at this moment, one of the most important of which is how to keep nourishing our religious spirit in these uncertain times when watching a television screen has become our main, if not only, means of keeping our minds occupied and our faiths strong. Your recommendation about watching Franco Zefferelli’s “Jesus of Nazareth” was the perfect one for our dry and hungry souls.

I am a Cuban exile who came to this country more than 50 years ago and share with you, a Brooklyn native, a clear love for baseball. So, Your Eminence, a heartfelt shout of “Tremendo home run!” for your article and a warm welcome to New Jersey. Muchas gracias and may God keep you close to us for many years.

Modesto Alonso
Florham Park

‘In the world’ versus being ‘of the world’

To the Editor:

The Beacon took a courageous stand (for which it took a lot of heat) to allow its readers to debate the topic of Catholics and their responsibility in terms of voting during this recent presidential election. That opportunity was no doubt partially inspired by Mr. Biden’s categorical support for a woman’s right to choose (abortion) from conception through to (shudder) the post-partem phases of pregnancy. Some Catholic clergy took him to task for that position, even to the point of asserting he was not in good standing with Church teaching. Biden actually doubled down by asserting that as a “good Catholic,” his faith informed his policy-making decisions!

The discussion has continued even past the election as evidenced by recent letters by Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Cerchio. Mr. Humphrey seemed to rationalize a position that reconciled voting for a candidate with views opposed to Catholic teaching while maintaining one’s own Catholic convictions. Mr. Cerchio took serious exception to that view. Let me share for one last time my own perspective on this issue.

As a sophomore in college, I took a course in epistemology offered by a passionate Jesuit professor of theology and philosophy. In one lecture, he alerted us to the imminent personal choice we would be confronting in being “in the world” versus being “of the world.” He sensitized us to the long-term consequences that decision would affect our own voyage to eternity. He stated that being “in the world” required us to take the tenets of our faith and by example and perhaps even by evangelism, promulgate them in our environs. In short, to be Christ-like in our behaviors just like the Master himself. He further cautioned us that doing so would not necessarily immunize us from hardship, ridicule and the like in the short term, witness Jesus’s own execution.

On the other hand, we could choose to be “of the world,” allowing our environment to

LETTER ON 11

Anti-Catholicism spiked in 2020

There is plenty of empirical evidence to conclude that anti-Catholicism grew by leaps and bounds in 2020. Church vandalism, much of it done to make a political statement, was rampant in those parts of the country where mob rule was tolerated; COVID-19 restrictions on houses of worship were often imposed arbitrarily, requiring dioceses to challenge them in court; comments made by political and cultural elites about Christians, especially Christian voters, were harsh if not cruel.

As important as any measure, Catholics themselves expressed concern about the state of bigotry in the nation. An EWTN survey in late August found that a majority of Catholics said they were either “very concerned” or “somewhat concerned” about the following:

- * Vandalization and attacks on churches.
- * Overall anti-Christian sentiment on the

fringes of the protests.

- * Calls by activists to tear down statues, murals and stained-glass windows depicting Jesus as a “white European.”

- * Vandalization and tearing down statues of famous Catholics.

- * Protesters in Portland, Oregon burning Bibles.

Not surprisingly, those Catholics who attended Mass once or more a week were the most alarmed about these events.

Who are the most likely to be anti-Catholic? Not surprising to the Catholic League, but no doubt surprising to many others, it is precisely those who fancy themselves as the most tolerant who, once again, showed themselves to be the most intolerant. For example, a Rasmussen survey found in



BILL DONOHUE

The cancel culture, which impacts Catholics as much as any segment in society, is not executed by those who hold to traditional values. No, it is the reserve of the educated elites, those who see themselves as beacons of tolerance. On that score, their hypocrisy quotient would be near perfect.

October that 15 percent of Democrats who were likely voters said that Catholics should be prohibited from sitting on the U.S. Supreme Court; the figure was 9 percent for Republicans.

A large survey of the American public conducted by the University of Virginia’s Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, “Democracy in Dark Times,” reported in November that Biden voters were much more likely to consider Trump voters negatively than was true vice versa.

The majority of Biden voters consider

Trump voters to be “closed-minded” (89 percent); “misguided and misinformed” (89 percent); “intolerant” (86 percent); “racist” (83 percent); “religious hypocrites” (80 percent); “authoritarian” (77 percent); “dangerous” (77 percent); “ignorant” (78 percent); “fascist” (63 percent); “un-American” (53 percent); “un-Christian” (59 percent); “undereducated” (63 percent); and “dishonest” (58 percent). Four in 10 Biden voters consider Trump voters “evil.”

It can safely be said that when Hillary

DONOHUE ON 11

Thoughts on a pro-life picket line

One of Dr. LeRoy Carhart's "Clinics for Abortion & Reproductive Excellence" — named to yield the Orwellian acronym CARE — is located about a mile away from my parish in Bethesda, Md. Earlier this year, 40 Days for Life prayed daily outside Carhart's abortuary, which specializes in late-term "terminations." Parishioners from a number of local churches participated in the 40 Days program, hoping to save some innocent lives and to help women in crisis pregnancies find genuine care.

Forty Days' presence at the Carhart facility evidently did not sit well with some of the students at a nearby county-run high school. So a "pro-choice drive-by" of Carhart's clinic was organized in mid-December: perhaps 15 cars, festooned with posters, circled the parking lot of the office complex in which Carhart conducts his abattoir. Participants in the drive-by may have been surprised that 40 Days for Life, on learning of the plans for this vehicular demonstration, invited pro-life people to conduct a rosary vigil on a sidewalk outside the parking lot, so that the "drive-by" couldn't avoid people with a different point of view — people who were also marking the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, depicted as pregnant on St. Juan Diego's miraculous *tilma*.

My wife and I participated in the rosary vigil, along with friends from our parish, other Catholics, and a stalwart if small contingent of Democrats for Life whose presence may have shocked the Carhart supporters. It was an instructive hour, giving me the opportunity to ponder the placards and posters displayed by the drive-by people, their slogans, and the chants of a man and a woman holding up a large banner — "Reproductive Rights = Human Rights" — amidst our rosary-praying group.

To begin with the last: it was striking that, while the 20 or so people in our group were relaxed and as cheerful as the circumstances permitted, the two banner holders were all angry, all the time. Both indulged in Che Guevara-style clenched fist salutes. Both kept hollering the inane slogan, "Keep your Bible off my body," although it was not clear how that injunction applied to the male half of the team. (He later switched to "Keep your Bible off my Constitution," a chant suggesting a sad ignorance of the reason-based natural law arguments against abortion.)



GEORGE WEIGEL

Then there was the content of that banner. Whatever else might be said about angry pro-abortion people (whose aggravations seem not to have been soothed by the prospect of the most radically pro-abortion administration in history), they don't seem to have any sense of irony — or of new-speak. For how can they claim to be defending "reproductive rights" when their entire enterprise is aimed at *stopping* reproduction, lethally?

As for the student-participants in the drive-by, their behavior did not reassure me that my tax dollars were being well-spent on their education, and in a county that prides itself on the alleged excellence of its state schools. More than a few of them flipped the finger at us (and thus at the icon of Our Lady of Guadalupe that one of our number carried). Others made a point of taking cell-phone videos, perhaps imagining that their new friends in federal power would ship us off to Guantanamo come Jan. 21. One car featured a crude, homemade poster declaring "Never Going Back!" and illustrated by the hoariest of "pro-choice" symbols: a coat hanger crossed out within a circle. Their high school, I surmised, did not acquaint its students with some relevant American history, i.e., Bernard Nathanson's testimony that,

in his days as a pre-*Roe v. Wade* pro-abortion activist, he and others exaggerated the number of "coat hanger" abortions by many orders of magnitude.

There was no opportunity to engage the drive-by folks. One would have liked to ask the students if they were taught in sophomore biology that the product of human conception is a human being with a unique genetic identity. Or whether they had ever discussed in class that first principle of justice, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, which tells us that innocent human life deserves legal protection in a just society. Or if they knew exactly what Dr. Carhart did in a late third-term abortion.

Reason rarely persuades angry people, alas. In the tough years ahead for the culture of life, compassionate witness is going to be ever more important: especially the witness of caring for women in crisis pregnancies, too often abandoned by the men who created their crises. No woman in America has to have an abortion; humane, life-affirming alternatives are available. Pro-life people must make those alternatives more visible in 2021.

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The illusion of invulnerability

Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger. That is a pious axiom that doesn't always hold up. Sometimes the bad time comes and we do not learn anything. I hope that this present bad time, COVID-19, will teach us something and make us stronger. My hope is that COVID-19 will teach us something that previous generations didn't need to be taught but already knew through their lived experience; namely, that we're not invulnerable, that we aren't exempt from the threat of sickness, debilitation and death. In short, all that our contemporary world can offer us in terms of technology, medicine, nutrition and insurance of every kind, does not exempt us from fragility and vulnerability. COVID-19 has taught us that. Just like ev-



FATHER RON ROLHEISER

eryone else who has ever walked this earth, we are vulnerable.

I am old enough to have known a previous generation when most people lived with a lot of fear, not all of it healthy, but all of it real. Life was fragile. Giving birth to a child could mean your death. A flu or virus could kill you and you had little defense against it. You could die young from heart disease, cancer, diabetes, bad sanitation and dozens of other things. In addition, nature itself could pose a threat. Storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, drought, pestilence, lightning, these were all to be feared because we were mostly helpless against them. People lived with a sense that life and health were fragile, not to be taken for granted.

Then along came vaccinations, penicillin, better hospitals, better medicines, safer childbirth, better nutrition, better housing, better sanitation, better roads, better cars and better insurance against everything

from loss of work, to drought, to storms, to pestilence, to disasters of any kind. And along with that came an ever-increasing sense that we are safe, protected, secure, different from previous generations, able to take care of ourselves, no longer as vulnerable as were the generations before us.

And to a large extent that's true, at least in terms of our physical health and safety. In many ways, we are far less vulnerable than previous generations. However, as COVID-19 has made evident, this is not a fully safe harbor. Despite much denial and protest, we have had to accept that we now live as did everyone before us, that is, as unable to guarantee our own health and safety. For all the dreadful things COVID-19 has done to us, it has helped dispel an illusion, the illusion of our own invulnerability. We are fragile, vulnerable, mortal.

At first glance, this seems like a bad thing; it is not. Disillusionment is the dispelling of an illusion and we have for too long (and too glibly) been living an illusion,

that is, living under a pall of false enchantment which has us believing that the threats of old no longer have power to touch us. And how wrong we are! As of the time of this writing, there are more than 82 million COVID-19 cases reported worldwide and there have been more than 1.8 million reported deaths from this virus. Moreover, the highest rates of infection and death have been in those countries we would think most invulnerable, countries that have the best hospitals and highest standards of medicine to protect us. That should be a wake-up call. For all the good things our modern and post-modern world can give us, in the end it cannot protect us from everything, even as it gives us the sense that it can.

COVID-19 has been a game-changer; it has dispelled an illusion, that of our own invulnerability. What is to be learned? In short, that our generation must take its place with all other generations, recognizing that we cannot take life, health, family,

ROLHEISER ON 12

Donohue: Anti-Catholicism

FROM 10

Clinton called Trump supporters "deplorable," she was speaking for most Democrats. The level of hatred that Republicans have for Democrats is nowhere near as great.

It is telling that this survey did not ask Trump voters whether they consider Biden voters to be "religious hypocrites." Perhaps that is because the University of Virginia social scientists figured it would be a waste of time: one can hardly be a hypocrite about a

value one does not possess.

The cancel culture, which impacts Catholics as much as any segment in society, is not executed by those who hold to traditional values. No, it is the reserve of the educated elites, those who see themselves as beacons of tolerance. On that score, their hypocrisy quotient would be near perfect.

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Letter: 'Of the world'

FROM 10

erode our Catholic beliefs through creating apparent "distinctions without differences" and by rationalizing amoral behaviors through the lens of a non-sectarian world. His message in short: you cannot create a dichotomy between your behaviors and others by adopting views opposed to Catholic teaching, especially in the long term.

Almost one in two Catholic voters chose Mr. Biden for President with all that this portends. Echoing Mr. Cerchio's sentiment, "So onward Christian soldiers, not for your ideas but for your very soul" to which I add simply, a fervent "Amen."

Frank P. Puzycycki
Long Valley

