JOIN celebrates 50 years of serving people in need
The Editor’s Notebook

Living a life of love and service

By David Garick, Editor

Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what is possible; and suddenly, you are doing the impossible. – St. Francis of Assisi.

Being Christian is not just calling ourselves Catholic. We do not encounter Christ only within the splendor of stained-glass windows standing before his holy altar. Christ shares his very being with us not as an end in itself, but as an impetus for us to go forth and share his love with the whole world.

Three times, Our Lord asked Peter, “Do you love me?” Each time, Peter said, “Yes, Lord. You know that I love you.” And the Lord replied, “Feed my sheep.” If we are to be true disciples of Christ, if we are to truly love him, we must pass that love on to one another. He has told us that the whole of the law of God is summed up in the commandment to “Love the Lord with all your heart, and all your soul and all your mind, and the second is like unto it, love your neighbor as yourself.”

We must go out of our homes and our churches and bring Christ to the poor, the suffering, the disheartened. The numbers are huge. The task seems impossible. But as the quote from St. Francis at the beginning of this column suggests, God has a way to make all things possible.

This edition of Catholic Times looks at JOIN, the Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs, a perfect example of how local Catholics are taking the faith outside the walls of the traditional church and sharing it with people in need.

Pope Francis speaks often of this important ministry to the poor and marginalized: “The Church must step outside herself. To go where? To the outskirts of existence, whatever they may be, but she must step out. Jesus tells us: ‘Go into all the world! Go! Preach! Bear witness to the Gospel!’ (cf. Mark 16:15). … In this ‘stepping out,’ it is important to be ready for encounter. There is another important point: encountering the poor. If we step outside ourselves, we find poverty. Today – it sickens the heart to say so – the discovery of a tramp who has died of the cold is not news. Today, what counts as news is, maybe, a scandal. A scandal: ah, that is news! Today, the thought that a great many children do not have food to eat is not news. This is serious, this is serious! We cannot put up with this! Yet that is how things are. We cannot become starched Christians, those overeducated Christians who speak of theological matters as they calmly sip their tea. No!” Pope Francis says, “We must become courageous Christians and go in search of the people who are the very flesh of Christ.”

The church exists in the place where Christ is present, reaching out with love to those in need. That is how he ministered in Palestine 2,000 years ago. That is how he commanded all of his disciples to continue his ministry. That is what he asks us to do today … if we truly love him.

USCCB president decries massive shooting at Texas Baptist church

A man and woman attend a candlelight vigil after a mass shooting on Nov. 5 at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas. A lone gunman entered the church during Sunday services, taking the lives of at least 26 people and injuring several more.

By Catholic News Service

The U.S. Catholic Church stands “in unity” with the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, and the larger community after a shooting during Sunday services took the lives of at least 26 people and injured at least 20 others.

Those who died ranged in age from 5 to 72 years old, and included 14-year-old Annabelle Pomeroy. Her father, Frank Pomeroy, is pastor of the church, but he was not at the service.

“We stand in unity with you in this time of terrible tragedy -- as you stand on holy ground, ground marred today by horrific violence,” said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

With San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, “I extend my prayers and the prayers of my brother bishops for the victims, the families, the first responders, our Baptist brothers and sisters, indeed the whole community of Sutherland Springs,” Cardinal DiNardo said.

Law enforcement officials told CNN that a lone gunman entered the church at about 11:30 a.m. CST while 50 people were attending Sunday services. Almost everyone in the congregation was shot. Sutherland Springs is 30 to 40 miles southeast of San Antonio.

Two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press the suspect was Devin Kelley, described as a white male in his 20s. He parked at a gas station across the street from the church, crossed the street and allegedly began firing as he walked toward the church and then continued firing once in-
War brings only death, cruelty, pope says at U.S. military cemetery

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

“No more, Lord, no more (war)” that shatters dreams and destroys lives, bringing a cold, cruel winter instead of some sought-after spring, Pope Francis said, looking out at the people gathered for an outdoor Mass at a U.S. war memorial and cemetery.

“This is the fruit of war: death,” he said, as the bright Italian sun lowered in the sky on the Feast of All Souls, Nov. 2.

On a day the church offers special prayers for the faithful departed with the hope of their meeting God in heaven, “here in this place, we pray in a special way for these young people,” he said, gesturing toward the rows of thousands of graves.

Christian hope can spring from great pain and suffering, he said, but it can also “make us look to heaven and say, ‘I believe in my Lord, the redeemer, but stop, Lord, please, no more war,’” he said.

“With war, you lose everything,” he said.

Before the Mass, Pope Francis placed a white rose atop 10 white marble headstones. The majority of the stones were carved crosses; one was in the shape of the Jewish Star of David.

As he slowly walked alone over the green lawn and prayed among the thousands of simple grave markers, visitors recited the rosary at the World War II Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial site in Nettuno, a small coastal city south of Rome.

In previous years, the pope marked All Souls Day by visiting a Rome cemetery. This year, he chose to visit a U.S. military burial ground and, later in the day, the site of a Nazi massacre at the Ardeatine Caves in Rome to pray especially for all victims of war and violence.

“Wars produce nothing other than cemeteries and death,” he said after reciting the Angelus on All Saints Day, Nov. 1. He explained he would visit the two World War II sites the next day because humanity “seems to have not learned that lesson or doesn’t want to learn it.”

In his homily at the late afternoon Mass on Nov. 2, Pope Francis spoke off the cuff and said people do everything to go to war, but they end up doing nothing but destroying themselves.

“This is war: the destruction of ourselves,” he said.

He spoke of the particular pain women experience in war: receiving the letter with news of the death of their husband, child, or grandchild.

So often people who want to go to war “are convinced they will usher in a new world, a new springtime. But it ends up as winter -- ugly, cruel, a reign of terror and death,” the pope said.

Today, the world continues to head off fiercely to war and fight battles every day, he said.

“Let us pray for the dead today, dead from war, including innocent children,” and pray to God “for the grace to weep,” he said.

Among the more than 7,800 graves at the Nettuno cemetery, there are the remains of 16 women who served in the Women’s Army Corps, the Red Cross, or as nurses, as well as the graves of 29 Tuskegee airmen. Those buried or missing in action had taken part in attacks by the U.S. and its allies along Italy’s coast during World War II.

After the Mass, the pope visited the Ardeatine Caves, now a memorial cemetery with the remains of 335 Italians, mostly civilians, brutally murdered by Nazi German occupiers in 1944.

The pope was led through the long series of tunnels and stopped to pray several minutes in silence at a bronze sculpted fence symbolizing the twisted, interlocking forms of those massacred. Walking farther along the dark corridors, he placed white roses along a long series of dark gray cement tombs built to remember the victims.

The victims included some Italian military, but also political prisoners and men rounded up in a Jewish neighborhood. They were all shot in the back of the head in retaliation for an attack on Nazi soldiers. The Nazis threw the bodies into the caves and used explosives to seal off access. After the war, a memorial was built on the site. Rabbi Riccardo Di Segni, chief rabbi of Rome, sang a short prayer, and the pope prayed to God, merciful and compassionate, who hears the cries of his people and knows of their sufferings. Through the risen Christ, Christians know that God is not the god of death, “but of the living, that your covenant of faithful love is stronger than death and a guarantee of resurrection,” he said. After returning to the Vatican, the pope was to visit the grotto under St. Peter’s Basilica, where many popes are buried.

The Catholic Foundation joins the #GivingTuesday movement

The Catholic Foundation again will join the #GivingTuesday movement on Tuesday, Nov. 28. The global day of giving harnesses the collective power of individuals, communities, and organizations to encourage philanthropy and celebrate generosity worldwide.

#GivingTuesday takes place annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday. It is designed to kick off the Christmas season and inspire people to improve their communities and give back in impactful ways to the parishes, schools, and charities they support.

With all the commercials, advertisements, and media coverage surrounding the season, the true meaning of Thanksgiving and Christmas often gets lost in the shuffle. #GivingTuesday can revive the spirit of giving and selflessness. As Catholics, we naturally want our giving to coincide with the teachings of our faith. You can ensure this happens by giving through The Catholic Foundation, which has hundreds of funds that go to parishes, schools, and social service agencies in your community. Everyone can participate in #GivingTuesday, and you can make your gift extra special by donating in honor of, in memory of, or on behalf of a friend or loved one.

Visit www.catholic-foundation.org/funds to search for your parish, school, or organization’s fund in the search box on the left side. If you don’t see your fund listed, contact Scott Hartman at shartman@catholic-foundation.org or (614) 443-8893.
I can still feel the thick plastic cover over the checkered tablecloths under my fingers, still smell the faint aroma of almond extract mixed with something like mothballs in my nose.

The week leading up to Christmas was the same every year of my childhood. In less than 24 hours, my brother and I made the rounds with my parents to the kitchen tables of every living great-aunt and great-uncle we had in New Jersey, and to the homes of a few “paisanos,” who I later learned were not actually of any blood relation to us.

I remember looking forward to the annual tradition. As soon as we stepped into each successive house, a fresh plate of cookies was placed on the table. I will never forget the anticipation of my mother lifting the standard limit on sweets for a whole day.

Looking back now, I appreciate so much more. It was a dedicated time that my parents set aside for us to learn about our family’s history. It shaped our own sense of identity and what we learned to value as adults.

My relatives would laugh so hard with one another, reminiscing about their own youth. We still tell some of the stories that we heard around those tables, as if we had witnessed the events firsthand.

Looking at the ways in which the church can hear the voices of young people has been the primary focus of this column – but it is also worthwhile to turn that question on its head. One such way is through a promotion of intergenerational solidarity. It’s a challenging message for a culture that idolizes youth, and that question on its head. One such way is through a promotion of intergenerational dialogue and relationships.

It’s for this reason that Pope Francis has very often stressed the importance of grandparents. “Your grandparents have the wisdom, and furthermore, they have the need for you to knock on the door of their hearts to share their wisdom,” he said this September to the Shalom Catholic Community. He himself keeps a note from his grandmother in his breviary that he uses every day.

Yet the pope has also said that young people should go out of their way to encounter and welcome the elderly who are not their family members. This will require proactive measures on our part, perhaps requiring us to go to the peripheries of our churches and communities to find them.

We should also ask our priests and pastoral staff where we can find them. Too often, they go unnoticed and are beckoning for company and community.

It will certainly require more listening than it does talking. It may involve awkward silences and patience and walking a little bit slower than usual. But isn’t the whole point of accompaniment to share in someone else’s journey, no matter its current direction or pace?

Pope Francis has reminded us that “the church regards the elderly with affection, gratitude and high esteem. They are an essential part of the Christian community and of society.”

As the 2018 synod on vocational discernment aims to put the realities of young people front and center for the church, we’d also be wise to heed the wisdom of those who have prepared the way ahead of us.

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**Catholic Healing Mass and service**

A Mass of healing and healing service will take place at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 20 at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St.

The healing service will follow the Mass and include Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, veneration of a relic of the True Cross of Christ, and an opportunity for everyone present to speak individually with a priest and have him say prayers of healing for what they seek. The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick also will be available. The service will close with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

All persons who seek Christ’s healing are invited, especially those who suffer with physical illness and infirmities, in addition to those in seek emotional and spiritual healing. All caregivers, family members, and members of the medical community also are invited.

Parking is available at the rear of the cathedral and is accessible off East Gay Street. There is a handicapped-accessible elevator in the courtyard (west side of the cathedral) on East Broad Street. Healing Masses take place at the cathedral on the third Monday of every other month. This will be the last Healing Mass at the cathedral for 2017. Dates for 2018 Healing Masses are Jan. 15, March 19, May 21, July 16, Sept. 17, and Nov. 19.

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**Talk, Mass to honor St. Albert the Great**

Columbus St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., will be the site of a talk on Thursday, Nov. 9 and a Mass on Wednesday, Nov. 15 to honor St. Albert the Great, patron of scientists.

St. Albert was a German bishop in the mid-13th century and was a member of the Dominican Order, whose priests serve St. Patrick Church.

Father Stephen Dominic Hayes, OP, will deliver the talk on “Faith, Science and the Catholic Church” at 7 p.m. Nov. 9 in the parish’s Aquinas Hall as part of its monthly “Into the Deep” lecture series.

The Mass on 7 p.m. Nov. 15 will be a Dominican Rite sung Mass, featuring the parish choir. Latin-English programs will be provided. Refreshments will be available.

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**Newark retreat center to host morning of reflection**

Sts. Peter and Paul Retreat Center, 2734 Seminary Road S.E., Newark, will host an Advent morning of reflection with Sister Louis Mary Passeri, OP, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 16. The theme will be “The Precious Present,” focusing on Advent as a time to pray and reflect on God’s generous gifts to each of us.

The event fee of $20 includes a continental breakfast. Register by calling (740) 928-4246 or online at www.stspeterandpaulretreatcenter.com. If you have questions, email info@stspeterandpaulretreatcenter.org. Registration deadline is Monday, Dec. 11.

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**SHOOTING, continued from Page 2**

“We ask the Lord for healing of those injured, his loving care of those who have died and the consolation of their families,” Cardinal DiNardo said. “This incomprehensible tragic event joins an ever-growing list of mass shootings, some of which were also at churches while people were worshiping and at prayer,” he continued.

“We must come to the firm determination that there is a fundamental problem in our society. A culture of life cannot tolerate, and must prevent, senseless gun violence in all its forms. May the Lord, who himself is peace, send us his spirit of charity and non-violence to nurture his peace among us all,” the cardinal said.
Mass formally opens canonization cause for Black Elk

By Catholic News Service

During a Mass to formally open the sainthood cause for Nicholas Black Elk, the Native American was described as someone who merged the Lakota and Catholic cultures in a way “that drew him deeper into the mystery of Christ’s love and the church.”

Black Elk’s love for God and Scripture led him to become a catechist, fulfilling the mission of all disciples, said Bishop Robert D. Gruss of Rapid City, South Dakota, in his homily at the Oct. 21 Mass at Holy Rosary Church in Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

The bishop said that for 50 years, Black Elk led others to Christ, often melding his Lakota culture into his Christian life. “This enculturation can always reveal something of the true nature and holiness of God,” he said, adding that Black Elk always “challenged people to renew themselves, to seek this life that Christ offers them.”

Bishop Gruss said Black Elk’s life as a dedicated catechist, spiritual leader and guide “inspired many to live for Christ by his own story.” With the formal opening of his cause, Black Elk now has the title Servant of God.

Black Elk was born sometime between 1858 and 1866. He died on Aug. 19, 1950, at Pine Ridge.

The bishop said the process for the sainthood cause for Black Elk is a long one. First, he must show a reputation for holiness that spread to others.

The first phase involves gathering testimony about his life and his virtues. Bishop Gruss said Black Elk’s public and private writings are being collected and examined. This documentary phase can take many years.

“The process now is now up to the Holy Spirit and Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Our task now is to continue to gather more information, testimony about his life, and to pray that he is found worthy to have his cause moved forward,” he said.

The road to canonization involves three major steps: First is the declaration of a person’s heroic virtues, after which the church declares the person “venerable.” Second is beatification, after which he or she is called “blessed.” Third is canonization, or the declaration of sainthood.

In general, two miracles must be accepted by the church as having occurred through the intercession of the prospective saint: one must occur before beatification, and the other after beatification.

The bishop also encouraged the congregation to follow Black Elk’s example, stressing that all Christians are called into the missionary field.

“Like Black Elk, if we are docile to the Lord’s will, devoting our lives to him, we will be out working for his kingdom of mercy, love and peace,” he said.

The bishop also stressed that today’s Catholics should not live “isolated religious lives” but instead should recognize they are called to be “God’s servants and instruments of Christ’s love in building and advancing his kingdom. Each of us has to decide how we can participate,” he added.

Last February, Bishop Gruss appointed Bill White as the diocesan postulator of Black Elk’s sainthood cause. White is an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Deacon Ben Black Bear from St. Francis Mission is translating some of Black Elk’s writings from Lakota to English.

Deacon Marlon Leneaugh, Rapid City’s diocesan director of Native American ministry, described Black Elk as a revered holy man among the Lakota who bridged the gap between traditional native spirituality and Catholicism.

“He showed his people that you did not have to choose between the two; you could both. He did not abandon his native ways when he became a Christian. To him it was together – praying to the one God,” Deacon Leneaugh said.
Ending of Our Father; OK to write off church donations?

QUESTION & ANSWER
by: FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
Catholic News Service

Q. Protestants have their own form of the Lord’s Prayer, ending with, “For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Amen.” I read in a book by a Catholic author, first published in 1911, that “such an addition was not uttered by Our Lord. Catholics consequently do not use it.” Please comment. (Columbus)

A. The answer is not quite as simple as the 1911 author suggests. True, most biblical scholars agree that the “Protestant ending” (“For thine is the kingdom...”) is not included in the earliest Greek manuscripts of the Gospels. So “Catholic” versions of the Bible (the New American Bible, for example, which is the one read at Mass) have never included those words as coming from Jesus (neither in Matthew 6:9-13 nor in Luke 11:2-4).

But certain manuscripts written less than a century later do include this additional phrase, and early Christians in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire began to use it to complete the Lord’s Prayer when it was offered at Mass. The Didache, a first-century teaching document and manual of worship, likewise indicates the use of this prayer-ending at Christian worship.

So, while the phrase was most likely not uttered by Jesus, it is both theologically sound and historically rooted.

Q. In Matthew’s Chapter 6 (verses 3-4), Jesus says, “When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” I have always considered donating to the church (or to any charity) something that is between me and God. However, many churches now track what you give to help you take advantage for tax purposes.

So, my question is: If I were to write off the contributions I give to the church, wouldn’t that be contradicting the teachings of Jesus? For a long time, I’ve just assumed the answer was “Yes” and never considered doing this. What is the church’s opinion? (Fayetteville, Arkansas)

A. The key to answering your question comes just before the two particular verses you have quoted. Jesus was warning against putting one’s holiness on public display. He said, “When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others” (Matthew 6:2).

Taking a tax deduction for charitable donations does not, in my mind, violate that caution. In your own case, you would not be seeking to draw attention to yourself, as its power to you, to the crowd about your splendid generosity; no one, in fact, would know what you had done except you and the IRS (and perhaps your tax accountant).

The federal tax code is designed with certain social benefits in mind -- in the case of charitable and religious deductions, to encourage taxpayers to help those who are helping others. And the money you save by way of the permissible deductions actually frees up even more funds to be used for noble purposes.

My only regret is that this option is available only to those who itemize deductions on Schedule A of their federal tax return -- which means that it can help you only if you choose not to take the standard deduction instead. And since each year only about 30 percent of tax filers itemize, the generosity of more than two-thirds of Americans offers no additional tax benefit.

Questions may be sent to Father Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Drive, Albany NY 12203.

Father Reichert retires

A retirement celebration for Father James L. Reichert took place on Sunday, Nov. 5 at the Church of the Ascension in Johnstown. Father Reichert retired from full-time ministry on Thursday, Oct. 12 after 46 years as a priest of the Diocese of Columbus, including the last 14 years as pastor in Johnstown.

Father Reichert, 72, grew up in Columbus, attended St. John the Evangelist School and Holy Family High School, and graduated from Bishop Ready High School. His priestly formation took place at St. Charles Seminary in Columbus and Mount St. Mary Seminary of the West in Norwood. He was ordained on May 29, 1971 by Bishop Clarence Elwell at his home church, Columbus St. John the Evangelist.

During his first nine years as a priest, he was in residence at Columbus St. Agatha Church and served as associate pastor at Columbus St. Catharine and Zanesville St. Nicholas churches, with his duties also including teaching at Columbus Bishop Watterson and Bishop Hartley and Zanesville Bishop Rosecrans high schools.

He was pastor at Columbus Holy Name for 11 years and Groveport St. Mary for 12, also spending some of that time as a chaplain at The Ohio State University Hospitals, before becoming pastor in Johnstown.

Anyone wishing to send Father Reichert a card or note of congratulations may address it in care of the Church of the Ascension, 555 S. Main St., Johnstown OH 43031.

Bishop Flaget receives playground grant

Chillicothe Bishop Flaget School received a $7,000 grant from The Catholic Foundation as part of the Foundation’s 2018 responsive grants cycle.

The pillars of focus for grant opportunities from the Foundation include: parish life – addressing the capital and infrastructure needs of diocesan parishes; Catholic education and faith formation – addressing the capital, education, evangelization, and faith formation needs of the faithful; social service – addressing the needs of marginalized in parish communities; and vocations – addressing the need for Holy Orders, the call to religious life, and marriage.

The Catholic Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable organization that receives and manages assets to provide perpetual funding for the parishes, schools, and ministries within the 23-county Diocese of Columbus. For more information on how you can be involved in giving, contact the Foundation at (614) 443-8893 or toll-free at (866) 298-8893.

Watterson open house date is Nov. 19

Columbus Bishop Watterson High School, 99 E. Cooke Road, will host its annual open house from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19. Prospective students are welcome to tour the facilities, meet faculty, staff, and coaches, and learn about the school’s academic, faith, service, and co-curricular programs. The school’s principal, Deacon Chris Campbell, will speak at 2 p.m.

For more information, contact admissions director Mary Kate Campbell at (614) 268-8671 or mcampbell@ceducation.org.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development
Working to End Poverty in the United States
THE EVERYDAY CATHOLIC

By Rick Jeric

Take a Knee or Two

Even though it seems to be going away slowly, the silent protest by some NFL players has captured our attention. It is personal and political at the same time. It stirs emotions and elicits reactions. The practice of taking a knee during our national anthem is considered disrespectful to our flag as our national symbol, and to our veterans who fought and gave their lives so that knee could be taken, but also is considered a legitimate form of protest to draw our attention to a deeper issue. It all depends on who you are. I think it also depends on what you are made of, your upbringing, and your environment. I thank God for my life that was formed by great parents and family, a Catholic education, a college degree, the best wife and children imaginable, good and stable employment and benefits, money saved for retirement, and a very nice and safe neighborhood in the suburbs. All good reasons to take a knee — or two — and say “Thank you” to God. I drive my nice car downtown to work each day, and function in a neighborhood that I would not choose to live in. I look out my office window and see the alley where a 13-year-old African-American boy was shot and killed by police after brandishing a pellet gun. I can shelter myself from the world around me, but I cannot ignore it. I can be angry at millionaires playing a game for a living, but I also can be open to a more sympathetic understanding of the world in which many of them grew up. Maybe I can take a knee or two in protest before and after the game, and ask God for the grace to be positive and compassionate. If I feel strongly about this issue, I can even turn off the television and focus on that prayerful knee or two. I will never know what it is like to be raised by one parent, or none at all, in a tough neighborhood where crime, drugs, and guns are the norm, and grass, flowers, fancy grocery stores, soccer fields with irrigation systems, schools with food courts for lunch, a student parking lot full of new cars, bicycle and jogging paths, and even roundabouts with nice brick trim and ornamental shrubs are not the norm. None of these things are bad. But I think it remains our responsibility to be grateful and humble, along with being sensitive. We can be like the Pharisee in Luke’s Gospel who goes to the temple and prays, “God, I thank you that I am not like others.” Or we can be like the tax collector who prays, “God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.”

We have many reasons to take a knee or two. And we should do so more often. I know I should. Instead of getting caught up in what athletes are doing on Sunday, we should all be on both knees for one simple hour on Sunday, receiving the richest gift of all in Jesus Christ. Then, putting that love into action each day in our families, schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods will have a real impact on societal norms and inequitable circumstances. Similarly, I will never know what it is like to be in the military or to fight to defend my country. I cannot imagine giving my life so that others can live in peace and freedom. Suffering through a prisoner of war camp, then coming home to live a normal life is hard to comprehend. Sacrificing life and limb and coming home to ungrateful citizens is awful. This Veterans Day weekend, take a knee or two for them, living and deceased. No matter where we live or what kind of life we enjoy, we owe it to our veterans. The knees we take, whether in worship or protest, are borne on the backs of our veterans. Thank you! And as St. Paul writes to the Philippians, “At the name of Jesus, every knee should bend in Heaven and on the earth ... and every tongue proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
DeSales staff grateful to PBS for lounge makeover

The staff at Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School says “Thank you” to the Public Broadcasting Service and local PBS affiliate WOSU-TV for the school’s newly refurbished teachers lounge and for the educational resources the network offers.

DeSales teacher Ruth Seggerson won the grand prize in the “Teach Boldly” sweepstakes hosted by PBS Education, earning the school a teachers lounge makeover courtesy of PBS and WOSU.

PBS launched the sweepstakes last fall as part of a yearlong celebration of educators across the nation. Throughout the year, PBS and member stations invite teachers to share ideas, learn from peers, and find daily inspiration at the PBS Teachers’ Lounge. This creative, digital space offers weekly insights from outstanding teachers and thought leaders in the education space and features timely resources that teachers can use to enhance their work in the classroom.

Photo courtesy St. Francis DeSales High School

Congratulations to Father James L. Reichert on the Celebration of his Retirement after 46 years as a Priest in the Diocese of Columbus

Ordained May 29, 1971
Taught at Watterson HS, St. Agatha residence 5/71
Assistant, St. Catharine, taught at Hartley, 8/74
Associate Pastor, St. Nicholas, Zanesville, taught at Rosecrans 7/78
Pastor, Holy Name, Columbus; 7/80
Pastor, St. Mary, Groveport, 7/91
Pastor, Church of the Ascension, Johnstown, 7/03
Retired October 12, 2017

A retirement celebration was held on Sunday, November 5, 2017 at Church of the Ascension in Johnstown

If you would care to send Father Reichert a card or note of congratulations, please send it in care of Church of the Ascension
555 S. Main Street • Johnstown, OH 43031

Adult & Continuing Education Info Session on Nov. 29

ODU offers a wide range of affordable degree completion programs online and on campus. Pursue your passion in an environment that’s rich in the Catholic Dominican tradition.

Join us from 6-7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov 29.
Register now: ohiodominican.edu/InfoSession

Central Ohio’s Catholic University • Founded by the Dominican Sisters of Peace.
Thankful for the Gift of Presence

Thursday, Nov. 9 is the feast of the dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome, the official church of the pope. The Mass readings for that day, not surprisingly, have to do with temples of one sort or another. The first reading is from Ezekiel 47, but let’s start a bit earlier in the book.

In chapters 40 to 48 of Ezekiel, the prophet describes a vision in which God transports him to a high mountain in Israel and an angel gives him a tour of a new city. The vision is long and full of details: precise measurements of walls, inner courts, outer courts, door jambs, and Temple outbuildings, as well as the new Temple itself. Ezekiel witnesses the glory of God returning to fill the Temple, and God tells him as the new Temple itself. Ezekiel witnesses the glory of God returning to fill the Temple, and God tells him that it again will be the divine dwelling place in the midst of the people.

In addition to seeing the physical structures, Ezekiel learns the rules for those who serve in the Temple, how land is to be appropriated, how feasts are to be observed, and a list of protocols and procedures for Temple worship and sacrifices that would make a royal event planner’s head spin.

As I read these verses, I was glad it was Ezekiel and not me who had been instructed to remember every detail so he could share them with the exiled Israelites when he returned to them in Babylon. They had pretty much lost hope. Jerusalem had fallen, and despite the prophet’s valiant efforts to help them recognize that its destruction was imminent, many had clung to the illusion that Jerusalem would survive and they would go back home, resuming life as usual. I can identify with that. It’s a human tendency to ignore signs that portend the coming of something calamitous or the slow creep of something bad.

Next comes the description of the spring in the Temple. That’s the first reading for Nov. 9. It’s abbreviated in the Lectionary (To get the full effect, I suggest reading all the first 12 verses.), but it’s still a magnificent image. A stream begins in the Temple, runs under the threshold, and flows to the Dead Sea, swelling into a river too deep for anyone to cross.

When it reaches the sea, it makes the salt water fresh, teeming with all kinds of fish and water creatures. People flock there with nets. Wherever the river flows, it brings life and healing. Trees along its bank produce new, delicious fruit every month. Even their leaves are medicinal. All this because it is God’s life flowing from the sanctuary.

When I read these words, I wanted to jump in. I wanted to splash through the river and sink beneath the water, let it do its healing, and then burst up through the surface full of hope, energy, and joy, free of the worries and concerns that fill my heart. Perhaps that’s how the Israelites felt when they listened to Ezekiel recount the story.

The good news is that God doesn’t dwell in temples or churches. Paul writes to the Corinthians, and to us, that we are the temples of God. (1 Corinthians 3: 16-17) The Spirit lives in each of us, neighbor and stranger alike. The glorious, healing, life-giving Presence that Ezekiel sees coming from the Temple flows in and through all, gracing the people and places it touches. We don’t have to look for that river streaming down from the city on a hill; that “river” is everywhere. We can sink into Holy Presence wherever we are. Incarnation means God has entered into the matter of creation. We are immersed in that Presence, whether we realize it or not. Open to it, Grace transforms us and all it touches. We can move into our deepest center and meet God there.

God is truly with us: strength in our struggles, joy in our celebrations, hope when we are tempted to despair. God walks with us when we are afraid, offers rest when we have worn ourselves out, waits when we are too busy to notice, fills what is empty, mourns with us in our grief, and sits with us when we don’t know what else to do.

The last words in Ezekiel, naming the new city, sum up this wondrous reality: “The name of the City shall henceforth be ‘The Lord is here.’” (48:35)

JOIN has been meeting people’s basic needs and providing hope for 50 years

Thelma Bullock is an enthusiastic, articulate woman who has lived on the limited income provided by a monthly Social Security disability check since 1989, when she was injured at work and lost her job. In that year, she began coming to the Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs (JOIN) to help her meet the challenges that organization for Inner-City Needs (JOIN) at 578 E. Main St., Columbus, Ohio. “The people at JOIN saved my life. They have helped me in so many ways, some of which I can’t explain. Today, I obtained a gas card and some toiletries and household products – little things, but when you have to stretch your paycheck, they’re important. “Over the years, I’ve received food and clothing, and JOIN helped me purchase a pair of glasses. One time when I had a bad headache, they provided me with aspirin. But the most important thing is that they have the best attitude. They’ll provide whatever they can, within reason, or if it’s something they don’t cover, they’ll tell you where to go for help. They’re very resourceful. And they’re so easy to talk to. They lift your spirits. They’re joyful, yet at the same time, they’re serious about what they do. If they didn’t feel that way, they wouldn’t be here. I would tell anyone who comes here to not be afraid to ask for things. If you tell them what you need, they’ll find a way to help. They have saved me from destruction and disaster.”

MULTIPLY Bullock’s story is about 25,000 – the number of people assisted by JOIN in the year between July 1, 2016 and this past June 30 – and you have an idea of the impact of the agency. The Joint Organization of the Diocese of Columbus on the city of Columbus has performed its continuing mission of meeting people’s basic needs and providing hope for the past 50 years. The organization has no motto, but a fitting one would be a phrase found in the apostle of charity, St. Vincent de Paul: “It is our duty to bear the service of the poor to everything else, and to offer such service as quickly as possible.”

Columbus Bishop John Cashen and the pastor of 10 inner-city parishes shared JOIN in 1967. A Catholic Times story from that time said they wanted to minister to the local church “a community where the spirit of the Gospel is a mandate for planning and working together to help the poor and the needy of the area served by those parishes.”

During much of its first decade-and-a-half, the agency operated out of various parts of the diocesan office building at 197 Gay St. and provided limited help, usually assisting one or two families a day. When the late Father Thomas Cudden was appointed diocesan vicar of Catholic charities and social concerns in 1979, he realized JOIN could be doing more. Two years later, he asked JOIN volunteer Ruth Beckman if she could take over as director and run it more like a business.

Beckman agreed, becoming the first woman, and the voice of JOIN, for the next 34 years as its director, until she retired at age 80 in 2015 to take care of the health issues of her husband of 60 years, Jack Beckman, and to spend more time with her eight grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her successor, Lisa Keita, had been director of the St. Francis Center in McKinleyville since 2010 when she was asked by Beckman to take her place. Keita also remains director of the McKinley Center, but she said she visits there only about once a month to perform administrative duties. Most of its day-to-day operations are handled by operations manager Ashley Bohrer.

“I was completely intimidated at the thought of taking over for Ruth, but she was confident in me,” Keita said. “She’s been very good about allowing me to do things in my own way. We do stay in touch, but it seems like most of the time, we see each other at funerals, as she’s so busy with Jack and her family. She always comes to the annual JOIN Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral, but had to miss the 50th anniversary Mass in June because she was out of town. Shortly after Beckman became director, the JOIN offices moved across East Gay Street, from the diocesan building into a structure shared with the former cathedral book store. When that site was sold to condos could be built there, JOIN relocated in 2007 to a larger building at 578 E. Main St., which has parking and direct freeway access and is shared with the clothing distribution center operated by the diocesan St. Vincent de Paul Society.

JOIN serves clients from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 2 p.m. every weekday, with the exception of legal holidays. The clothing center is open from 10 a.m. to noon Monday through Thursday and accepts donations from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays.

JOIN serves between 85 and 90 families on an average day, with the number reaching 100 or more at times. People most frequently visit the agency to obtain Central Ohio Transit Authority passes. The organization distributed 1,437 COTA passes this past July alone.

The second-most-frequently requested service involves providing vouchers for the fee needed to obtain an Ohio or out-of-state birth certificate – an item which is necessary when applying for a state driver’s license or identity card. JOIN issued 436 birth certificate vouchers in July. For the 2016-17 fiscal year, it distributed 9,590 bus passes and issued 1,378 birth certificate vouchers. Other items provided by JOIN include hygine and household goods; referrals to food pantries; assistance with rent payments (in partnership with a parish St. Vincent de Paul Society) and with utility payments, gasoline and grocery gift cards; prescription assistance; diapers and formula; work shoes or boots; bags of groceries; locks; funeral assistance; and arrangements for eyeglasses and glasses.

“Our biggest growth in recent years has involved the number of birth certificate vouchers we provide,” said Sister Sharen Baldy, SCN, JOIN associate director, who has been with the organization for the past 15 years. In Ohio, the fee for a birth certificate is $25.50, which the vouchers cover. “You can’t move in society without a birth certificate,” said Keita. “There are so many people who don’t have for various reasons, particularly if they were incarcerated, are homeless, or had things stolen from them,” she said.

Sister Sharen said people can’t just walk in and ask for a birth certificate voucher; they must have a letter of reference from another agency. “Out-of-state birth certificates are harder to obtain, especially if you have no other ID, but we do what we can in those cases,” she said. “We try to find a sibling, a parent, or someone who live nearby who can help validate a person’s identity.”

Many birth certificates need notarized to become valid, and Sister Sharen is a notary.

“We are not a pantry, but we always have some nonperishable food available to provide a bag of groceries which will be enough for a meal or two,” Keita said. “There are many parish and community pantries where we can refer people for more long-term help.”

We also don’t provide furniture or clothing, but with the St. Vincent de Paul clothing center open in the same building at the same time as JOIN, in the morning, we’re able to refer people to that agency, said Beckman.

We accept food donations through the generosity of supporters. In addition, we have a small kitchen appliance drive to supply JOIN with the appliances and kitchen decorative items needed by families. Items can be delivered to JOIN most weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call in advance to coordinate and confirm. JOIN is at 578 E. Main St., Columbus. Its phone number is (614) 241-2530.

JOIN volunteer co-sherrie Zettler tells her to a mother and son. Two nonperishable, especially canned meat items. Items are received by JOIN every Monday from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Please consider having a parish or organization drive to supply JOIN with the most-needed items. Individual contributions also are welcome.

JOIN also helps families with school clothing. The organization drive to supply JOIN with the clothing needed by Charity Newsies there. JOIN also refers families needing items to the St. Vincent de Paul clothing center open in the same building from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every weekday.

Please consider donating the following items to JOIN:

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<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laundry detergent and bleach</td>
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<td>Above all, YOUR PRAYERS</td>
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- Laundry detergent and bleach
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- Razors
- Other nonperishable items
- Adhesive bandages
- Diapers and wipes
- Infant formula
- Canned goods
- Cleaning supplies
- Mops and buckets
- Laundry detergent and bleach
- Small kitchen appliances
- Dish and cutlery items
- Kitchen decorative items
- Mop
- Umbrellas
- Gloves and scarves
- Above all, YOUR PRAYERS

*Please consider having a parish or organization drive to supply JOIN with the most-needed items. Individual contributions also are welcome.*

*Items can be delivered to JOIN most weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call in advance to coordinate and confirm. JOIN is at 578 E. Main St., Columbus. Its phone number is (614) 241-2530. JOIN director Lisa Keita may be reached at lkeita@columbuscatholic.org.*

See JOIN, Page 17

JOIN “Wish List”

The Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs helps people in a variety of ways through the generosity of supporters.

Please consider donating the following items to the organization:

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See JOIN, Page 17
JOIN, continued from Page 11

volved the parents of three children.
The father, who is only in his 40s, found out in August that he has Stage 4 cancer,” she said. “He is the sole source of income, because the mother is the caregiver for her father. The family had no income until the father could obtain Social Security payments, and that takes some time because of the paperwork involved. The family came to JOIN, and we were able to help pay their rent through a fund that one of our benefactors set up for this kind of situation.”

“A lot of times, people come from out of state to Ohio because they were promised they’d find work here, only to find there’s nothing,” Keita said. “We had one couple like this who came from Atlanta. The wife has severe neuropathy in her feet. They were living in their car, and the car died.

“It just happened that somebody had donated a car to us – not the kind of donation we generally receive. We were able to give them reliable transportation, and now the husband is doing day labor. Some days, he earns enough that they can sleep in a motel, and sometimes they still sleep in the car. But they now are a little more secure.

“We have one guy who gets cars roadworthy for us when we call on him, and he’s a great help. Really, it’s amazing how often we have things donated to us at just the right time,” she said. “Not long ago, someone donated a backpack to us. I just held on to it, and a few days later, a woman came to us and asked if we had a backpack because a bully had destroyed her kid’s backpack. The one that was donated was sitting there ready for her. It’s like God was right there. This sort of thing isn’t unusual at all.”

For the coming Thanksgiving season, JOIN will distribute 400 boxes containing food from the Byron Saunders Foundation, a central Ohio organization.

JOIN does not make a special Christmas appeal, but provides assistance to 150 to 200 families at Christmastime, when it also distributes handmade toys provided by the Woodworkers of Central Ohio organization.

Keita and Sister Sharen are two of JOIN’s three full-time staff members. The third, Pat Huffman, answers the phone and helps with prescription and food pantry requests. The organization also has seven part-time workers, including Sister Bernadette Campbell, OP, and Sister Annemary Miller, SND-deN, and at least 50 regular volunteers, many of whom have assisted JOIN for 10 years or more.

Art Wohlfrom of Columbus St. Agatha Church has been a JOIN volunteer for three or four years, visiting a few times a month and stockpiling the pantry to make sure it maintains an adequate supply of food for emergencies.

“You can’t help but be affected by what you see here,” he said. “People come here because of their need, and they know JOIN will provide them with something which will be of real use to them, which they often wouldn’t be able to have otherwise. We see God’s charity and God’s work in action every day.”

During the year, JOIN receives help from many parishes and other organizations, including Cristo Rey Columbus High School, which provides students to perform various tasks five times a month as part of its work-study program. Keita started to list some of the other groups which provide assistance, then said “there are so many I know I’ll forget some. Without them, we’d be much more limited in what we can do.”

“I leave here some days and I’m so tired, but then I wake up the next day and I’m ready to go because I know how important the work is that JOIN does,” Sister Sharen said. “I see the face of Christ in people, and that’s why I come here. I became a Sister of Charity of Nazareth to serve the poor, and I’m living that mission daily.”

“We do a lot of things at JOIN that are important, but perhaps the most significant thing is that we just sit and listen to people,” Keita said. “Everybody’s need is real. No one wakes up saying ‘I’m looking forward to going to JOIN and to standing in line for a bus pass,’ but these are the situations that befall people.

“I’m grateful to the people we are privileged to serve and to those whose funds, faith, and prayers allow us to perform this service. The people who ask for our help every day are God’s children. They need us. JOIN needs to be here. And whoever chose that name for us 50 years ago knew what they were doing, because what we do allows the grace and the gifts the Catholic Church brings to join with the needs of the individuals we serve and to come together in the spirit of Jesus’ love,” she said.

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, JOIN has set up a jubilee fund with a goal of $50,000 to continue its crucial services. Individuals are asked to consider a gift of $50, but any amount will be gratefully accepted. Checks may be made payable to “JOIN Jubilee Fund” and sent to JOIN, 578 E. Main St., Columbus OH 43215.

One-time or continuing contributions to join also may be made through The Catholic Foundation’s JOIN Endowment Fund. The fund’s identification number is 320AAJ. For more information, go to https://catholicfoundation.org or mail your contribution to the Catholic Foundation, 257 E. Broad St., Columbus OH 43215.

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SEVEN PARISHES SPONSOR
COUNTY FAIR BOOTH

The seven parishes in the Fairfield-Hocking-Pickaway Deanery sponsored an information booth at the Fairfield County Fair in Lancaster last month. The fair traditionally is Ohio’s final county fair of the year. Attendance for this year’s fair was about 95,000. John Albert of Lancaster St. Mary Church said that the booth is part of a broader evangelization effort within the deanery and that most people who stopped by took home a rosary. Also available were a brochure about the deanery’s parishes; prayer cards; information on parochial schools, Catholic organizations, and the Pregnancy Decision Health Centers; and books from the “Dynamic Catholic” series by authors including Matthew Kelly and Scott Hahn. Two volunteers from each parish staffed the booth. This was the second year all the deanery’s parishes combined for a booth. For many years previously, Lancaster St. Mary School had a display at the fair. The parishes are St. Bernadette, St. Mark, and St. Mary, all in Lancaster; Bremen St. Mary; Sugar Grove St. Joseph; Logan St. John; and Circleville St. Joseph.

Photo courtesy Lancaster St. Mary Church

www.columbuscatholic.org
Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle A)

Wisdom hastens to make herself known to all

Wisdom 6:12-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

The book of Wisdom dates to the last half of the first century BC. It was written by a Jew who knew Greek and who probably lived in Alexandria, Egypt. Alexandria was a great center of learning and had a large Jewish population. Wisdom was written in Greek. It is only preserved in Catholic Bibles as part of the canon of inspired writings. Protestants list it among the apocryphal works of the Old Testament.

The Greek word Sophia is feminine, so the author personifies Wisdom throughout the book as “She.” Thus, we have in verse 13, “She hastens to make herself known in anticipation of their desire.” She is readily available to those who seek her. Whoever looks for her early in the morning (“at dawn”) will find her sitting at the gate, meaning she is always near. Possessing wisdom is actually something that frees one from worldly cares because the wise one is able to put all things in their proper context. Wisdom actually responds to those who seek her by making herself easily available. The whole presentation has some intriguing imagery.

The Wisdom reading is paired with another of the parables: that of the 10 virgins awaiting their oil. The Sabbath day and will return to Powell in the early hours of Saturday.

Weekly Bible Readings

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION MASS SCHEDULE
WEEK OF NOVEMBER 12, 2017

SUNDAY MASS
10:30 a.m. Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com. Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 7:30 a.m. on WWHT-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

St. Joan of Arc plans March for Life bus trip

Powell St. Joan of Arc Church is sponsoring a bus trip to the March for Life in Washington on Friday, Jan. 19. The bus will leave the church parking lot at 10700 Liberty Road on the evening of the preceding day and will return to Powell in the early hours of Saturday.

Those wishing to participate are asked to gather at the church at 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 18 to load the bus, review the itinerary, and pray. The bus will leave at 9, with the trip taking seven to eight hours.

In Washington, those on the bus will participate in the youth rally at the Capital One Arena; the adult and family Mass at St. Mathew’s Cathedral; the rally on the National Mall before the march; and the march itself. Following the march will be a tour of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, and dinner. The bus will leave at 8 p.m.

The cost is $90 per person. For more information, contact Matt Mazur at (419) 410-4110 or mpmaze@gmail.com.

St. Joan of Arc plans March for Life bus trip

The Weekday Bible Readings

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY
In writing Lessons in Hope: My Unexpected Life with St. John Paul II, one of my secondary intentions was to bury two urban legends: that John Paul II asked me to write his biography and that Witness to Hope and its sequel, The End and the Beginning, are "authorized" or "official" biographies. Alas, the straightforward refutation of these myths in Lessons in Hope hasn’t done the job in some quarters. So let’s try again:

First, John Paul II did not ask me to write his biography. The project was my idea and the pope agreed to cooperate with it.

Second, Witness to Hope and The End and the Beginning were neither “authorized” nor “official,” and they were vetted by absolutely no one.

And within point two lies a tale of much more importance for 21st-century Catholicism than correcting my confusions about my work.

As you’ll discover in Lessons in Hope, I met with John Paul II in March 1996 to discuss the ground rules for my writing his biography and the history of his pontificate. During dinner in the papal apartment, I told the pope that two things were necessary to make the project work. The first was that I had to have access to him, his associates, his friends, and some papers that might otherwise be locked up for decades. And the second? “You can’t see a word of what I write until I hand you the published book.” To which the 264th bishop of Rome replied, “That’s obvious. Now let’s talk about something interesting.”

But why was it “obvious”? Many another world leader (not to mention churchman) would have asked for at least a discrete peek, and perhaps far more, before agreeing to cooperate with an author. Not John Paul II. He had spent his entire priesthood preaching and teaching moral responsibility; the book was my responsibility; so neither he nor anyone in his circle would be looking over my shoulder, red pencil or scissors in hand.

In his pre-papal life as a university chaplain, Father Karol Wojtyła’s signature phrase as a confessor and spiritual director was “You have to decide.” As one of his friends and penitents put it to me, “He’d mastered the art of listening. We’d talk for hours but I never heard him say, ‘I’d advise you to …’ He’d throw light on a problem. But then he would always say ‘You have to decide.’” Helping his young friends to see the good and choose it as a matter of habit – growth in virtue – was the Wojtyła pastoral method.

And it had nothing to do with a notion being bandied about by some in the Church today: that there are no moral rules applicable in all situations.

For while Father Wojtyła was helping his friends learn the art of moral discernment, Professor Wojtyła was working with his colleagues and doctoral students at the Catholic University of Lublin to get moral philosophy out of what a third-generation Wojtyła protege called the “trap of reflection.” In that trap, there are no boundary markers for the moral life and moral choosing is untethered from any authority, be that authority revelation or reason: the moral life is always inside my head.

Wojtyła and his colleagues thought that such self-absorption led to moral vertigo, a dizziness that made for disorientation and unhappiness. That was bad enough. But the Lublin scholars also believed that the deconstruction of morality by forms of radical subjectivism had helped underwrite the horrors of the 20th century. The roads to Auschwitz and the Gulag camps were paved with the shards of a once-solid moral edifice within which men and women had previously faced the challenges of moral decision-making with the aid of stable reference points, not by their intuitions or feelings.

So John Paul II’s insistence that my work was my responsibility was more than a vote of confidence in me, and a shrewd recognition that papal vetting would render Witness to Hope highly suspicious. Far more importantly, it was an expression of his pastoral and theological convictions about the human capacity for responsibility: with the help of grace, we can choose and decide wisely and well, if we open ourselves to the liberating power of the moral truths found in revelation and reason. And those truths are truths for all seasons and all circumstances.

Those convictions need strengthening at all levels of the Catholic Church today.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.
By Junno Arocho Esteves/Catholic News Service

When it comes to salvation, God does not seek any form of compensation and offers it freely to those in need of his love, Pope Francis said.

A Christian who complains of not receiving a reward for going to Mass every Sunday and fulfilling certain obligations “doesn’t understand the grateruity of salvation,” the pope said in the homily at his Nov. 7 morning Mass.

“He thinks salvation is the fruit of ‘I pay and you save me. I pay with this, with this, with this.’ No, salvation is free and if you do not enter in this dynamic of gratuity, you don’t understand anything,” he said.

The pope reflected on the day’s Gospel reading from St. Luke, in which Jesus recounts the parable of the banquet of a rich man who, after having his invitation spurned by his guests, invites “the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame” to enjoy his feast.

The pope said those who rejected the rich man’s invitation were “consumed by their own interests” and did not understand the man’s generosity.

“If the gratuitousness of God’s invitation isn’t understood, nothing is understood. God’s initiative is always free. But what must you pay to go to this banquet?” the pope asked. “The entry ticket is to be sick, to be poor, to be a sinner.”
NOVEMBER

9, THURSDAY

Cenacle at Holy Name

6 p.m., Holy Name Church, 154 E. Patterson Ave., Columbus. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers in the Cenacle format of the Marian Movement of Priests.

Holy Hour at Holy Family

6 to 7 p.m., Holy Family Church, 584 W. Broad St., Columbus. Holy Hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by meeting of parish Holy Name and Junior Holy Name societies, with refreshments.

Ohio Dominican Early Assurance Programs Info Session

6 to 7:30 p.m., Battelle Hall, Ohio Dominican University, 1215 Sunbury Road, Columbus. Information session on ODU medical school and physician assistant early assurance programs.

Theology on Tap Meeting

7 p.m., El Vaquero restaurant, 3230 Olentangy River Road, Columbus. Theology on Tap discussion and social group gathering.

Cristo Rey Columbus Entrance Examination

9 a.m., Cristo Rey Columbus High School, 400 E. Town St., Columbus. School entrance examination for students meeting school’s income guidelines.

Frassati Society Pilgrimage to Somerset St. Joseph

5 p.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Parish’s Frassati Society for young adults leaves for pilgrimage to Somerset St. Joseph Church, Ohio’s oldest Catholic parish, returning at approximately 10 p.m.

10, FRIDAY-SATURDAY

Watterson Presents ‘Brothers Grimm Spectaculation’

7 p.m., Bishop Watterson High School, 99 E. Cooke Road, Columbus. School’s theater department presents “The Brothers Grimm Spectaculation.” Tickets $5 to $10.

St. Joseph’s Hermitage Taste and See Celebration

6:30 p.m., Pasquale’s Ristorante, 5766 Eminent Square, Columbus. Fourth annual Taste and See wine tasting and dinner benefiting St. John’s Hermitage, a place of sanctuary and rest in northwestern Scioto County for priests, deacons, and seminarians. Plans for new hermitage chapel to be unveiled. Tickets $60, or $100 per couple.

11, SATURDAY

Life and Mercy Mass in Plain City

9 a.m. Mass, St. Joseph Church, 140 West Ave., Plain City. Saturday Life and Mercy Mass, followed by rosary and confession.

Into the Deep” Talk at Columbus St. Patrick

7 to 8:30 p.m., Aquinas Hall, St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Monthly “Into the Deep” series on the Catholic faith continues with talk by Father Stephen Dominy Hayes, OP, on “Faith, Science, and the Catholic Church.”

12, SUNDAY

St. Christopher Adult Religious Education


Open House at DeSales High School

11 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Francis DeSales High School, 4212 Karl Road, Columbus. Open house for prospective students and their parents.

Open House at Our Lady of Peace

12:15 to 1:30 p.m., Our Lady of Peace School, 40 E. Dom- inion Blvd., Columbus. Open house for prospective students and their parents. Tour school and talk with staff, students, and parents.

Kateri Prayer Circle at St. Mark

1 p.m., Aranda Center, St. Mark Church, 324 Gay St., Lancaster. Kateri Prayer Circle meeting to honor St. Kateri Tekakwitha and promote Native Catholic spirituality.

Lafraternitas of St. Dominic Monthly Meeting

130 p.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Meeting of St. Catherine of Siena chapter, Lafraternitas of St. Dominic.

Prayer Group Meeting at Christ the King

5 to 7 p.m., Christ the King Church, 2777 E. Livingston Ave., Columbus (enter at daily Mass entrance). Weekly parish prayer group meets for praise, worship, ministry, and teaching.

Catholic Conversations Series

6 to 8 p.m., Sports on Tap, 4030 Main St., Hilliard. Monthly Catholic Conversations series for anyone 21 and older, sponsored by Columbus St. Margaret of Cortona and Hilliard St. Brendan churches. Speaker: Msgr. Frank P. Lane, Catholic Trivia Night. Participants are asked to donate $5 toward cash prizes for the top three players. RSVP to nancyherstone@gmail.com or julienaparano@gmail.com.

Spanish Mass at St. Peter

7 p.m., St. Peter Church, 6899 Smoky Row Road, Columbus. Mass in Spanish.

13, MONDAY

Ohio Dominican TESOL Information Session

6 p.m., Room 276, Bishop Griffin Center, Ohio Dominican University, 1216 Sunbury Road, Columbus. Information session on ODU master of arts in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) program.

Pontifical College Josephinum Lecture Series

7 p.m., Jessing Center, Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus. Father Jared Wicks, SJ, Josephinum scholar in residence, speaks on “Learning from Luther: Penitential Traveling Toward Holiness” as part of college’s “Building Spiritual Bridges to the Community” lecture series.

14, TUESDAY

Our Lady of Good Success Study Group

11 a.m., Sacred Heart Church, 893 Hamlet St., Columbus. Monthly meeting of Our Lady of Good Success study group. Eucharistic Holy Hour in church, followed by catechetical study and discussion.

Borrowman Lecture at St. Charles

Noon, St. Charles Preparatory School, 2010 E. Broad St., Columbus. School’s 17th annual Borrowman lecture, with talk by national religion reporter Kenneth L. Woodward. Tickets $25 includes lunch.

Holy Hour at Columbus St. Francis of Assisi

7 a.m., St. Francis of Assisi Church, 3861 N. Broadway Ave., Columbus. Monthly Holy Hour following 6 p.m. Mass.

Rosary for Life at St. Joan of Arc

Following 6:15 p.m. Mass, St. Joan of Arc Church, 10000 Liberty Road, Powell. Recital of Rosary for Life, sponsored by church’s respect life committee.

EnCourage Ministry Monthly Meeting

6:30 p.m., EnCourage, an approved diocesan ministry dedicated to families and friends of persons who experience same-sex attraction. EnCourage respects the dignity of every person, promotes the truth of God’s plan for each of us, and focuses on sharing our love. Confidentiality is maintained. Call for site.

15, WEDNESDAY

Abortion Recovery Network Group

9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Westerville Area Resource Ministry, 150 School St., Westerville. Open house for prospective students and their parents. Hear from principal, meet teachers and coaches, experience technology program, take campus tours.

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16-19, THURSDAY-SUNDAY

St. Charles Presents ’Shakespeare (Abridged)’

8 p.m. Thursday-Sunday, 3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, St. Charles Preparatory School, 2010 E. Broad St., Columbus. School’s theater department presents “The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged).”

17, FRIDAY

For Angelico Concert at Cathedral

8 p.m., (pre-concert talk at 7:30), St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St., Columbus. Concert by For Angelico chamber chorus, performing Spanish songs for lamentation and rejoicing. Part of Early Music in Columbus series. Tickets $30, $25 for seniors and $12 for students.

18, SATURDAY

Life and Mercy Mass in Plain City

9 a.m. Mass, St. Joseph Church, 140 West Ave., Plain City. Saturday Life and Mercy Mass, followed by rosary and confession.

Bishop Hartley Admissions Testing

9 a.m., Bishop Hartley High School, 1285 Zettler Road, Columbus. Admissions testing for prospective members of school’s Class of 2022. Students who wish to be considered for a scholarship must take test on either this date or Dec. 9. P reregistration is required.

Centering Prayer Group Meeting at Corpus Christi

10:30 a.m. to noon, Corpus Christi Center of Peace, 111 E. Stewart Ave., Columbus. Centering prayer group meeting, beginning with silent prayer, followed by Contemplative Outreach DVD and discussion.

All fund-raising events (festivals, bazaars, spaghetti dinners, fish fries, bake sales, pizza/sub sales, candy sales, etc.) will be placed in the “Fund-Raising Guide.”

An entry into the Guide will be $18.50 for the first six lines, and $2.65 for each additional line. For more information, call David Garick at 614-224-5195.
One of central Ohio’s most beloved holiday traditions since 1974 -- BalletMet’s The Nutcracker -- again will be presented from Friday, Dec. 8 to Sunday, Dec. 24 at the historic Ohio Theater, 39 E. State St., Columbus. Set to Tchaikovsky's original score performed by the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, the ballet will be choreographed by former BalletMet artistic director Gerard Charles.

As in previous years, a number of Catholic dancers will appear in the production. They include (from left): first row, Malia Hevezi, Emily Bartlett, Daniel Barnes, Lucia Carolina Guardia Perez, and Kaitlynn Hanna; second row, Lizzy Bruening, Alana Sayat, Isabelle Lapierre, and Grace Ortega; third row, Mary Claire Smith, Katie Bartlett, Seth Pettis, Kate Fields, and Melody M. Crigger; fourth row, Lily Rosati Yos and Frankie Bonte.

Thanksgiving Concert

Paul Melcher, music director at Marysville Our Lady of Lourdes Church, and his wife, Chelsea (both pictured), will present a Thanksgiving concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19 in the church, 1033 W. 5th St.

Joining them will be Joshua Zoppa on trumpet. This concert will feature hymns, operatic arias, and Broadway tunes for soprano, as well as inspired piano and trumpet selections.

The concert is free. A free-will donation will be graciously accepted.
Delaware St. Mary students celebrate All Saints Day

Delaware St. Mary School celebrated All Saints Day with fifth-grade students dressing as the saints they studied during the first quarter of the year. The school also had a fall fun festival in October, followed by a “trunk or treat” program, which featured a dinner and 40 families distributing Halloween treats. About 400 students participated.

Photo courtesy St. Mary School

St. Pius X men’s retreat planned for December

Reynoldsburg St. Pius X Church, 1051 S. Waggoner Road, will host its annual men’s retreat from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1 and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2, followed by the Sacrament of Reconciliation, with Mass at 5 p.m.

The theme for the retreat is “The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail: Taking the Battle Beyond the Breach.” The retreat will be led by John Bradford of Wilderness Outreach. It will begin Friday evening with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by an introduction to the weekend, and fellowship.

Talks by Bradford on Saturday will help participants understand their identity as Catholic men, the meaning of fatherhood, and how to tap the power of the Holy Spirit to take the battle beyond the breach, unleashing the Gospel in a world desperate for it. There also will be opportunities for small-group discussion, quiet time, and private and communal prayer.

The cost is $30 and includes snacks and beverages Friday night and breakfast and lunch Saturday. Contact John Zacovic at (614) 322-9473 or jzacovic@insight.rr.com for more information. Register online at http://spxreynoldsburg.com. The registration fee will be collected Friday evening.

Lend an ear!
Pope Francis said that there are no easy answers to the suffering and destruction wrought by hurricanes and that while such disasters happen naturally, humankind must also take responsibility for not caring for the environment.

In a video chat with young children participating in a program of the international network of Scholas Occurrentes on Oct. 26, the pope spoke with children from Texas and Puerto Rico, where Hurricanes Harvey and Maria struck hardest.

“If God loves us all, why did he make hurricanes and heavy rains?” asked Pedro Garcia, a 9-year-old Mexican-American boy living in Houston who lost his home after Hurricane Harvey struck Texas.

The pope said that there are questions even the most intelligent person can’t answer and that can only be answered with “solidarity, with a hug and to be close to those who suffer.”

“When I am asked these kinds of questions -- I confess with all sincerity -- I don’t know how to answer,” Pope Francis said. “Do you know why? Because there isn’t an answer. The only thing I can do is look at the cross and ask, ‘Why did God allow his son to be crucified?’”

The only answer to Christ’s suffering on the cross and the sufferings of others, he continued, is God’s love because “when Jesus was on the cross, he never forgot that his father cared for him and loved him.”

“When these misfortunes happen to us, we cannot forget that the father loves us,” the pope said.

However, he also said that people must take responsibility for actions that have contributed to the worsening of such natural disasters and pleaded with men and women to “care for the world and for nature.”

“But no, we want to build a pipeline so that we can make more money.' Yes, why do you need money? So that you can pay for the funeral service because that is where this will take you, your country, the earth and all of us. Care for the earth!” the pope said.

Pope Francis also spoke with children from Loiza, Puerto Rico, one of the poorest areas on the island that was devastated by Hurricane Maria in September.

Ariana, a 5-year-old girl, cast a serious look at the pope and said, “Hi, Pope Francis. When are you coming to Puerto Rico?”

The young girl cracked a little smile as Pope Francis laughed at the directness of her question.

“I don’t know when I will go to Puerto Rico because it isn’t easy to prepare a trip and there are many things that need to be studied,” he answered.

“But one day, I will go; I want to get to know (Puerto Rico) and I want to get to know you.”

Alejandro, 8, didn’t ask a question but pleaded with the pope, “in the name of all the children like me,” to “remember Puerto Rico because we are going through a very difficult situation.”

The pope thanked Alejandro and sent a greeting “to all the children of Puerto Rico” and encouraged them to “keep moving forward.”

Before ending the conversation, Ariana had one final request for the pope: “Papa, I ask you to pray for Puerto Rico’s recovery and for peace in the world.”

Visibly moved by the little girl’s request, the pope said “Yes, my dear, I will do that. And if you children pray for peace in the world, you will be heard. Do not doubt that.”