Meeting with DCS officials bearing fruit for diocese

Andy Telli

A recent meeting between leaders of the Diocese of Nashville and the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services has set the stage for a growing relationship between the two as they work together to protect children.

“We want the best advice we can find so our parishes are safe environments for our young people,” said Bishop J. Mark Spalding, who invited the Department of Children’s Services representatives to meet. “I saw them as one of the experts in the field of child protection ... so I could not ask for people better in the field than the Department of Children’s Services.”

Attending the meeting for the diocese, which was held in November, were: the bishop; Chief Administrative Officer and Vice Chancellor Brian Cooper; Chancellor and diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator Deacon Hans Toecker; and Catholic Charities of Tennessee Executive Director Pam Russo.

They met with several representatives of the Office of Child Safety in the Department of Children’s Services, including: Deputy Commissioner Dimple Dudley, Executive Director Carla Aaron, Regional Investigations Coordinator Kate Greer, and Investigations Coordinator Christy Huckey Blazer.

“I thought the vibe at the meeting was just excellent,” said Russo. “It was a great opportunity to get us all around the table to get to know each other.”

“All the people at that table had one thing in common: how do we ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults,” Russo said.

During the meeting, Bishop Spalding expressed his and the diocese’s commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, Russo said. “Nothing is more important than their safety.”

There was a very cooperative spirit from both sides during the meeting, Bishop Spalding said. “It went beyond my expectations.”

The Office of Child Safety is responsible for investigating reports of child abuse or neglect, including sexual or physical abuse. Tennessee law requires anyone who has knowledge of suspected abuse to make a report to civil authorities.

Bishop Spalding said he hoped the meeting demonstrated that diocesan officials are comfortable working with the Department of Children’s Services and have no hesitancy being transparent and accountable, are willing to reach out to victims of abuse with pastoral care and will do

Huckey Blazer.

Continued on page 5
March for Life will emphasize ‘pro-life is pro-science’

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON. The 46th annual March for Life, to be held Friday, Jan. 18, plans to fortify its pro-life message with science that proves life begins at conception and with a specific focus on stem-cell research.

This year’s theme is: “Unique From Day One: Pro-Life Is Pro-Science.”

The annual march marks the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision which legalized abortion nationwide.

Hundreds of young people from the Diocese of Nashville plan to make the pilgrimage to this year’s March for Life and share their witness in support of life and human dignity at all stages. About 90 high school students from Pope John Paul II and around the diocese will fly into Washington, D.C., with the diocese’s group, led by Bill Staley, director of the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Nashville. Also traveling with the group will be Father Andy Baiso, CYO Chaplain, and Father Andrew Forsythe.

St. Cecilia Academy and Father Ryan High School each have large groups traveling by bus to the march.

In addition to the march on Jan. 18, Staley’s group will tour the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the St. John Paul II National Shrine, and the Dominican House of Studies. They will also visit the Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Vietnam Memorial, the World War II Memorial, along with other sites on the National Mall. “We’ll tour the monuments through the lens of human dignity,” Staley said.

While the march focuses primarily on protecting unborn babies in the womb, Staley wants his group to realize the value of life at all stages. The teens, he said, “need to realize that they are loved and created by God. Teens struggle so much with that, so we want them to understand their own dignity and self-worth as well,” he said. “We want them to go out into the world and be a beacon in the darkness.”

“The mission of March for Life is to protect the baby in its earliest stages,” Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund told Catholic News Service. “It’s so important to have a foundation of human dignity for any kind of research.”

“Our DNA is present at the moment of fertilization,” said Mancini. “Sadly, society tries to ignore or block these facts.”

“Science should always be at the service of life, not the reverse,” she added.

“The moment of fertilization, eight days after ovulation, is when the baby begins to receive life from parents,” Mancini told CNS. “That’s different than, say, the moment of implantation or the moment of formation. The first moment of human life is when the baby is conceived.”

By the time an unborn infant reaches 18 to 20 weeks, “the science is very clear that you can perceive pain by that point in time,” said Dr. David Prentice, research director for the Charlotte Lozier Institute, the research arm of the Susan B. Anthony List. “These individuals do not need to be destroyed for healing.”

Prentice said adult stem cells “from many different sources – umbilical cord blood, the liver” – would be a suitable replacement.

“Science speaks the truth because it illuminates the truth,” said Dr. Grazie Pozo Christie, a radiologist and a policy adviser for The Catholic Association.

Abortion “was sold to us as a scientific advance, maybe the ultimate scientific advance,” she said.

But science has subsequently “opened our eyes, it has opened our ears,” she said. And the term for fetuses sometimes used in 1973, “a ball of cells,” she described as “a terrible perversion of medicine.”

Mancini said this year’s events will focus on the scientific discoveries that have led to new understanding about life in the womb.

“Science and technology are on the side of life in large because they show the humanity of the child at a very young age,” Mancini told Catholic News Service.

“We can hear and see a baby’s heartbeat now at six weeks. There are blood tests to know a baby’s gender at seven weeks. Now that’s changed enormously over the course of the last few years,” she said.

The 2019 march follows encouraging news for the pro-life movement that abortions overall as well as the country’s abortion rate continued to decline in 2015, according to data compiled by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

CDC determined that the abortion rate in 2015 – the last year for which statistics are available – is at 11.8 abortions per 1,000 women ages 15-44. The rate has dropped eight of the past nine years since 2007’s rate of 15.9; the rate of 15.6 held steady in 2008.

Planned speakers for the 2019 March for Life include Abby Johnson, a former abortion clinic worker who founded And Then There Were None, a ministry that assists abortion clinic workers who have left their position.

Ahead of the march on Jan. 18, there will be a conference and expo Jan. 17. A panel discussion during the conference will include Christie and Prentice, along with Rick Smith, founder of Hope Story, a nonprofit organization that helps families with a Down Syndrome child; and Christine Accurso, executive director of Pro Women’s Healthcare Centers.

In addition, popular commentator Ben Shapiro of The Daily Wire planned to bring his podcast to the march for a live recording at 10 a.m. (EST) Jan. 18.

The main event, the March for Life Rally, is set for noon on Friday, Jan. 18, on the National Mall.

Details of events are online at http://marchforlife.org/mfl-2019/rally-march-info.

Theresa Laurence of the Tennessee Register contributed to this report.
January 15

- Prebyteral Council Meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center, 10 a.m.
- Priest Assembly, Catholic Pastoral Center, Noon
- Pro-life Mass, Sagrado Corazón, Catholic Pastoral Center, 6:30 p.m.

January 16

- Pastors and Principals meeting, Pope John Paul II High School, 10 a.m.

January 19

- Mass, St. Mark’s Church, Manchester, 4 p.m.

January 20

- Mass, St. Joseph Church, Loretto, 8 a.m.
- Mass, Sacred Heart Church, Loretto, 10:30 a.m.

January 21

- Closing for Dominican Sisters’ 40 hours, 4:45 p.m.

January 25

- Pope John Paul II High School vs. Father Ryan High School, Basketball, Father Ryan Campus

Follow Bishop Spalding on Twitter: @bpspalding

Official announcements

Bishop J. Mark Spalding has announced the following appointments:
- Father Zacharius M. Kirangu has been appointed chaplain for the SEERA Club of Williamson County, effective Jan. 1, 2019. This appointment will be in addition to his appointment as administrator of St. Patrick Church in McEwen and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Tennessee Ridge. He was ordained as a priest on May 11, 2003.
- Father Noble Dominic Ambalathur-thiel, MSFS, has been appointed as the Associate Pastor of St. Philip Church in Franklin, effective Jan. 1, 2019. Father Noble is a member of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales religious order.

Necrology

The Diocese of Nashville asks for your prayers for vocations, for our priests and for the following deceased clergy of the Diocese of Nashville:

- Most Rev. Joseph Bademacher, D.D., January 12, 1900
- Rev. Ambrose J. Heim, January 13, 1854
- Rev. Daniel W. Ellard, January 14, 1915
- Rt. Rev. Msgr. Thomas Tobin, January 18, 1924
- Rev. William A. Shannon, January 19, 1925
- Rev. William Walsh, January 21, 1902
- Rev. Alphonse B. Parker, January 22, 1927
- Rev. Francis T. Marron, January 25, 1918

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Most Reverend J. Mark Spalding’s Schedule

Necrology
Deacon Joseph Coen, member of first class of deacons, dies at 81

ANDY TELLI

Deacon Joseph J. Coen Sr., a member of the first class of permanent deacons ordained for the Diocese of Nashville in 1975, died on Dec. 19, 2018. He was 81.

“That first class, they did a lot to pave the way for subsequent deacon classes,” said Deacon Mike Wilkins, who served with Deacon Coen at Holy Rosary Church.

There was confusion among Catholics about the role of the permanent deacons after the order was revived in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, Deacon Wilkins explained. “I knew they had a rough way to go,” he said of the first class.

When Deacon Wilkins was about to start his formation program, he asked Deacon Coen if he had any regrets. “He said, ‘not a one, not a one.’ Just as straight and clear an answer as I’ve ever gotten from anybody.”

Deacon Coen was born on Jan. 27, 1937, in Lexington, Kentucky, the fifth of six children of Daniel K. Coen Sr. and Grace Donehoo Coen. He was raised in Louisville, Kentucky, and Washington, D.C., until his family moved in Nashville when he was a sophomore in high school.

Deacon Coen graduated from Father Ryan High School in 1955. He worked in the Tennessee Army National Guard for 32 years work-
ing as a computer specialist assigned to the U.S. Property and Fiscal Office in Nashville.

He married his wife, Rose, in 1964, and the family settled in Donelson where they were parishioners at Holy Rosary.

“He was very active at Holy Rosary,” Mrs. Coen said of her husband. “He worked around the parish diligently.”

“He was really a spiritual guy and he really had a devotion to the Blessed Mother,” Mrs. Coen said. “My husband and I never, ever missed saying the rosary together. Every day.”

When the diocese began accepting applications for the first class of permanent deacons, “He mentioned to me one day that he was kind of wondering about the diaconate program,” Mrs. Coen said.

He talked to his pastor at Holy Rosary, the late Msgr. William Bevington, who encouraged him to investigate it. “Fa-
ther Bevington was a great influence on him,” Mrs. Coen said.

Deacon Coen was ordained as a deacon with 13 other men on April 26, 1975 by Bishop Joseph Durick. Only two members of the class survive, Deacon Frank Bainbridge and Deacon Ken Levinson.

“They didn’t know what to do with them yet,” Mrs. Coen said of the first class. “But Joe enjoyed it.”

For her husband, being a deacon was more of a service to the Church than anything,” she said. “His whole idea was service in his own quiet way. He felt like he was truly blessed.”

As a deacon, he was heavily involved in visiting the sick and the Legion of Mary.

“He was very much at peace when he passed away,” she said. “He had a very gentle guy.”

“He was very much at peace when he passed away,” she said. “He had a very gentle guy.”

“When Deacon Wilkins was about to start his formation program, he asked Deacon Coen if he had any regrets. “He said, ‘not a one, not a one.”

A memorial Mass was celebrated for Deacon Coen on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019, at Holy Rosary Church. There was a private burial at Calvary Cemetery in Nashville.

He is survived by his wife, Rose; children; sisters; and brothers.

January

14 Monday

St. Felix of Nola

Red Cross Blood Drive, 1-6 p.m., St. Ignatius, 601 Bell Road, Antioch. Info: api

pointment: RedCrossBlood.org or 1-800-

733-2767.

Parenting Information Session, Child Safety, 6:7 p.m., Catholic Charities TN of

Nashville. Info: 615-413-1350. RSVP: 931-801-0895 or mcausey@cc

tenn.org.

GriefShare Session, 6:30 p.m., St. Philip, Room 105, 113 Second Ave., S., Franklin. Info: Dave, 615-479-9504, GriefShare@StPhilipFranklin.com.

15 Tuesday

St. Paul the Hermi

Mass for Life with Bishop J. Mark Spalding, 6:30 p.m., the Catholic Pastoral Center, 2800 McGavock Pike, Nashville. All are welcome.


16 Wednesday

St. Fary

Nashville Catholic Business Women’s League Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Rich-

land Country Club, 1 Club Dr., Nashville. Speaker: Rebecca Hammel, Su-

perintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Nashville. Registration: https://www.
ncbwl.org/upcoming-events-registration. Non-members are welcome.

Nashville Diocese Catholic Commit-
	ee on Scouting Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Parish Council Room, Christ the King, 3001 Belmont Blvd., Nashville. Info: www.

ndcsc.org.

18 Friday

St. Volusian

Holy Rosary Academy Kindergarten Screening, 190 Graylynn Dr., Nashville. Info: to reserve or to reserve an appointment time; Alaina Dougharty, 615-883-1108 or doughartya@holyroary.edu.

20 Sunday

St. Fabian

Father Ryan hosts Chattanoogoa Notre Dame and Knoxville Catholic for Mass and wrestling matches, 1 p.m., 700 Norwood Dr., Nashville. 50th Annivesary of the 1969 Father Ryan vs. Notre Dame match.

Seven Dolors of the BVM Frater-


Free Non-Contact Football Mini-Camp for 6th-8th graders, Defensive Skill, LB/DB. 2:30-5 p.m., JPH High School. 117 Caldwell Dr., Hendersonville. Wear athletic wear with cleats; bring water bottles. Register student’s name, position, school, and grade level: brian.sneed@gmail.com.

French Mass, 5 p.m., Holy Name, 521 Woodland St., Nashville. Check www.
holynameofnashville.com for possible changes. Fr. Edwige Carre, Celebrant.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

21 Monday

St. Agnes

GriefShare Session, 6:30 p.m., St. Philip, Room 105, 113 Second Ave., S., Franklin. Info: Dave, 615-479-9504, GriefShare@StPhilipFranklin.com.

24 Thursday

St. Francis de Sales

Fransalians Associate Meeting. Lay Order of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, 6-7 p.m., St. Joseph, Parish Life Center, 1225 Gallatin Pike S., Madisonville. Info: fransaliansassociatetsn@gmail. com or 615-336-6030.

25 Friday

St. Peter Thomas

Holy Rosary Academy Screening for Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4, 190 Graylynn Dr., Nashville. Info: to reserve an appointment time; Alaina Dougharty, 615-883-1108 or doughartya@holyroary.edu.

26 Saturday

St. Timothy

Free Standardized Test Preparation Seminar for 7th grade TIP qualifiers, 9 a.m., Deacon Ryan, 700 Norwood Dr., Nashville. Registration: www.father-

ryan.org/duke-tip.

Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Meeting, 9:30 a.m. registration; 10 a.m. Mass, St. Luke, 10682 Old Nashville Hwy., Smyrna. Brian Cooper speaks about being the CAO and Vice Chancellor of the Nash-

ville Diocese. Lunch: 50 members; $20 non-members, payable at the door. RSVP: cwall@asbmail.com or 615-360-5170.

Three to Stay Married, 6:30 p.m., Cath-

tedral, Fleming Center, 205 West End Ave., Nashville. An evening of celebration and in-

spiration for married couples. Fr. John Sims Baker will share insights, advice, and gentle words on soul-saving work God de-

sires through marriage. Includes dinner and dancing. Registration/ticket: www. smarystdowntown.org or 615-322-0104.

27 Sunday

St. Angela Merici

St. Edward Pre-K through 4th Grade School Open House, 2 p.m., 190 Thompson Ln., Nashville. Info: 615-833-

5770 or wes.stedward.org.

28 Monday

St. Thomas Aquinas

GriefShare Session, 6:30 p.m., St. Philip, Room 105, 113 Second Ave. S., Franklin. Info: Dave, 615-479-9504, GriefShare@StPhilipFranklin.com.

29 Tuesday

Sts. Sarbelius & Barbea

Why Arts Program at Father Ryan hosts a concert at Van Gogh’s, 6:30 p.m., 700 Norwood Dr., Nashville. Info: father-

ryan.org/arts.

31 Thursday

St. John Bosco

Week Surviving Divorce Program, begins Jan. 31, 6:20 p.m., The Lady of the Lake, Room 203, 720 Stop Thirty Rd., Hen-
dersville. Cost: $22. Info: Roseann 615-496-5677 or catholicedivorcedo@gmail.com.
Meeting with DCS officials bearing fruit for diocese

Continued from front page

“anything we can to promote the safety of young people.”

“The bishop is operating in a very transparent manner and DCS appreciated it,” Russo said.

Department of Children’s Services officials were surprised but pleased to receive the bishop’s invitation to meet. “I thought it was great,” said Greer, who grew up as a parishioner at St. Henry Church.

“This didn’t go on in the past, us talking to each other,” Greer said. “It’s a great opportunity. We should be on the same side.”

Bishop Spalding wanted to have the meeting to inquire about what programs or professional advice the state officials could offer to improve the diocese’s Safe Environment program.

“We’re looking to improve the Safe Environment program,” Bishop Spalding said. “Hopefully, the Department of Children’s Services will be a key partner in taking those steps.”

“The key thing for me is reaching out to the best resources we have in Tennessee,” Bishop Spalding said.

As part of the Safe Environment program, the diocese conducts background checks on all employees and volunteers who work with children and provides training about how to recognize the signs of abuse and how to respond.

The meeting with state officials quickly bore fruit. Deacon Toecker invited Department of Children’s Services representatives to speak at a meeting of parish and school Safe Environment coordinators on Wednesday, Jan. 9, at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Nashville.

The state officials gave a presentation about the DCS hotline for receiving reports of suspected abuse and the process of investigating such reports.

“As staff, we sometimes worry what happens after we make the call,” Russo said. “They can answer that question. It’s wonderful to have someone from DCS there at the training.”

Talking about child abuse can be difficult, agreed Greer, who oversees investigations of suspected child abuse and neglect in 22 counties in Middle Tennessee. But the session with the Safe Environment coordinators went well, she said. “I thought it was great. There were great questions.”

During their meeting with the bishop, the Department of Children’s Services representatives suggested the diocese arrange a similar meeting with representatives of law enforcement agencies in the region who investigate abuse cases.

“Bishop Spalding wants a great working relationship with the Department of Children’s Services and law enforcement going forward,” Russo said.

Both state and diocesan officials hope the November meeting will lead to a closer working relationship.

“Because children are so important to us I hope the relationship will continue and will grow,” Bishop Spalding said.

Reporting abuse

T

nnessee state law requires that anyone who has knowledge of suspected child abuse or neglect to make a report to civil authorities.

To report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services’ Office of Child Safety, call the Child Abuse Hotline at 877-237-0004. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The Diocese of Nashville encourages anyone who knows of or suspects abuse to contact civil authorities, and diocesan officials will cooperate with any investigation.

To contact diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator Deacon Hans Toecker, call 615-783-0765.

For information about reporting abuse and the diocese’s Safe Environment policies for the protection of children and youth, visit www.dioceseofnashville.com/child-safety.

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Pope to U.S. bishops: Abuse crisis requires conversion, humility

Cindy Wooden CNS

VATICAN CITY. The clerical abuse crisis and the “crisis of credibility” it created for the U.S. bishops have led to serious divisions within the U.S. Church and to a temptation to look for administrative solutions to problems that go much deeper, Pope Francis told the U.S. bishops.

Without a clear and decisive focus on spiritual conversion and Gospel-inspired ways of responding to victims and exercising ministry, “everything we do risks being tainted by self-referentiality, self-preservation and defensiveness, and thus doomed from the start,” the pope wrote.

In a letter distributed to the bishops at the beginning of their Jan. 2-8 retreat, Pope Francis said he was convinced their response to the “sins and crimes” of abuse and “the efforts made to deny or conceal them” must be found through “heartfelt, prayerful and collective listening to the word of God and to the pain of our people.

“As we know,” the mentality that would cover things up, far from helping to resolve conflicts, enabled them to fester and cause even greater harm to the network of relationships that today we are called to heal and restore.

“The abuses of power and conscience and sexual abuse, and the poor way that they were handled” continue to harm the Church and its mission, he said, but so does “the pain of seeing an episcopate lacking in unity and concentrated more on pointing fingers than on seeking paths of reconciliation.”

Such a division, which goes well beyond a “healthy” diversity of opinions, is what caused him to recommend a retreat because, the pope said, “this situation forces us to look to what is essential and to rid ourselves of all that stands in the way of a clear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

The pope said he had hoped “to be physically present” with the bishops for the retreat, but since that was not possible, he was pleased they accepted his suggestion to have the gathering be led by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, speaks at the conclusion of a prayer service in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Mundelein Seminary Jan. 2 at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Illinois, near Chicago. The U.S. bishops began their Jan. 2-8 retreat at the seminary, suggested by Pope Francis in September, which comes as the bishops work to rebuild trust among the faithful as questions continue to revolve around their handling of clergy sex abuse.

seems adequate,” the pope wrote. Still, pastors must have the wisdom to offer a response based on listening to God in prayer and to the suffering of the victims.

Pope Francis said Church leaders must “abandon a modus operandi of disparaging, discrediting, playing the victim or the scold in our relationships,” and instead listen to the “gentle breeze” of the Gospel message.

Encouraging the bishops to continue taking steps “to combat the ‘culture of abuse’ and to deal with the crisis of credibility,” he warned that credibility “cannot be regained by issuing stern decrees or by simply creating new committees or improving flow charts, as if we were in charge of a department of human resources. That kind of vision ends up reducing the mission of the bishop and that of the Church to a mere administrative or organizational function in the ‘evangelization business.’

A restored credibility, he said, can only be “the fruit of a united body that, while acknowledging its sinfulness and limitations, is at the same time capable of preaching the need for conversion. For we do not want to preach ourselves but rather Christ who died for us.”

“We want to testify that at the darkest moments of our history the Lord makes himself present, opens new paths and anoints our fathering faith, our wavering hope and our tepid charity,” the pope said.

The bishops as a group, he said, must have a “collegial awareness of our being sinners in need of constant conversion, albeit deeply distressed and pained by all that has happened.”

Humility “will liberate us from the quest of false, facile and futile forms of triumphalism” and from anything that would “keep us from approaching and appreciating the extent and implications of what has happened.”

“Affective communion with the feelings of our people, with their disharmonies, urges us to exercise a collegial spiritual fatherhood that does not offer banal responses or act defensively, but instead seeks to learn — like the prophet Elijah amid his own troubles — to listen to the voice of the Lord.”

The bishops had planned to devote most of their November meeting to discussing and voting on several proposals to the abuse crisis, including the formulation of standards of episcopal conduct and the formation of a special commission for reviewing complaints against bishops for violations of the standards.

However, Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, asked the bishops to delay their votes, citing the short amount of time the Vatican had to review the proposals, possible conflicts in them with Church law and in view of the meeting Pope Francis has called for February with the presidents of all the world’s bishops’ conferences to discuss child protection and the abuse crisis.

Pope Francis in September, which comes as the bishops work to rebuild trust among the faithful as questions continue to revolve around their handling of clergy sex abuse.

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, speaks at the conclusion of a prayer service in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Mundelein Seminary Jan. 2 at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Illinois, near Chicago. The U.S. bishops began their Jan. 2-8 retreat at the seminary, suggested by Pope Francis in September, which comes as the bishops work to rebuild trust among the faithful as questions continue to revolve around their handling of clergy sex abuse.

Bishop R. Daniel Conlon of Joliet, Ill., prays during a service in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Mundelein Seminary.
Details published on Vatican delaying USCCB vote on abuse provisions

CINDY WOODEN CNS

VATICAN CITY. The surprising news in November that the Vatican had delayed or not voted on several proposals for responding to the sexual abuse crisis was motivating by a lack of time given the Vatican to study them with some potential conflicts with Church law, according to a letter obtained by the Associated Press.

AP reported Jan. 1 it had obtained the letter written Nov. 11 by Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, to Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, asking that the votes be delayed.

Cardinal DiNardo informed the bishops of the Vatican’s request Nov. 12, at the start of their fall meeting, the agenda of which was primarily focused on the abuse crisis.

"From our perspective," Cardinal DiNardo told AP, the U.S. bishops’ proposals “were designed to stop short of where the authority of the Holy See began.”

The USCCB president said his surprise at the requested delay was genuine, because “in early October, we shared the content and direction of the proposals with multiple dicasteries of the Holy See. Finding no objection, we moved forward on the final drafts.”

"We had not planned, nor had the Holy See made a request, to share the drafts prior to the body of bishops having had an opportunity to amend them,” he told AP in a message also made available to Catholic News Service. "The USCCB office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"The November meeting, Cardinal DiNardo said, was designed to get the proposals “into final form, after which it would have been possible for the Holy See to have an opportunity to review and offer adjustments.”

“Moreover, the letter said, was to inform bishops of a potential need to express their “updated views and concerns” to the Holy See. The USCCB president noted that the Holy See had already asked for an update on its Sexual Abuse Commission.

"I have no doubt that just as the early Church relied on Peter’s unique ministry to try the challenges of the day, so will we draw strength and insight from our unity with his successor,” he said.

Cardinal DiNardo said, "It is now clear there were different expectations on the bishops’ conference’s part and Rome’s part that may have affected the understanding of these proposals.

"The proposals included standards of ecclesiastical conduct and the formation of a special commission for reviewing complaints against bishops for violations of the standards.

"From our perspective,” Cardinal DiNardo said, "the emphasis seemed to be on delaying votes and not wanting to get ahead of the February meeting of episcopal conference presidents.

"There were additional discussions on or around Nov. 6 with Cardinal Ouellet as to the proposals,” he said. “At that point, I thought it best to share the texts with the bishops and I advised Cardinal Ouellet that any delay in finalizing these texts in November would prove a great disappointment to the faithful who were expecting their bishops to take just action.”

"The Holy Father asked for my communication, had written on the Vatican Insider website that “a Vatican source involved in the matter” told him: “It is wrong to think that the Holy See does not share the objective of the U.S. bishops to have effective instruments for combating the phenomenon of the abuse of minors and to establish firm points regarding the responsibility of bishops themselves.”

“The motive for asking for a postpone ment (of the vote),” he said, “was not to be considered putting on the brakes, but an invitation to better evaluate the proposed texts, including the one about the commission on priests who are convicted of sexual abuse, and to share the objective of the U.S. bishops to have effective instruments for combating the phenomenon of the abuse of minors and to establish firm points regarding the responsibility of bishops themselves.”

Another blessing from the week, he said, was being drawn closer to each other and especially to the Lord.

“I have no doubt that just as the early Church relied on Peter’s unique ministry to try the challenges of the day, so will we draw strength and insight from our unity with his successor,” he said.

Tornielli reported that the Vatican proposed two revisions that were not accepted by the bishops: the first was that the USCCB's proposal should contain a list of all bishops who have been reported, and the second was that the USCCB's proposal should also include a list of those bishops who have been convicted of sexual abuse.

The Vatican also proposed that the USCCB's proposal should include a list of all bishops who have been reported, and the second was that the USCCB's proposal should also include a list of those bishops who have been convicted of sexual abuse.

The church is now faced with the task of responding to the Vatican's request for a delay in the vote, which means that the USCCB's proposal will have to be reviewed and revised before it can be presented to the USCCB for a vote.

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Holy Rosary group builds community among young families

Theresa Laurence

When Holy Rosary parishioner Alice Murphy and her family moved to Middle Tennessee from the Washington, D.C., area in 2017, she began to search for an active group for young Catholic families. When she couldn’t find what she was looking for, she decided to start one of her own.

The Holy Rosary Young Families Ministry hosted its kick-off event last fall and has grown steadily since then.

“When we first moved here, with no friends or family around, I wanted to meet young families and I couldn’t figure out how to do that,” said Murphy, a mom of a 4-year-old and a 2-year-old, whose husband travels extensively for work. “I really saw a need for a group like this.”

Murphy explains this during a Tues-day afternoon meetup with several other moms and children from the group. They gathered in Holy Rosary’s “training chapel,” a glassed-in seating area in the back of the church where parents can take noisy children during Mass. Three other mothers are present, one who has come with her teenagers, whom she homeschools, the others with pre-school aged children. As the younger children build with blocks, look at books, climb over the pews, the moms chat about why this group is important to them.

“It’s very important to me to raise my kids within the Church,” said Murphy. “I want my children to grow up around a group of peers so they can grow to-gether as brothers and sisters in Christ.”

“Sharing the Catholic faith is a wonder-ful common denominator,” said Jessica Machado, a mother of two young children and a native of the Donelson area. “I made a conscious choice to be a stay-at-home mom, but it can be very isolating,” said Olivia Hartman, a mother of three girls, ages 5 and under, and a parishioner at Assumption Church. “And of a Catholic group, "you can ask some-one to pray for you and it’s not weird." Murphy explains this during a Tues-day afternoon meetup with several other moms and children from the group.

Hartman said she values her friendships with other women from the community who are not Catholic, but the bond she feels with the Catholic moms is different. “These are more deep-level friend-ships,” she said. It also helps to celebrate the liturgical seasons like Advent with other families. “It’s really encouraging and fun for the kids,” she said.

Additionally, Hartman said, being part of a Catholic group, “you can ask some-one to pray for you and it’s not weird.” The Holy Rosary young families group, prayer and bible study are cen-tral components of what they do. They do plan some just-for-fun activities, like walks at the greenway, game nights, and meal swaps, but most of their ac-tivities include a specific faith element. On the calendar for the next month are: “Faith-share playdates,” “Rosary playdate/Confession swaps” and “Cat-echism and games.”

Murphy is quick to point out that the group is not just for stay-at-home moms, but open to all families, even caregivers such as grandparents who want to find community and spiritual nourishment among like-minded folks. “As a child of two working parents this is very important to me,” said Murphy. “I believe that each family has different situations and different reasons for their dynamic.”

Murphy tries to plan a mix of activities at different days and times during the week, including the weekend, so parents with all different schedules can find something to attend. “We have things for every type of parent,” she said.

As more young Catholic families con-tinue moving to the Middle Tennessee area, Murphy welcomes them to join the Holy Rosary group or to replicate this type of group in their own parish. She wants young families who are intent on raising their children in the Catholic faith to know that “you’re not alone, we have a support system.”

“We want to help parents to understand the gifts and challenges of Christian parenting and develop a community where young couples can find faith, fellowship and support,” said Murphy.

Holy Rosary Young Families upcoming events

Open to all young Catholic families in the Diocese of Nashville. All activities listed will take place at Holy Rosary Church.

Sunday, January 13
Catechism & Games, 2-4 p.m. in the large conference room. A family-friendly Catechism study. Adults study the Catechism; there will be kid-friendly religious activity or video for the children. Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 p.m., then game time. This week’s topic: The Magisterium of the Church and the dogmas of the faith (85-90).

Sunday, January 20
Catechism & Games. Same as above, except this week’s topic will be: The supernatural sense of faith (91-100).

Friday, January 25
Babies & Bibles, 9-10 a.m. The first of a 10-week bible study focused on Marriage and Family. Week one: “Building on the Rock.” Child care will be provided.

Sunday, January 27
Catechism & Games. This week’s topic will be: Sacred scripture (101-104).

For more information or to be added to the email list, contact Alice Murphy at murphya118@gmail.com.
Habitat build an opportunity to serve for sponsor, JPII community

Andy Telli

Since opening in 2002, service has been an important part of the culture at Pope John Paul II High School.

Late last year, the school’s students, faculty, staff, board members and parents demonstrated that commitment by volunteering on a Habitat for Humanity build sponsored by Karen and Danny Dugan, the parents of two alumni: Daniel Jr., class of 2010, and Colin, class of 2012.

“We were invited to do this by Danny Dugan, an alumni parent,” said Michelle Barber, dean of admissions and advancement at JPII.

The Dugans have committed to sponsoring 10 homes in 10 years. As sponsors, they provide the funding to construct the house and volunteers to work on the four weekends it takes to complete construction.

“Eight or nine years ago, my wife met somebody who was involved in Habitat,” said Dugan, a parishioner at St. Stephen Catholic Community in Old Hickory. “We went on a build weekend, we took our children. It was one of the hottest days ever.”

The experience left a lasting impression. “We developed a very fond heart for the project,” Dugan said.

The Dugans’ commitment has had “a tremendous impact on the community,” said Lauren Lane Payne, senior vice president of philanthropy for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Nashville. “When you’re able to provide a home for a family and know that that sponsor is going to be part of it for the next 10 years, it’s a beautiful testament to their faith in the Habitat community.

“They’ve got a true passion for Habitat. They’ve got a true respect for the families” that Habitat builds homes for, Payne said of the Dugans.

“What do they do, it comes from the heart. It is something they passionately believe in,” Payne said. “There is a special feeling on that dedication day when they stand up and they’re with the family presenting the keys, that they express just such humility and compassion and love for the family. That’s really special to see.”

The latest home, built in Lebanon, was the sixth the Dugans have sponsored. Originally, they recruited employees of the business they owned, family and friends as volunteers to help build the homes. Last year, Barber reached out to Dugan to ask about a donation to the school’s annual fund drive.

“I said, ‘I’ll make you a deal. You provide volunteers for a weekend and I’ll help you make your goal,’” Dugan recalled. “It actually worked out great for both of us.”

“It was great for our kids to have the experience,” Barber said.

“They staffed a Saturday and a Sunday completely. They did 25 percent of the build on their own, which is great,” Dugan said. “Talking to Lauren, the participation and enthusiasm of the students and parents was just amazing.”

JPII provided 20-30 volunteers on both days of the third weekend of the build. Barber said. “We had more people than we could handle really,” she said.

At the end of the day, JPII junior Rita Fann, an exchange student from China, was worn out from working on the house, “but I felt great” about being able to serve, she said.

“I was kind of amazed how they did this in four weeks,” said Zach Dodd, a JPII junior. “I was amazed how much work was put into them and how people were willing to do the work for nothing more than the satisfaction” of helping the family.

“It was a really good experience,” said senior English Chesser.

She wasn’t expecting the family the home was built for, John and Lauren Riley and their three children, to be on the site. But Chesser ended up spending time with them. “It was cool to see how all the work was coming together to make a really nice house for them,” Chesser said.

Habitat for Humanity provides affordable housing for qualified families.

“When families or individuals apply for the program, we are looking to see if they have three main things,” Payne said. “We want to see if they have a housing need and they have an ability to pay, because they have to save $2,500 to $5,000 in closing costs as well as afford their mortgage. At the end of the program they get a zero-interest, 30-year mortgage.”

“Before we got involved in it, our perception was the homeowner received a free home,” Dugan said. “That’s a misconception.”

Payne said the third thing the agency is looking for from applicants is a willingness to partner with the agency.

Payne said, “They do 80 hours of classroom time in our Homeowner Academy. They all go through Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University. They have a one-on-one budget coach who is a volunteer who works with them.”

There are classes on wills and basic home maintenance, as well, Payne added.

“We’re trying to teach them everything we can to make them successful first-time home owners,” she said.

Each family also has to work about 100 hours on their own home and other Habitat homes. Payne said, “They’re fully invested in the program.”

Helping to build each other’s homes helps create a sense of community, Payne said. “They’ve gone through the program together; they’ve built together; they’ve raised walls together.”

The Dugans’ commitment is “remarkable,” Payne said. “We as an agency never assume that it’s going to happen the next year. … We don’t take for granted their generosity.”

The opportunity to serve others in the community was beneficial for the JPII community as well, Barber said.

“Over the years, we’ve provided service for more than 50 agencies in Sumner and Davidson counties and beyond,” Barber said. “It’s always been, since our inception, an integral part of the education at JPII.”
Salvadoran missions chief: Honor St. Romero by fighting injustice

Rhina Guidos CNS

WASHINGTON. After the canonization of St. Oscar Romero finally came to fruition, Salvadorans and the saint’s admirers must give him new life by learning about him, pondering how his teachings apply to the present, and helping others around the world based on his work toward ending injustice and exclusion, said the head of Pontifical Missions for El Salvador, the homeland of the newly minted saint.

“We have to give life to his words, his teachings ... a rejuvenation,” said Father Estefan Turscios Carpiao, who spoke with Catholic News Service Dec. 27 during a brief visit to Washington.

Much is said about his assassination, said Father Turscios, who was a seminarian living in exile in Ecuador when St. Romero, then Archbishop of San Salvador, was martyred while celebrating Mass March 24, 1980. And certainly, he said, “one must start there, with the women religious.”

She described as a “fig leaf” the approach of appointing a woman or two to mid-level management positions in some Vatican offices and used as an example the fact that while women make up two-thirds of the consecrated religious in the world, there has been only one female undersecretary at a time at the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Many other women religious perform almost hidden work in the Vatican – running the switchboard, keeping house for cardinals, doing secretarial work.

“It’s like self-sacrifice is the only way to live a religious vocation,” Scaraffia wrote. “And in the end, it simply supports the power and authority the men in charge have.

The January edition of “Woman-Church-Church” included a short article about the Benedictine convent of Fahr, Switzerland, which attracted attention during the world Synod of Bishops in October.

The sisters distributed a photo of 15 of their members wearing their traditional, long black habits and holding signs saying, “Votes for Catholic Women,” which was part of a campaign calling for women to be among the voting members of the synod.

“We are part of this Church and therefore we should be able to have our voice heard and make our contributions,” Priorress Irene Gassmann told L’Osservatore.

The sisters at Fahr, she said, have been reflecting for years on the role of women in the Church and, in 2016, were among the leaders of a walking pilgrimage to Rome calling for women to be among the voting members of the synod.

“Reform, not revolution” is the cover title on the January issue of L’Osservatore Romano, monthly supplement to the Vatican’s L’Osservatore Romano newspaper.

them in discussions and planning meetings from the parish level all the way to the Vatican.

The 1983 Code of Canon Law opened to all laypeople, including women, “many possibilities for institutional participation,” but, Scaraffia wrote, “the impediments lie only in the refusal of many to make real an equality already recognized and accepted in theory.”

No legal obstacle exists to women being consulted by the pope as part of his ongoing efforts to reform the Roman Curia, she said, and there is no reason a woman could not be among the people who speak at the pre-conclave meetings of cardinals about the needs of the Church before they process into the Sistine Chapel to elect a new pope.

Scaraffia argued that the Vatican should rely on organizations like the women’s International Union of Superiors General for advice and input rather than on “the current practice of the hierarchy selecting individual women. In that way, one could avoid a paternalistic relationship to religious women and a selection that risks rewarding not the most competent, but the most obedient.”

“If one really wants to deal a blow to clericalism,” she said, “one must start there, with the women religious.”

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Help the Church in Latin America
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Please be generous January 27
Science is potent weapon in fight for life

EDITORIAL

Holiness through participation

Multitudes of people will once again make the trek from every corner of the country to the nation’s capital for the 46th annual March for Life on Jan. 18, which will mark the dark anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

The pilgrims will march, they will speak out, they will pray that world will embrace the value and dignity of every human life, from conception to natural death.

In this battle for the heart, mind and soul of our culture, those defending life will wield a powerful weapon: science. The theme for this year’s march is “Unique From Day One: Pro-Life Is Pro-Science.”

The message is simple. At the moment of fertilization, the split second when the sperm fuses with the egg, a unique human living organism is created. Present in that one-cell zygote is the DNA that will determine a host of hereditary characteristics of our eyes to our susceptibility to certain diseases to elements of our personality.

“Therefore, every life has a God-given value and dignity that is present from the moment of conception. We do not grow into this dignity. It is bestowed upon us by the Creator at the moment of our creation and never to be taken away. It is our responsibility, our obligation, to recognize the value of every human life, to respect it and to protect it for as long as it exists. That means that our respect for life cannot be limited to the unborn. It must extend to the young, the sick, the poor, the homeless, forgotten, the condemned, the old, and the mother struggling with an unexpected pregnancy. We reject the false idea that one chooses to support either the mother or her child. Instead, supporting the child means we must support the mother. Many women who consider abortion do so from fear. Some are afraid they are not capable of taking care of their child, that they do not have the financial resources or the family support they would need. Others feel their child will only be a burden. The truth is, however, that by their means they will have to drop out of school, short-circuited dreams of a career. Still others feel they will be abandoned by their child’s father. Whatever their fears, we, as brothers and sisters in Christ, must walk with them and support them with the help they might need. Our goal is a productive, joyful life for mother and child.”

As we have been long a market to convince society that failing to respect the value of every human life is the road to ruin. It will be a longer march still. But we must not only must we not be in Washington, D.C., but in our own communities and homes. We join that march with every act of love and kindness and understanding that we extend to the troubled and vulnerable in every stage of life. Our march for life does not last a day but a lifetime.

FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE LITURGY "FOSTERS HOLINESS IN EACH PERSON"

FAITH ALIVE
DAVID GIBSON CNS

The action on the field during a particularly exciting football game often locks spectators in its grip. With minutes to go and everything hanging in the balance, spectators hold their breath, jump up and down or even pray. The moment consumes them. Similarly, some films move viewers to laughter or tears. Perhaps they identify with the profound anguish or desperate plight of a character in the story.

A game and a film both can cause viewers to feel caught up in actions unfolding before their very eyes. These largely remain the actions of others, nonetheless. Spectators remain a step removed from the action and its outcome.

The Second Vatican Council raised the issue of spectatorship in its 1965 Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (“Sacrosanctum Concilium”). The council’s footprint undoubtedly is noticed most often today through this document’s impact because it involves the celebration of the Mass and sacraments, so recognizably part of the lives of Catholics.

It is difficult to define with precision what a “spectator” is. But the council insisted forcefully that Catholics are not present as “silent spectators” during the Sunday Mass or celebration of the sacraments. Catholics should be prepared to “take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing” — to collaborate fully and with devotion in the liturgy, the constitution asserted (No. 48).

I call attention to this whenever I teach the class in my parish that prepares parents for the upcoming baptism of an infant or young child. A reason parents are asked to attend this class is so that they will not approach their child’s baptism as spectators but will be present to “take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing.”

If the council hoped believers would not assume the posture of “silent spectators” during sacramental celebrations, does that imply that they should be spectators of some other kind, noisy or incessantly vocal, for example? It implied, in the council’s words, that they should participate both “internally and externally” in the liturgy (No. 19).

Today, worshipers participate in the Mass through verbal responses and singing. They listen in an active, focused way to the biblical readings, and they participate through prayer that is spoken and sung with others and prayer that is quietly personal. Some participate by proclaiming the Scripture readings or by giving the homily or in roles meant to assure that newcomers and others feel welcome.

Catholics do not tend to think in our times that they are present only to observe what is done by the priest, the altar servers or the choir, for example.

Yes, Catholics do not remain silent quietly throughout the Mass, as they might have done in the distant past. This teaching of the council has taken root. Active, informed and collaborative participation in the institutions and associations that fulfill roles in people’s lives is a sign of our times.

Twenty-first-century citizens are not surprised to be invited to contribute not only their best thinking but their energies and talents to achieving the goals of communities that are intimate parts of their lives.

If the Second Vatican Council in certain ways reflected this cultural shift of the times, its call for full liturgical participation nonetheless was based upon the basic purposes of liturgical worship.

“FULLY CONSCIOUS AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS IS DEMANDED BY THE NATURE OF THE LITURGY”

“Fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations is demanded by the very nature of liturgy,” the council’s liturgy constitution noted. It explained that “such participation by the faithful is demanded by the Christian people ... is their right and duty by reason of their baptism” (No. 14).

People born long after the council may wonder why the liturgy constitution thought it necessary to accent the importance of participation in the entire Mass, including the Liturgy of the Word in which the biblical readings are proclaimed and the homily is heard. Few Catholics today would question the value of this part of the liturgy.

After all, the Church experienced an explosion of interest in Scripture during the decades after the council. Scripture seminars often became a mainstay of parish life, and the Bible was accorded a key role in Catholic spirituality.

“The two parts which, in a certain sense, go to make up the Mass, namely the Liturgy of the Word and the eucharistic liturgy, are closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship,” the liturgy constitution commented (No. 56).

Vatican II also fostered liturgical participation through its emphasis on holiness as a goal for all, not only the clergy. “All the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status are called to the fullness of the Christian life,” the constitution on the Church (“Lumen Gentium,” No. 40). Jesus, it pointed out, “preached holiness of life to each and every one of his disciples of every condition.”

Exploring the life of holiness, many now look more and more to the liturgy as, in the words of the liturgy constitution, “the primary and indispensable source from which ... to derive the true Christian spirit” (No. 14).

David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for giving

To the Editor:

Thank you so much to all the individuals and parishes who responded to the Diocese of Nashville’s “White Socks for Prisoners Drive.”

As a result of your tremendous generosity, Diocesan Director of Prison Ministry Deacon James Booth, Diocesan Director of Prison Ministry, at boothjames4@gmail.com.

Deacon James Booth
Diocesan Director of Prison Ministry

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seanashville.com.
Mary’s example shows we must follow and trust the Lord

Mary Margaret Lambert

As their oldest surviving grandchild, I was fortunate enough to live with them for several months when my mother joined my father in California. He was serving our country during World War II as an aircraft mechanic at an Army base and had the opportunity for his young wife to join him there.

I attended school with my two older cousins, and spent my evenings and weekends learning to crochet, play solitaire and canasta, and evicting pesky moles from my Papa’s fruit orchard. For most children it would have seemed somewhat unusual, but to me it was pure bliss.

As I was gathering information for my contribution to the evolving family history, I searched my unorganized collection from the attics of deceased relatives. Many of them were of people I didn’t know, and since there is no one left who remembers, they were forever eradicated in the recycle bins.

The ones I do know, however, were duly noted with names and estimated dates written on the back. Fortunately, some were already identified in my grandmother’s familiar script lettering.

The wedding photograph of my grandparents was especially touching. To see the two of them, young, surrounded by their wedding party for the stern-faced formal portrait brought tears to my eyes and joy to my heart.

My grandfather had immigrated alone to America from Italy as a teenager in search of a better life. He met my grandmother, who was the first member of her Italian family to be born in the United States, and they were married. Together they created a successful family business and a ever-growing group of animated, emotional, loving relatives who never heard or spoke anything other than in outside voices.

The thought occurred to me, as I was arranging some of the old photographs into an album, that 50 years from now, how will future generations be able to find pictures we take? Will they have to retrieve old cell phones and try to revive them in order to see the selfies and other milestone moments?

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Passing on the precious gift of family stories, traditions

Mary’s example shows we must follow and trust the Lord

Mary Margaret Lambert

Among the gifts I received this year for Christmas, there is one that I shall forever treasure. Because I was an only child for 11 years before my parents finally got me a baby brother, I was very close to my cousins. They were like siblings to me even though we lived in different houses, and our parents were brothers and sisters to each other.

Although we visited frequently throughout the year, we gathered every Christmas to celebrate with lots of food, conversation, and camaraderie. Unlike some of my friends who spent the holiday at home, we packed up the family car after breakfast and headed to the home of one of my uncles to spend hours with family.

Every third year when it was my parents’ turn to host the event, all our gifts from Santa were neatly arranged under the tree after they were opened to show our cousins just how good we had been all year.

Now that I lay claim to the rather overwhelming title of family matriarch, and the traditions of my childhood live on in memory only, the children and grandchildren of my cousins are an important part of my life.

My job description requires keeping secrets and family traditions, telling tales, representing our family at every funeral, blessing of vehicles, babies, family meals, pets and homes.

One of my first cousins has done a lot of research on family history. He has shared his facts with me and his niece, who is my second cousin. (Don’t dare to try to figure all of this out, it will give you a headache.)

She has recently retired and devoted countless hours to assemble a written account of our genealogy. For the past three years, I’ve received a new volume to add to the growing notebook binder. Entitled “Black Eyed Peas on New Year’s Day,” it is a priceless collection of family photos, stories, and our heritage.

It will be handed down for generations to follow.

This year, I was honored to contribute my own memories of my father’s parents, my grandparents.

As their oldest surviving grandchild, I was fortunate enough to live with them for several months when my mother joined my father in California. He was serving our country during World War II as an aircraft mechanic at an Army base and had the opportunity for his young wife to join him there.

I attended school with my two older cousins, and spent my evenings and weekends learning to crochet, play solitaire and canasta, and evicting pesky moles from my Papa’s fruit orchard. For most children it would have seemed somewhat unusual, but to me it was pure bliss.

As I was gathering information for my contribution to the evolving family history, I searched my unorganized box of old family photos—an collection from the attics of deceased relatives. Many of them were of people I didn’t know, and since there is no one left who remembers, they were forever eradicated in the recycle bins.

The ones I do know, however, were duly noted with names and estimated dates written on the back. Fortunately, some were already identified in my grandmother’s familiar script lettering.

The wedding photograph of my grandparents was especially touching. To see the two of them, young, surrounded by their wedding party for the stern-faced formal portrait brought tears to my eyes and joy to my heart.

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NEXT SUNDAY

Msgr. Owen F. Campion

BACKGROUND. The Book of Isaiah furnishes the first reading for the weekend of Jan. 20.

When this third section of Isaiah was written, the Hebrew people had just emerged from a terrible period in their history. They had just emerged from captivity in Babylon, the imperial capital. There these exiles, and then their descendants, languished for four generations until political fortunes changed. The more powerful Persians conquered Babylonia itself.

As a result, the exiles were allowed to return to their homeland. The prophets did not see the sequence of events leading to this happy release as merely coincidental or the result of human decision-making. Rather, God provided for it. God had promised to protect the exiles and to set the arrangement by sinning. Despite their sinfulness, however, God was constant. He provided.

For its second reading of the weekend of Jan. 20 the Church presents a passage from St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians.

Leading the Christian life as a model for our earthly parent.

The response of Jesus to the obvious coming upon the marvel of the changing of the water into wine. This indeed was remarkable, but the story has other powerful lessons.

A great lesson is about Mary. John’s Gospel never names her. It always simply refers to Mary as “the mother” of Jesus. This is not an oversight. It stresses her unique role as the Lord’s earthly parent.

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Warm city, warm hearts: Panama opens its doors to young people

**Junno Arocho Esteves CNS**

**VATICAN CITY.** As World Youth Day in Panama draws near, organizers say they are prepared to make young people from around the globe feel right at home.

While warm temperatures will greet thousands of young people in Panama, Father Romero Aguilar, WYD general coordinator, told Catholic News Service he hopes that the warmth of hospitality also will meet them from the heart.

"People are opening their homes to house young people. We were surprised by how the people responded to the appeal for housing. We want all the kids to have a place, a space, a home," Father Aguilar said.

Father Gervan Menezes, associate pastor of St. Philip Church in Franklin, will be among the throng of pilgrims traveling to Panama for World Youth Day. He previously attended World Youth Day in 2013 in his home country of Brazil, and in 2016 in Poland.

Working with a Brazil-based travel agency, Father Menezes will serve as chaplain for a group of pilgrims traveling from the United States.

He is looking forward to another chance to witness the diversity of the universal Church, "the reminder that the Church is not just the U.S. or Brazil. It's youth from all over the world."

World Youth Day comes at a time of great challenge for the U.S. Church, as it again wrestles with the clergy sexual abuse scandal, but Father Menezes said the event offers the chance for youth "to witness that the Church is more than that."

He often tells people "to be the difference in the Church that you want to see."

World Youth Day, he said, "is an important time to be together and pray for the Church."

"Youth have the power to not only be the Church of tomorrow but the Church of today," said Father Menezes, who previously served as a chaplain for the Diocese of Nashville’s Youth Office, and as a chaplain for Father Ryan High School.

The pope’s visit to Panama Jan. 23-27 will be his 26th trip outside of Italy and the third World Youth Day.

The theme for World Youth Day 2019 is taken from the Gospel of St. Luke: “I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”

During his visit, the pope will celebrate a penitential liturgy Jan. 25 with young inmates at Las Garzas de Pacora Juvenile Detention Center in Pacora. He will also visit Casa Hogar el Buen Samaritano (Good Samaritan Home), a center dedicated to helping people with HIV-AIDS.

The pope’s meetings with young people who are unable to take part in the public WYD activities is a response to the Gospel’s call to clothe the naked, visit the sick and comfort the imprisoned, the WYD organizing committee said in a statement.

With the event scheduled for January rather than in the summer, as the past two World Youth Days have been, fewer young people are expected to attend the Panama event, but local Church and government officials are optimistic and say they expect some 200,000 young people to attend.

Due to the difficulty of scheduling an extended trip while school is in session, the Diocese of Nashville is not organizing a trip to this year’s World Youth Day, according to Bill Staley, director of the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Nashville.

More than 10,000 young pilgrims from the United States had registered by Dec. 19 to attend the events in Panama and the number continues to climb, said Paul Jarzembowski, World Youth Day USA coordinator and assistant director of youth and young adult ministries for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Following the pope’s lead in meeting with young people unable to attend the WYD festivities, events are being planned in major cities across the United States to coincide with the gathering in Panama.

Jarzembowski told CNS that U.S. bishops have encouraged local leaders to engage with young people not going to Panama "for some kind of spiritual moment: a celebration, pilgrimage, retreat or simply an informal gathering."

"No matter how one connects, it is important that this January, every single young person in America is journeying together in solidarity with those pilgrims who are making their way to Panama," he said.

Archbishop Jose Domingo Ulloa of Panama told journalists that by early December, 47,000 young pilgrims from 155 countries had registered for the event, while 168,000 others are completing the registration process.

He also said that an estimated 37,000 volunteers have signed up to help assist young people attending the event.

"As a Church, as a country, we are prepared to welcome thousands of pilgrims," Archbishop Ulloa said.

However, for organizers of WYD, preparations to receive young pilgrims to the country is more than just an exercise in hospitality, they said. It is a means of spreading the Christian message of welcoming those in need.

The plight of Central American migrants making their way to the U.S. border made headlines around the world in November and brought to light the dire circumstances that forces men, women and children to embark on such a treacherous journey.

"I believe that this trip will reverberate in the U.S., but especially in the area of Central America, and it will also shed light not only on the reality that we live, but especially the reality lived by young people: of exclusion, of seeing themselves at times forced to immigrate and look for new paths, as well as the reality of violence," Archbishop Ulloa told CNS.

He also said that the pope’s presence in Panama will be like a soothing “balm and fresh air for our young people to regain their strength.”

Father Aguilar told CNS that the warmth felt in Panama is not only “climatological but also human,” and he said he hoped people opening their homes to young pilgrims will encourage countries to open their doors to those in need.

"We have to give an example, especially in the case of immigration. This phenomenon is very much present in our countries," he said. "We must be welcoming so that nobody feels in any way that they weren’t allowed in Panama. It is a welcoming country and it will be an example of welcoming for everybody.”

Theresa Laurence of the Tennessee Register contributed to this report.
1969 champs honored at Father Ryan tournament

Father Ryan High School paid tribute to its historic 1969 state championship wrestling team at this year's Johnny Drennan '85 Memorial Wrestling Tournament. This is the 50th anniversary of the school's first team state championship, which was also the first won by a school from Nashville. It was the first of more than 20 state titles won by Father Ryan over the years. And dozens of Ryan wrestlers have won individual state championships. On hand for the celebration, were several members of the 1969 team, and Rose Drennan, the widow of the late Joe Drennan, the coach of the team who helped lay the foundation for the school's wrestling program. Among the wrestlers honored during the finals of the Johnny Drennan '85 Memorial Tournament were, from left, Phil Mattingly, Mike Carter, Jimmy Wilson, Doug Henard, Joe Morales, Rose Drennan, Bubba Donnelly, Scott Brunette and Frank Baltz. Carter and Morales were graduates of St. Joseph School, Henard was a graduate of St. Ann School, Baltz was a graduate of Holy Rosary Academy, and the others were graduates of St. Henry School. At this year's tournament, which is one of the area's most prestigious, Union County of Kentucky took home the team championship with Father Ryan finishing second. Father Ryan's Brooks McAfee won the tournament championship in the 106-pound weight class. Cal Eason, above right, and Jacourey Miller finished second for Father Ryan in their weight classes, 113 pounds and 145 pounds, respectively.

Three named All-State

Three players from Pope John Paul II and Father Ryan high schools were recently named to the Tennessee Sports Writers Association's 2018 Football All-State team for Division II-AAA. Named to the All-State team from Pope John Paul II High School were junior wide receiver Rory White and sophomore running back Antwan Roberts, who was selected as an athlete on the offense first team. Father Ryan senior Seamus O'Connell was named as an athlete on the defense first team. O'Connell also played wide receiver for the Irish this season.

Jerry Tachoir Group to perform concert for St. Patrick

The Jerry Tachoir Group, a Grammy-nominated jazz ensemble, will perform a benefit concert for St. Patrick Church in Nashville at 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 10. The concert will be performed at St. Patrick Church, and a meet-and-greet reception will follow the concert. Tickets are $10 each.

Members of the Jerry Tachoir Group include: Jerry Tachoir on vibes and marimba, his wife Marlene on keyboards and vocals, Roy Vogt on bass and Rich Adams on drums. The group has performed across the United States, in Canada and in Europe, at colleges and universities, jazz clubs and jazz festivals. Among the festivals where the group has performed are: the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, the Northsea Jazz Festival in Holland, the Montreal Jazz Festival in Canada, the Pittsburgh Jazz Festival, the Three Rivers Arts Festival, Shalystide Arts Festival, Rites of Spring Jazz Festival, the Summer Lights Festival in Nashville, the Melon Jazz Festival, the Franklin, Tennessee Jazz Festival and others in the United States.
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