THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF OAKLAND • CATHOLICVOICEOAKLAND.ORG

NOVEMBER 2021
VOLUME 59 • ISSUE 10

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Many of you are here today in Lourdes to ask Jesus to cure you, just as He cured the deaf man in today's Gospel. I assure you that Jesus still performs miracles here at Lourdes. For some, Jesus cures their bodies. For others, He cures their souls.

In 1927, a young Spanish medical student came here to Lourdes to help attend the sick. He was looking forward to finishing his studies and becoming a physician. He attended the Blessed Sacrament Procession on the Esplanade. There he saw a mother pulling her son in a cart. The boy's body was twisted and contorted by polio. His mother was praying the rosary loudly, and cried out, "Maria Santissima, help us!"

The medical student was moved by the mother's faith and watched as she maneuvered her cart to be in the path where the Blessed Sacrament would pass. The bishop came, carrying Our Lord in the monstrance, the very same Jesus who walked on this earth 2,000 years ago. As the bishop made the Sign of the Cross over the boy with the Host, the boy extended his arms and legs, and jumped out of the cart. The pilgrims joyously cried out, "A miracle! A miracle!"

The medical student was astonished. Faith was a power stronger than science. He went back to Spain, withdrew from medical school, and entered the novitiate of the Jesuit Fathers. Thirty-eight years later, he was elected General of the Jesuit Order. His name was Father Pedro Arrupe.

The boy was cured in his body. Pedro Arrupe was touched in his soul.

All of us here today come with our share of suffering and pain, carrying our cross. Some carry burdens heavier than others, but we all ask Jesus for healing. And we ask His Blessed Mother to intercede for us.

If you are looking for healing and have not yet found it, let me pass on some advice I received 37 years ago when I first came to Lourdes as a young priest. I went to confession. In addition to my sins, I poured out to the priest all my troubles.

The priest gave me a penance that changed my life. He told me to go outside and look around and find someone who was suffering more than me. And then offer 10 Hail Marys for that person. I went outside the chapel and saw a little girl, lying flat on a gurney, attended by her parents. She was so ill she could not even sit up in a wheelchair. My heart was moved with compassion for her, and I prayed my Hail Marys for her.

Then I felt my own troubles melt away. My cross was lightened, and everything came into focus.

"Jesus has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."
My suffering had meaning. It was a gift I could offer for others. I could identify with St. Paul, who said, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I make up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of His body, that is, the church.” (Col 1:24).

I know it is difficult. If your hearts are still frightened, hear the Lord speak to you today through the words of the prophet Isaiah:

“Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, He comes with vindication; with divine recompense He comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing ... The burning sands will become pools, and the thirsty ground, springs of water.”

Go and wash yourself in those “springs of water” here at Lourdes, and there find healing in your body or your soul.
On All Souls’ Day the Church prays for all the faithful departed, those who await that day when they will join the company of all the saints. This feast reminds us all that even after death, we are linked with our loved ones and fellow-travelers in an unbroken line of faith, hope and love. All Souls’ Day gives us the opportunity to strengthen that bond, to remember those who have died, and to inspire and strengthen one another as the community of believers still here on earth.

Each year All Souls’ Day is observed at the Cathedral of Christ the Light with a Solemn Requiem Mass, celebrated by Bishop Barber. This year the Cathedral Schola Lumen Gentium will sing the Requiem composed for choir and orchestra by Gabriel Fauré.

We invite you to consider a gift in honor of a deceased loved one in support of this Requiem Mass and the music ministry of the Cathedral of Christ the Light. For a memorial gift of $100, your named family member or friend will be remembered at Mass and be included in the commemorative program.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to remember those who have died, and to inspire and strengthen one another as the community of believers still here on earth.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: _________________________________________
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Email: _________________________________________

Name(s) to be remembered at the All Souls’ Solemn Mass:

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Please return this form, with your donation, by October 27, with the name(s) to be included in the program.

Checks should be made payable to The Cathedral of Christ the Light, and marked “Requiem” in the memo line. Additional names may be added.

Mail or drop off at the Cathedral Office to: Vanessa Barrett
The Cathedral of Christ the Light
2121 Harrison Street, Suite 130
Oakland, CA 94612

Online donations for memorials can be made by visiting the cathedral website: ctlcathedral.org
Between October 14 and November 22, 2021, each one of us has the chance to strengthen the future of the Diocese of Oakland.

For some months a commission of lay faithful and clergy of our diocese has been working on the Mission Alignment Process (MAP). Your voice is a vital component of this process. Between October 14 and November 22, 2021, you have the opportunity to participate in the MAP through a parish survey. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we look to align our parishes, parishioners, clergy, schools and structures for an even more fruitful living of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Please join in our survey and support this process with your prayers!

SURVEY OPENS OCTOBER 14! TAKE THE SURVEY ONLINE AT:

https://www.catholicleaders.org/oaklanddmi

Take the survey in your parish, on the diocesan website or through your school community.

The survey is anonymous and available in many languages.

You may also request a paper survey at your parish.
We need every Catholic in our diocese to participate in the Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI) Disciple Maker Index survey.” —MARY FAIR

Mary Fair, a member of the Mission Alignment Process commission, invites you to participate in the survey this month.

What excites you about the Mission Alignment Process?

I am very excited to be working with a group of bright, intelligent, engaging and very committed clergy and laity, who are approaching the process with a defined mission, specific goals and a defined timeline. It is important that we look comprehensively at the entire diocese at one time: our parishes, schools and priests. We have an opportunity to look at organization in new, out-of-the-box ways. We are blessed to be fully supported by the Bishop and diocesan leadership.

How long have you been part of the Diocese of Oakland?

I have been part of the Diocese of Oakland for 23 years. I joined the Diocesan Planning Board when it was formed in February 2005 by Chuck Siebenand. The DPB gathered data, reviewed and made recommendations to the Presbyteral Council, the College of Consultors and the Bishop about parish closures, mergers, purchasing land for growth, etc.

I’ve had the pleasure of working on the Diocesan Pastoral Council and several diocesan subcommittees over the years, including a Communications committee. I’ve enjoyed the opportunity to work with many parishes to help them establish a pastoral council or to develop mission and vision statements and/or a pastoral plan.

In 2008, I was invited to serve on the Catholic Charities East Bay Board of Directors and served until 2016. In addition to serving as chair from 2014-2016, I also served as board committee chair for the Human Resources, Development, Governance and Finance/Investment committees.

Since leaving that board, I have volunteered to support the CCEB development department with Transforming Lives tour and luncheon and as chair of the Golf Committee.

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What do you enjoy about working with the Diocesan Planning Board and Catholic Charities?

I’m passionate about my work with the church. Working with the Diocese has helped me realize that I am, and we all are, part of a bigger Catholic family, more than just a parishioner. I've loved the chance to work with amazing people at the chancery and in many parishes who are committed to the work of the church.

What changes have you seen in the Diocese over the years?

There have been four bishops in my 22 years in the Diocese, and each has led with a different style and focus. Today and as part of this process, I very much appreciate Bishop Barber’s gift of seeing the big picture. Other changes I’ve seen have been the need to move priests around more. This can be hard for younger priests who must serve as parochial administrators without a lot of experience. The Chancery layoffs have been hard on everyone; this results in less support for parishes. This Mission Realignment Process will help priests identify where their talents can best serve the church.

What is your role on the MAP Commission? Are you on a subcommittee of the MAP Commission?

There are 15 members of the Mission Alignment Process. I am one of six lay members and chair the parish subcommittee. I also serve as a member of the parishioner subcommittee.

What work does your subcommittee do and how is your subcommittee work different from the other subcommittees?

Along with Father Mark Ruiz and Amanda Wehrman, the parish subcommittee will collect data supplied to the chancery (parish profiles/addendum reports, attendance, staffing and finances) and review and analyze it. After an initial review and analysis,
we may ask for supplemental information about the 2020 response during the COVID pandemic to meet parishioner needs and hold Masses.

Once the parishioner surveys have been completed in November, data will be collected and then my committee will work with the parishioner subcommittee when we visit parishes in March-May 2022.

The Demographics subcommittee will collect data from the Disciple Maker Index parishioner survey and MissionInsite specific demographic data to identify who we are and what cultures we celebrate.

The Schools subcommittee will focus on Catholic elementary and high schools, and the Priests subcommittee will use the “Called for More” priest inventory to evaluate active priests.

All the subcommittees provide opportunities for growth and transformational change in the diocese in a prayerful and structured process.

**What is the most important role a parishioner can play in the MAP process?**

This is so important and perhaps the most important message. We need every Catholic in our Diocese to participate in the Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI) Disciple Maker Index survey. This survey will be open to parishioners from Oct. 14-Nov. 22, 2021. Surveys will be online on your parish website, the diocesan website or can be completed on paper. The survey will be available in multiple languages. This is the chance to share your voice. The more participation, the better data we will have.

Beyond the survey, I encourage you to attend parish meetings being hosted by MAP from March through May 2022.

**What happens once the surveys have been completed in late November?**

Once the surveys are completed, the MAP Commission will have access to all the data to evaluate. Each parish representative will also have access to the data to help parishioners understand the results.

**What will this mean for my parish and my ministries?**

Each parish will have an objective assessment of their parish community to:

- Better understand its strengths, weakness and opportunities.
- See a snapshot of parishioners’ needs and what they consider important.
- Identify areas where ministries may be needed or not needed (i.e., create a senior social ministry if there are a lot of seniors in the community or area).
- Identify evangelization opportunities.
- Guide pastoral planning.

**What do you hope to see at the end of the process?**

I have big hopes and prayers for this process. We have the opportunity to match priests to their skills and talents so they can feel fulfilled and best serve the lay faithful. I am also hoping we end this process in June 2022 with parishes that are vital, alive and providing liturgy, learning and outreach opportunities to meet the Bishop’s vision of forming missionary disciples, strengthening the parishioner Sunday experience (reverent liturgies, excellent homilies, inspirational and uplifting music, and everyone feeling a sense of welcome and belonging) and embodying the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in our outreach and care for others in and outside our parish communities. With intention and prayers, we can create a spiritually renewed, financially stable and better organized diocese to meet the needs of all the lay faithful and equip leaders (clergy and lay) to serve their parishioners the best way they can.

Ultimately, we want every Catholic in the diocese to be so excited about their parish and being Catholic that they share their passion with as much enthusiasm and energy as they have when they share about a play, sports team, book or restaurant or anything else that appeals to or excites them.

Finally, I pray that we will “be the best we can be” at all levels — priests, deacons, lay leaders, ministries, parishioners and parishes — so everyone wants to be a part of their church community and grow in their faith!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**FEATURE STORY**

**MARTINA’S JOURNEY**

A quest for education leads from Guatemala to Mexico, El Paso to Oakland, and on to New York

When she arrived at Cornell University in August, Martina Pablo, like many first-year students, experienced a rush of complicated emotions.

“I was scared and excited at the same time,” she said.

But there was something more. Martina, who graduated from Oakland’s Holy Names High School in June, also said that she was “feeling different feelings” — a nod to the young woman’s lengthy and determined quest for an education. This quest involved thousands of miles of travel away from her native Guatemala without family or friends, time spent in a Texas detention camp, and finally finding sanctuary and support in the East Bay.

Martina, 21, was born and raised in a small village in Guatemala. Her parents were coffee farmers; Martina, who had two older siblings and two younger ones, was the middle child.

Because her family was part of the local indigenous community, Martina grew up speaking her community’s language and was sent to school to learn Spanish. She also learned about discrimination early on. “I didn’t like how people treated my father and my mother, how indigenous people were treated.”

Early on, Martina developed a love for learning. “One of my dreams was to continue school,” she said. When she was in middle school, she told her parents that she wanted to go to high school. While her parents were supportive of the idea, they told her that they did not have the money to send her to high school.

Undeterred, Martina said that she told her parents that she wanted to find a way to go to high school. Months later, after applying for a scholarship, she was accepted to a private high school.

While happy about the scholarship, Martina’s parents told their daughter that she could attend the high school as long as she worked on the farm before going to school. For the next year and a half, she worked four hours a day on the farm before going to school.

Despite earning good grades, Martina began experiencing problems at the school and lost her scholarship. After talking to her parents about the family’s financial needs, Martina reluctantly began to work long hours on the family farm and helping to raise the chickens and pigs.

“I was not happy,” Martina said of this time of her life. “That was not my dream. That is not what I wanted to be.”

While she worked on the farm, Martina continued to look for other options, which included following the path of one of her older brothers, who had moved to the United...

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STORY BY CARRIE MCCLISH

Carrie McClish, a parishioner at Sacred Heart and Holy Names High School in Oakland, reported for The Catholic Voice from 1984 to 2020. This is her first story in The Catholic Voice magazine.

PHOTOS BY DALLAS NELSON, COURTESY OF HOLY NAMES HIGH SCHOOL, OAKLAND
was the possibility that I could be caught by bad people ... she just told me that you have to pray.”

As she walked across the bridge, Martina said that she felt as if she wasn’t on Earth. “I felt like I was walking somewhere else,” she said. “My hands were shaking, I was sweating ... I was praying and asking God to come with me.”

After crossing the bridge, Martina ran directly to the police station to ask for help. After being interviewed by the police, who verified that she was a minor, Martina was taken to a detention center for minors. After two months, she was released to her brother, who brought her to his home in Oakland. She promptly enrolled in public school and started looking for work. For the next year, Martina’s days were full. After spending the day in school — from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. — the teen worked from 4 p.m. to 1 a.m.

During that time, Martina and her brother parted ways; he left to begin a new life with his girlfriend. This new development brought fresh uncertainty into Martina’s life; in addition to settling in a new country, she was juggling work and school, struggling to pay the rent and find a lawyer to help her address her immigration issues. “It was a lot,” she recalled, adding that she thought about dropping out of school. But after asking around, she found a lawyer who eventually referred her to Oakland Catholic Worker. The organization was able to not only offer her a place to live for several months, but to provide shelter for her older sister and infant nephew, who had also moved to the United States.

Martina also met Bob Lassalle-Klein and his family, who soon became her advocates as well as
extended family. Bob, who helped reboot the current incarnation of the Oakland Catholic Worker as a sanctuary for Central American refugees fleeing from the wars in Central America and remains active as a board member, became acquainted with Martina when they went to make a presentation at Oakland’s Bishop O’Dowd High School.

After staying several months at OCW, Martina was placed with a family. But when that placement didn’t work out, Bob and his wife, Lynn, welcomed Martina into their home. “We had an empty bedroom and we said ‘yes,’” he said.

Bob, who also serves as a permanent deacon for the Diocese of San Jose, said “yes” in supporting Martina, who needed a sponsor, by formally becoming her legal guardian.

A professor at Oakland’s Holy Names University, Bob also helped Martina move closer to her education dream. He helped support her search for a scholarship to a private high school in the East Bay. “Holy Names High School stepped up and offered her a full ride, which was really special and neat,” he said.

Martina said that she enjoyed her time at Holy Names High School, which included running cross-country. “It was a nice experience,” she said.

She became emotional when she recalled the academic assistance that she received from the faculty. “They were really great,” she said. “They never gave up on me. The teachers really supported me.”

As she recalled receiving her high school diploma in June, Martina’s voice trembled with excitement. “I was thinking about how God surprises you,” she said.

That excitement continued to sustain Martina as she arrived at New York’s Cornell University — thanks to a full-ride scholarship — to continue to work on turning her dreams into reality.
November is a month when many people will visit the cemeteries of the Diocese of Oakland to remember their loved ones with flowers and prayers at their gravesites.
An Evening with Sandy

About Sandy
Sandy is the Oakland diocese grief minister trainer and has been named one of the 15 most influential women in the Oakland diocese. She has taught grief counseling throughout California and Phoenix. She believes in the importance of how spirituality plays in counseling and caregiving. She believes in it so much that she counsels about 500 one-on-one counseling sessions per year, and facilitates three grief support groups for parents whose child has died.

How does one grieve during this pandemic?
Grieving is difficult, everyone does it differently and on their own timeline. Add COVID-19 to the mix and everything changes: no hugs, no consoling, no face to face. Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Service invites you and anyone else who needs grief support to an Evening with Sandy, weekly Zoom meeting. The meetings are held 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. every Tuesday.

Join the meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/862.513.50832
Meeting ID: 862 5135 0832

The Vigil of Lights will take place during the week of Oct. 25-29. Tables will be set up from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. outside the offices of four cemeteries: Queen of Heaven in Lafayette, Holy Cross in Antioch, Holy Sepulchre in Hayward and St. Joseph in San Pablo. Families are invited to decorate luminaria memorial bags.

“When the pandemic hit, we realized a lot of grief groups couldn’t meet,” said Deacon David Holland. “We’re delighted to be of help.”

Deacon Dave, who serves at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Martinez, is outreach manager for Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Services.

He is especially pleased to talk about “Tuesdays with Sandy,” a Zoom meeting with Sandy Heinisch, a parishioner at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Brentwood and the Diocese of Oakland’s grief ministry trainer. Deacon Dave is the co-host of the one-hour meeting.

Grief, particularly in this time of pandemic, can be particularly difficult. “It feels very isolated on your own,” he said. Recognizing that others are experiencing this, he said, is a “Godsend.”

In adjusting to their new normal, people on the Zoom call start to open up. “You see the pain,” he said. “You also see the hope.”

He also praised Sandy’s groups for parents whose children have died. “You don’t know until you’re going through it,” he said of the grief. It can be helpful to know you are not the only one experiencing this grief, he said.

“They’re a very close-knit group,” he said, offering support to one another.

CFCS hosted its annual Children’s Mass on Oct. 2 at four cemeteries — Queen of Heaven in Lafayette, Holy Cross in Antioch, Holy Sepulchre in Hayward and St. Joseph in San Pablo. The Mass is designed for parents whose children have died, no matter the age of the child. “Even in their 40s and 50s, they’re still your child,” Deacon Dave said.

CFCS also offers support to parents whose child, from pre-birth to age 12, has died. The Precious Lives program
provides financial assistance for basic funeral and cemetery services, as well as a discount for services beyond the basic level. Outreach about the availability of this program is made to parishes, hospitals and schools.

Through the Gather Them Home program, CFCS provides space for cremated remains at no cost. “We can keep them forever or for a time,” he said, noting that some families may want to repatriate the cremated remains in the future.

“Once they’re in the cemetery, they’re prayed for all the time,” he said. CFCS is offering this program to show reverence to the human body, in keeping with the Catholic tradition that prohibits scattering of ashes.

“Our body is actually God’s body,” he said. “God gave it to us in one piece. We return it to Him in love.”

Placing that body in a Catholic cemetery, he said, puts it on “holy ground.”

CFCS partners with the diocese’s Catholics Care program in the Marriage and Family Life office, and works closely with the diaconate community.

Deacon Dave, who came to the United States from his native Ireland in 1989 is in the diaconate Class of 2003. He had been a rural letter carrier in Oakley when Deacon Matt Dulka recommended him for a counselor position at St. Joseph Cemetery in San Pablo. He later became the manager of Holy Cross Cemetery in Antioch.

In his current role, he is outreach manager for the cemeteries, visiting parishes to introduce parishioners to the services CFCS can provide to families.

PARA MAS INFORMACIÓN COMUNÍQUENSE CON UNA DE NUESTRAS LOCALIDADES:
Holy Sepulchre (510) 537-6600 | Queen of Heaven (925) 932-0900
Holy Cross (925) 757-0658 | St. Joseph (510) 234-2012
cfcoakland.org
SANDY HEINISCH DIDN’T SET OUT TO BE A GRIEF MINISTER. TWO YOUNG MEN SHOWED HER THE WAY.

It wasn’t in Sandy Heinisch’s plans to become a grief counselor. As she reflects on her life, she knows this was God’s plan for her.

Sandy’s experience with the deaths of two young men – one an 8-year-old boy she tutored at home while he was fighting leukemia in the 1970s; the other, her 39-year-old son, more than three decades later – led her to help others through her ministry.

“I have credentials not because of all the little initials after my name,” Sandy said.

“It’s because I am a mother who lost a child.”
She’s a person who doesn’t mince words; if you mention someone “passed away,” she’ll gently, but firmly, tell you the person “died.”

Perhaps you’ve met Sandy through attending her grief ministry training in one of 27 parishes; many laypeople, deacons and priests have done just that. Perhaps you’ve been part of one of her groups at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Brentwood or Church of the Good Shepherd in Pittsburg. Or you’ve met her online in the past 18 months in one of her Zoom groups sponsored through Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Services. You might have seen her name under “grief ministry” in the Diocese of Oakland directory or through the Catholics Care initiative.

Likely, too, a friend has shared her name with you at a time you needed it the most.

“That is my mission: to always be available to anyone who has lost a child,” Sandy said.

Her mission is fueled by faith. “I have always had a strong sense of Catholicism,” she said. “I have never wavered in my faith, from being a child of Catholic parents — my mother and father raised me as a strict Catholic — I have never wavered.”

Sandy was a mother of three — she and her husband Frank had welcomed Mary Jo, Frankie and Paul.

“When Mary Jo was in second grade, Sister Alice was her teacher,” Sandy recounted. “Sister Alice said to me, because she knew I wasn’t working at the time, do you think you could home tutor Danny?”

Sandy asked only that she could bring her youngest child with her.


She tutored him and visited him in the hospital.

“That was my very first experience with a dying child,” she said. “I learned that they have a special language.”

On their last visit, he was in and out of consciousness. As she left, she said to him, “Danny, I’m leaving now.”

He responded, she said, “I want to thank you for coming.”

“He didn’t mean for just one day,” she said. “He said I was the only one who told him what was happening to him. I never told [him]. He knew through what I was saying.

“For a year after Danny’s death, his mother and I would meet all the time. My question was constant: Why was Danny given to me at this time in my life?”

Sandy decided to go to De Anza College and become a licensed vocational nurse. “I believe I went to school to become a nurse because of Danny.”

She worked as a nurse for close to 30 years, mostly in hospice. After moving to Brentwood in 2001, she worked in home care and education of certified nursing assistants and nurses and continuing...
education. “I stopped that after I became a counselor; I couldn’t do both,” she said. “I became a counselor because of Frankie,” she said. 

In 2005, the Heinisch’s son Frankie died of a blood clot to the heart. He was 39.

He was beloved. “He was very special to me. He was extraordinary. He knew how to reach people. It was like he was an old soul.”

The grieving mother knew she needed help. “I told my daughter, ‘I need counseling. I need it now. I don’t need it six months from now. I will lose my mind trying to make sense of Frank’s death.’”

As a faithful Catholic, she first tried her parish. “I did not have any luck there,” she said.

A friend suggested the Contra Costa Crisis Center.

She and her husband Frank went through the center’s 13-week course. One of the leaders suggested to Sandy that she become a counselor.

“That went along with everything I had done as a nurse,” she said. “I had worked in hospice; it was very logical that I went from helping those who were dying and their families to the survivors.”

She received additional training at the Contra Costa Crisis Center; trained 500 hours with grief counselor Dr. Darcie Sims; and with the National Catholic Ministry to the Bereaved.

“I based my grief ministry training on the National Catholic Ministry to the Bereaved,” she said. “I knew I didn’t want anyone else to go crazy trying to find a place to go with their grief. That’s why I never say no to parents who have lost a child.”

Sandy also works with widows and widowers, but is also able to refer them to various groups throughout the diocese.

What does it take to work in grief ministry? “Experience; empathy, not compassion and not sympathy; easy to talk to; trust,” Sandy ticks off the attributes.

And the greatest of these is the support of family.

Frank and Sandy Heinisch celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary this summer. Theirs is a love story for the ages.

“We met at confession,” Sandy said. “You know how you stand facing each other waiting?” she said, recalling confessional in churches of the 1950s. “We looked at each other, smiled, flirted, not saying anything because we were in church. We were 14 and 15.

“We got married in the same place where we met,” she said, at St. Philomena Church in Chicago. “We didn’t get married until we were 19 and 20.

“That was a marriage that God blessed. At 14 and 15, what was our chance of having a marriage? We never would have gotten divorced. That was never in our vocabulary. We have had so many challenges. It had to be blessed. He’s a gift from God for me.

“I know what I mean to him, and vice versa.”

Their family has grown. “Our children have raised great kids,” she said. The five grandchildren are college graduates. A summer visit from the four-great-grandchildren brought additional joy to their Brentwood home.

Without Frank’s support for Sandy’s ministry, she said, “it wouldn’t have happened.”

“When Frankie died, I relied upon my religion. I couldn’t have gone through that journey without knowing there was a reason for it. And I look back on my life — I can do that because I’m going to be 79 — I see the thread of faith throughout. God had a master plan for me. I was a homemaker, all of a sudden I was a home teacher for a child that died 6 months after I began. I became a nurse; then I became a hospice nurse, after that, helping people to die and feel that God did not desert them, that God was with them. I helped them to spiritually accept God was right with them as they were dying.

“When my son died, I had to make sense of it. You don’t lose a child without trying to make sense out of what just happened.”
Bearing loss together — with Christ and in community

Moving through the grief process after the death of a loved one has a large social component. Although we live in a society where individualism is highly valued and some grieving in isolation is necessary, too much is incredibly lonely and painful. Knowing that our God is there alongside us is a comfort, but we are also wired for human connection. How do we help others to bear loss?

BY LAUREL HILLIKER, PHD

Recognize and acknowledge the loss.

Loss needs our attention and people need our compassion. Show up to support the mourners. In our frantic return from the pandemic, many of us are trying to make up for time lost and have filled up our lives. The bereaved will remember those who attended services and those who reached out through cards, letters, phone calls, texts, etc. in the months and years after the death. They will also remember those who stayed distant as well as those who carried them through without judgment.

Remind those grieving that you are there for them.

Then, be there. Let go of reservations about what to say or do. Your quiet presence and your witness to their pain will be valued. I was asked to “be there” for a devastated mother who lost her adult daughter suddenly in 2020. She did not want to talk or be with anyone; however, she was open to texting. I checked in with her frequently, never giving advice, just sending a simple message, photo or comforting meme. Her responses include excruciatingly painful accounts of memories of her sweet daughter, a person with disabilities. One day, I read a story of a bereaved woman and felt she might relate to it. I prayed a quick prayer and then sent the story by text. Her reply was timely: “You have no idea how many times you have brought me back from the edge, the brink, the ultimate decision.” Our support can be life-saving.

Remember the deceased.

Do not be afraid to use their name, as most mourners appreciate the gesture. Visit the parish of the family and request a Mass for the soul of the deceased. Reminisce with the mourner/s about the person who died and suggest ways that all of you can integrate their good qualities into your own lives.

As followers of Christ, we are called to bear loss together, with him and in community. Acknowledging loss, being there for the bereaved and remembering the deceased all provide support that in turn strengthen community bonds and help one another as Jesus taught us. ✤
GIFT of GIVING

BAY AREA CRISIS NURSERY
The Bay Area Crisis Nursery’s mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect. The only crisis nursery in the Bay Area, it provides short-term overnight and day services for babies and children to give parents time to focus on addressing a crisis or stressful situation. Knowing their children are safe, parents can make better use of other services to resolve crises like homelessness, domestic violence, mental or physical illness and other unexpected emergencies.

- **Need:** Cash gifts or consult the Amazon wish list, which will be updated with requests from parents.
- **Mail to:** 1506 Mendocino Drive, Concord 94521, Attention: Holiday Drive
- **Contact:** Tara Bartholomew, executive director, 925.685.6633
- **Website:** www.bayareacrisisnursery.org

BIRTHRIGHT OF CONCORD
A nonprofit pregnancy support service offering free, confidential, nonjudgmental help to pregnant women.

- **Need:** Maternity clothes, diapers sizes 1-6, baby clothes to 18 months, volunteers, board members, a treasurer, monetary donations
- **Mail address:** 3106 Clayton Road, Concord 94519
- **Contact:** 925.798.7227 by appointment only during the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Website:** www.concordbirthright.org
- **Email:** concord@birthright.org

DETENTION MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF OAKLAND
The Detention Ministry of the Diocese of Oakland will help bring Christmas this year to the families of formerly incarcerated men and women who currently live in transitional homes.

- **Need:** Because of COVID-19 restrictions, we are accepting cash donations. Families benefiting from the program will receive gift cards to a target amount and can shop online or in person at the selected stores.
- **Mail address:** Checks may be sent payable to Catholic Community of Pleasanton to The Catholic Community of Pleasanton, P.O. Box 817, Pleasanton CA 94566 before Dec. 5. Please put “Detention Ministry” in the memo line of the check. You may also donate to this program online at www.catholicsofpleasanton.org.
- **Contact:** Matt Gray, mgray@catholicsofpleasanton.org

DOROTHY DAY HOUSE
Founded in 1992, Dorothy Day House (DDH) has emerged as the leading resource for the unhoused population in Berkeley. DDH is the only food service organization that serves its population three meals a day, 7 days a week, all year round. The unhoused populations in Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville rely on DDH to provide basic services such as showers, laundry, clean clothing and a caring presence. Our approach to building a personal relationship with those in need first has led to our unprecedented success in helping those in need rebuild their lives, one step at a time.

Our ongoing services have been modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to keep our residents, staff and other guests safe. For the majority of those experiencing homelessness in our community, Dorothy Day House is the only resource that they can turn to.

- **Website:** dorotheydayhouseberkeley.org
- **Wish List:** Monetary donations, volunteers

All donations will support the following programs:
- **Berkeley Community Resource Center (BCRC):** DDH’s BCRC program provides daily showers, laundry and referral services to housing and mental health organizations.
- **Food Services:** Our food services provide 70,000 meals each year to those in need in Berkeley, through our three regular meals served each day to our residents and the daily community breakfasts and lunches served year-round. We also bring these services directly to those who live in encampments.
- **Berkeley Emergency Storm Shelter:** The BESS is a seasonal 24/7 shelter that provides food, safety and warmth through the winter months for the unhoused.
- **Horizon Transitional Village (HTV):** The HTV is a brand-new program that provides food, shelter and housing-placement services for 50 individual men and women in addition to access to our other available services.
- **Dorothy Day House Shelter:** Our original shelter provides shelter for 50 men and women, with full access to all of our available services.
- **Contact:** Brit Hotaling, 510.705.1919; brithotaling@dorothydayhouse.org; or send checks to: Dorothy Day House, Attn: Development Department, P.O. Box 12701, Berkeley 94712.
- **Donate online:** https://dorothydayhouse.networkforgood.com/

THE GABRIEL PROJECT OF THE DIOCESE OF OAKLAND
The Gabriel Project is a parish-based outreach program that seeks to bring the love of Christ to women in difficult and crisis pregnancies. We see the conception of each child as a fresh expression of God’s unfailing love. We offer immediate and practical help spiritual, emotional and material.

The Catholic Voice is pleased to present our 2021 Gift of Giving Guide. The following nonprofit groups responded to our request for their holiday wish lists. We share this information with you in the spirit of the season.
**MERCY BROWN BAG PROGRAM**

Sponsored by Mercy Retirement & Care Center, this program provides bags of nutritious groceries to more than 8,000 needy seniors twice monthly, free of charge. The program helps seniors make ends meet, maintain their health and stay in their own homes.

- **Need:** Cash donations, large-size paper bags, notes to ease isolation and volunteers to help us make and deliver bags to seniors’ doorsteps.
- **This Christmas:** For Christmas we are hoping to add notes to the bags we deliver to doors. Bring or mail notes to Mercy Retirement & Care Center. We bought insulated bags to send each holiday frozen chicken out and keep it cold in the process. We are accepting donations to help cover the cost of the chickens and the bags.
- **Volunteer:** Sign-up sheets to choose a shift are at www.mercybrowbag.org.
- **Where:** 3431 Foothill Blvd., Oakland 94601
- **Contact:** Krista Lucchesi, Director, 510.534.8540, extension 369

**NIGHTS ON THE STREETS — CATHOLIC WORKER**

We offer hospitality to the Body of Christ by providing food, clothing, shelter, counseling and referrals to the homeless and needy in local communities, and we assist others who do so.

- **Need:** Prayers for health, guidance and the support of our continuing works of mercy; financial support for our 25th year of consistent and continuing hospitality for our unsheltered brothers and sisters; volunteers to prepare and serve at Friday “soup nights” every winter (this includes cooking 5 gallons of soup and distributing it the same evening); servers for our Sunday breakfast served al fresco at two locations in Berkeley. Sleeping bags are always needed.
- **Mail address:** P.O. Box 11312, Berkeley 94712-2312
- **Contact:** J.C. Orton, coordinator, 510.684.1892; noscw@sbcglobal.net

**OAKLAND ELIZABETH HOUSE**

Oakland Elizabeth House is a 12- to 18-month transitional housing program for women and children who are experiencing homelessness because of domestic violence, rent increases, job loss, substance abuse and mental health challenges. Our mission is to support women and children in their transition to independence by creating and maintaining a nurturing, cooperative living environment that provides resources, hospitality, and respect.

- **Need:** Cash donations
- **Where:** 6423 Colby St., Oakland 94618
- **Contact:** 510.658.1380
- **Website:** www.oakehouse.org

**ST. MARY’S CENTER**

St. Mary’s Center is a community of hope, justice and healing that serves at-risk seniors and preschoolers in the heart of Oakland. We strive to improve quality of life through counseling, shelter, nutrition, advocacy and social support. We have been delivering grocery bags to our transitional houses and encampments, and in the process our Community Center has become a small store.

- **Need:** Shelf-stable foods; new socks; new travel-size toiletries, including make-up, feminine products, soap, body wash, creams, lotions, shaving supplies and adult diapers in sizes L and XL.
- **Address:** 925 Brockhurst St., Oakland 94608
- **Contact:** Julie Merrill at St. Mary’s Center for information on how to donate items or to arrange a drop-off: 510.923.9600, extension 200 or email jmerrill@stmaryscenter.org.
- **Website:** www.oakehouse.org

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL (SVP) OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

Founded in 1964, St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County assists vulnerable residents all through the year and especially during the holidays. At Thanksgiving and Christmas, SVdP may be the only resource that a family in need has for a holiday meal or gifts. The 2021 holiday programs may be modified due to continuing concerns re: COVID-19. In addition to the holiday programs, rental, utility and emergency assistance is available from St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County.

**Assistance for Individuals and Families in Need**

Assistance is offered from our centralized Pittsburg Family Resource Center and our 28 parish-based Conferences or branches located throughout the county. Collectively, SVdP’s programs provide holiday help to more than 14,000 county residents. Due to safety and health precautions, appropriate safety protocols will be followed.

- **Wish List:** Volunteers, food cards, warm coats and monetary donations
- **Contact:** To donate a gift card, monetary donation or to volunteer, please contact Barb Hunt, 925.439.5060; or send checks to Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County Attn: Christmas Program, 2210 Gladstone Drive, Pittsburg, CA 94565.
- **Donate online:** www.svdp-cc.org

**All donations will support the following holiday programs:**

- **Free Thanksgiving Dinner:** Served on Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 25) at St. Vincent de Paul’s Free Dining Room at 1415 Simpson Court, Pittsburg. A special holiday meal of turkey and all the trimmings for 150 guests, many of whom are our regular Pittsburg Free Dining Room guests.
- **Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday Food Baskets and Gift Programs at SVdP’s 28 Conferences:** The 28 SVdP parish-based Conferences conduct local food and gift programs within each of the communities they support. For example, the SVdP branch at St. Francis of Assisi in Concord distributes 150 turkeys and food baskets at Thanksgiving. Contact Stephen Krank, s.krank@svdp-cc.org.
- **Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Gift Card Program at the Pittsburg Family Resource Center:** Provides a $50 food gift card to families at Thanksgiving and Christmas. This program provides needy families with extra food during the holidays.
- **Holiday One Warm Coat:** Provides the distribution of more than 7,000 coats to the needy throughout the county in November and December.
For the first six years of “The Many Sounds of Christmas” at St. Columba Parish in Oakland, the church filled with festively dressed parishioners, who were entertained by choirs, musicians and individual performers.

Those seated in the back of the church, however, might have had a little trouble seeing.

Last year, COVID-19 turned the event into a virtual performance, with performers filmed in their studios.

The upside was everyone attending had the best seat in the house.

In 2021, Planning committee chair Linda Whitmore said performers will be on stage live at St. Columba Church, but the audience will be watching from their respective best seats in the house.

Think of it as live TV.

“It’s really been uplifting for our church members,” she said of the planned concert involving a wide range of performers, including classical, spiritual, gospel, hip-hop and jazz.

“Everybody can feel connected,” she said.

Miranda Wilson will serve as mistress of ceremonies for the performance, which will begin at 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11. The parish will change its Saturday Mass schedule that day to allow time to set up the concert.

The St. Columba Choir, Kymi Armour, Kev Choice, Joseph Hebert, Francisco Herrera, Dr. Candace Johnson, Don Lewis, Tai-Ge Min and Geri Whitmore will perform.

“The Many Sounds of Christmas” concert musicians are Ben Flint on piano, Jerry “Boon” Johnson on drums and Oshmin Oden on bass guitar.

The St. Columba Parish Planning Committee members have been together for eight years and have coordinated all of the St. Columba Church Christmas Concerts. Linda Whitmore is chair of the committee, which includes Father Aidan McAleenan, pastor; Kevin L. Nichols; Stephanie LaCarrubba; Nancy Pope-Angulo; and Sidney Ragland, director of music.†
The Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose are excited about the many wonderful Holiday Boutique items available through our online catalogue. With safety and good health as primary goals, we are offering prepaid online ordering with the choice of shipping or curbside pickup! It’s a safe and simple way to receive your favorite Holiday Boutique items.

You’ll have your choice in shipping or curbside pickup. Pickup dates at the Motherhouse in Fremont are Oct. 16 and 30, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., as well as curbside on Nov. 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Once again, we partner with the wonderful Sciabica family who make it possible to press, store, bottle and deliver our delectable and rare olive oil. We also offer you their link to their own products. Sciabica provides a 5% discount and direct shipping from Modesto to your home.

Keep your eye out for new items this year, including 1-pound fruitcakes, a smaller version of your favorite; peanut butter balls; and cozy pet blankets.

Our best sellers might go fast. These include our traditional 2-pound fruitcake wrapped in a gift box; a limited supply of MSJ Olive Oil; heartfelt handmade articles from our talented Sisters and friends; jars of beautiful, golden Holy Honey from our beehives; and delicious bourbon balls.

Don’t miss your chance for an early Christmas present! That raffle barrel will roll again this year with a Grand Prize of $1,000 and two other prizes of $500. Additional tickets are available online for printing at www.msjdominicans.org.

We wish each of you a very peaceful beginning to this significant season.

Seasonal Blessings,
Your Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose

AN ONLINE SHOPPING SPREE AT WWW.MSJDOMINICANS.ORG NOW THROUGH NOV. 14, 2021

SHOPPING ASSISTANCE
Call “Santa’s Helper” at 510.933.6330.
CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT NOV. 20-21

The annual collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) takes place Nov. 20-21 in parishes in the Diocese of Oakland and throughout the United States. Funds are granted through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the local CCHD office to nonprofit organizations whose programs focus on eliminating poverty and advancing social justice.

To learn more about the history and mission of CCHD and to view its new video “Empower, Organize, Advocate” go to: www.cchdeastbay.org

Donations to CCHD can be made at www.cchdeastbay.org, at your parish or by sending a check to:

Catholic Campaign for Human Development
433 Jefferson St.,
Oakland, CA 94607

NINE EAST BAY ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED CCHD GRANTS IN 2021

PROSPERA, OAKLAND ($75,000) — Focuses on creating and sustaining Latina-owned business cooperatives that build economic independence and well-being in immigrant communities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

PLANTING JUSTICE, OAKLAND ($50,000) — Operates a large, organic nursery that provides employment skills and living-wage jobs to formerly incarcerated adults and low-income residents in East Oakland.

GENESIS, OAKLAND ($25,000) — Unites and activates a multiracial, income-diverse community to promote effective, equitable solutions to regional problems including transportation, affordable housing and services for those who are disabled.

ASHLAND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ($5,000) — Residents of unincorporated mid-Alameda County are building a network of neighbors to advocate for improvements in their low-income community, including public safety at the Bayfair BART station.

MONUMENT IMPACT, CONCORD ($5,000) — Latino-led organization addressing the institutional barriers to economic advancement for low-income immigrants, refugees and people of color.

MY EDEN VOICE ($5,000) — Grassroots organization of individuals and families in Ashland, Cherryland, Hayward Acres and San Lorenzo working to identify and solve issues including tenant protections, need for parks and open space, and services and leadership training for low-income youth.

YOUTH SPIRIT ARTWORKS, BERKELEY ($5,000) — Interfaith organization working to empower and transform the lives of teens who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Built and runs a 26-unit Tiny House Village for homeless youth.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR KIDS, RICHMOND ($4,000) — Develops programs and leadership training that give African American and Latinx families ways to advocate for quality education for their children and emotional and physical well-being.

EDEN COMMUNITY LAND TRUST ($4,000) — Committed to preserving affordable housing in unincorporated communities of South Alameda County through acquiring properties that protect low-income residents from displacement and provide housing that remains community controlled.

‘BOTTLES FOR BABIES’ HELPS FUND ULTRASOUND MACHINE

The Knights Council #6043 from the Catholic Community of Pleasanton hosted a “Bottles for Babies” fundraiser. A total of $9,325 was raised with the generous support of parishioners. All money went toward the purchase of a new ultrasound machine at RealOptions medical clinic. Special thanks to Grand Knight Michael Schibler and Past Grand Knight Lou Santero, who chaired the event.

CHRISTMAS JOY

News from Dress A Girl Around the World: 2,300 dresses, 100+ Flat Stanley/Stella dolls, 10 pairs of flip-flops and 15 boys’ t-shirts are on their way to the Florida headquarters of Box of Joy to fill their Christmas boxes. UPS picked up the 13 boxes of Christmas joy, which a hardy group of volunteers had expertly packed in about an hour. Dress a Girl Around the World plans to send dresses to Operation Christmas Child; the Livermore-based group reports 800 dresses are already ready to go.

SAVE THE DATE:

The Blessing: Songs of Christmas, presented by the Catholic Community of Pleasanton with a special performance by the Tri-Valley Korean Catholic Church, at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17 at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Drive, Pleasanton.
HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS EVENTS

BISHOP O’DOWD HIGH SCHOOL
9500 Stearns Ave., Oakland, CA
www.bishopodowd.org/admissions
Admissions phone: 510.553.8631
Admissions Director: Kerryn Pincus Gallagher
View and register for admissions events at www.bishopodowd.org/admissions

DE LA SALLE HIGH SCHOOL
1130 Winton Drive
Concord, CA
www.dlshs.org/admissions
925.288.8102
Register for admissions events: www.dlshs.org/admissions

HOLY NAMES HIGH SCHOOL
4660 Harbord Drive, Oakland, CA
www.hnhsoakland.org
Director of Admissions: Petra Rocha,
510.450.1110, ext. 117, procha@hnhsoakland.org
Register for admissions events at hnhsoakland.org under Admissions.

MOREAU CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
27170 Mission Blvd., Hayward, CA
moreaucatholic.org/admissions
admissions@moreaucatholic.org
Director of Admissions: Paulina Maravilla
Register online for admissions events

ST. JOSEPH NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL
1011 Chestnut St., Alameda, CA
www.sjnd.org
Admissions director: Gabi Lippi, admissions@sjnd.org,
510.995.9458
Register online for admissions events

SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL
Peralta Park, 1294 Albina Ave., Berkeley, CA
www.saintmaryschs.org/Director of Admissions: Cherisse Payne
Open House: Dec. 1, 1 p.m.
Reservation required

SALESIAN COLLEGE PREPARATORY
2851 Salesian Ave., Richmond, CA
Admissions Director: Christina Karabinis,
ckarabinis@salesian.com, 510.234.4433, x 1416
Register for admissions events: www.salesian.com/admissions/visit-salesian

BISHOP O’DOWD HIGH SCHOOL
9500 Stearns Ave., Oakland, CA
www.bishopodowd.org/admissions
Admissions phone: 510.553.8631
Admissions Director: Kerryn Pincus Gallagher
View and register for admissions events at www.bishopodowd.org/admissions

CARONDELET HIGH SCHOOL
1133 Winton Drive, Concord, CA
Admissions Director: Jessica Mix ‘99, jmix@carondeleths.org,
925.686.5353, ext. 367
Register to attend an admissions event: CarondeletHS.org/Apply

CRISTO REY DE LA SALLE HIGH SCHOOL
1530 34th Ave., Oakland, CA
Admissions Director: Annie Nguyen,
anuuyen@cristoreydelasalle.org,
Call or text: 510.513.7313

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ckarabinis@salesian.com, 510.234.4433, x 1416
Register for admissions events: www.salesian.com/admissions/visit-salesian

Open House: November 7
Virtual Tours | Campus Visits | Applications
hnhsoakland.org
Dear Father Joe:

IS THE MASS IRREVERENT?

I have a friend who has listened to some podcasts and read some websites that are quite angry about how the Church has changed in the past few decades. She says everything was much more reverent before the 1960s and that we should go back to the way things used to be. This is making me question what happens at Mass on Sunday.

OK — you’ve hit the spot a lot of people do. As we explore our faith and try to grow into it, we will find passionate, articulate people who try to bring us to agreement with their viewpoint. Sometimes, it can be elevating and helpful, but other times, it can pull us into a spiritual black hole where we end up drawn into their passion instead of into the love of Christ.

Let’s walk through this a bit.

The first thing I urge you to do is consider the source. If a person’s primary source of income seems to be telling everyone what the Church is doing wrong, then you should ignore them. They have a vested interest in stirring up trouble.

If every time you read a website’s content, you get angry/indignant or scared, then you should ignore them. True faith leads to joy, not anger and fear.

If someone’s ministry/website rarely talks about Jesus, never seems to be joyful and/or spends an inordinate amount of time advocating for a political party, you should ignore them. We are called to follow Christ, not a political party.

One force at work right now in Catholicism urges us to reject the changes to the liturgy that began before the Second Vatican Council and continued after the Council. Many of these folks are sincere in their belief that the liturgy today lacks the solemnity and mystery they believe was more visible in the past. Other people have simply hijacked this discussion as a pretext to criticize the Church and accuse it of doing everything wrong.

Some people point to plummeting Mass attendance in the U.S., as well as to lack of reverence and Catholic practice. They believe this has all occurred due to liturgical changes they associate with Vatican II, but they are seeing correlation as causation.

This simplistic approach ignores the issues Jesus focused on, and quite literally embraces the answers Jesus condemned. Allow me to explain.

Jesus condemned religiosity that defined “righteousness” as something humans can pull off by “doing it right.” He explicitly challenged people like the Pharisees who seemed to revel in condemning those who didn’t follow the details of religious practice the same way they did. This is not arguable — read the Gospels.

It’s simply too easy to pretend that the waning practice of Catholicism in the West is about how we pray Mass, because we can change that without any kind of interior conversion. It’s harder to face the truth: We modern Christians have moved God to the back burner. We are focused on what’s good for us more than what’s good for our whole community — and so we want things done our own way or we walk away.

Beyond all this, it is simply easier to pretend a Church we never saw was perfect. The reality we live in is always messier than the one we never experienced. Our bias will always be toward what we think might have been or what we believe could be. I can share multiple stories of elderly people who describe liturgies that felt rushed, mumbled and disconnected from the lay people in the pews.
I would suggest that holiness lies in living in the present. Here’s the key, folks: Trying to control what we cannot or should not has made some of us unhappy, bitter, perpetually indignant or angry. In talking to innumerable people considering conversion to Catholicism, often it’s not the doctrines or dogmas that give most serious seekers pause, it’s the marketed rage of “Catholic” media and their faithful acolytes who can’t seem to find happiness.

I beg of you to avoid that black hole. It lures you in with easy answers and then, before you know it, you can’t even enjoy praying Mass without being enraged that others aren’t doing it right. You won’t find “meek and humble of heart,” which is the Jesus standard; instead, you may find folks who complain about the liturgy or their pastor or the “new” translation of the Mass. The Joy of the Gospel, the Eucharist and the Sacred Tradition of the Church are the hallmarks of our Catholic faith. Recall Romans 15:13: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Salvation is a messy business because we are messy people. The incarnation of God in the person of Jesus was anything but neat and orderly. As God’s Church on earth, and as disciples of Jesus Christ, we can work together in our parishes and dioceses to help our Church be more reverent. In an upcoming column, I will try to offer some ways that we can, in fact, help our Church to be more holy, reverent, joyful and dignified in our sacred worship.†

St. Cecilia has inspired Christians and artists for centuries. Believed to have been martyred around 230, this patroness of music and musicians continues to be honored for her unfailing devotion to God and for her courage and generosity.

According to stories from the fifth century, Cecilia was a Roman citizen from a wealthy family who secretly consecrated herself to God as a child. When her father insisted she marry a pagan, she fasted and prayed to preserve her virginity. During the wedding, Cecilia sang a prayer in her heart asking God for his intervention. That night, she told her husband that an angel had been sent to protect her from consummating the marriage. When he asked to see the angel, Cecilia sent him to be baptized by Pope Urban, and he was converted. Returning to his new bride, he found an angel with Cecilia who crowned the two of them with roses and lilies.

Tradition says that after her husband was martyred for refusing to sacrifice to pagan Gods, Cecilia donated her material goods to the poor and converted more than 400 people with her preaching before she was sentenced to death. Before her death, she donated her home to Pope Urban, asking that it be converted into a church. The church, Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, was erected on this site in the third century. In 1599, when the church was renovated, Cecilia’s remains were examined and found to be incorrupt. Her body was reburied under the altar.

Due to her prayerful song during her wedding, Cecilia is honored as the patroness of church musicians and is usually depicted with musical instruments. Her story has inspired works by artists through the years, including painters and composers, and Geoffrey Chaucer retells her story in “The Second Nun’s Tale” in The Canterbury Tales.†
Prominent politicians lost no time in reacting hyperbolically to the Supreme Court’s decision refusing to enjoin Texas’s new law banning abortions after the detection of a fetal heartbeat.

President Biden announced a “whole-of-government effort” to find ways to overcome the Texas measure. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) denounced the Supreme Court’s refusal as a “cowardly, dark-of-night decision to uphold a flagrantly unconstitutional assault on women’s rights and health,” and promised new legal action: “This ban necessitates codifying Roe v. Wade” in federal law.

As a faith leader in the Catholic community, I find it especially disturbing that so many of the politicians on the wrong side of the preeminent human rights issue of our time are self-professed Catholics. This is a perennial challenge for bishops in the United States: This summer, we provoked an uproar by discussing whether public officials who support abortion should receive the sacrament of the Eucharist. We were accused of inappropriately injecting religion into politics, of butting in where we didn’t belong.

I see matters differently. When considering what duties Catholic bishops have with respect to prominent laymen in public life who openly oppose church teachings on abortion, I look to this country’s last great human rights movement — still within my living memory — for inspiration on how we should respond.

The example of New Orleans Archbishop Joseph Rummel, who courageously confronted the evils of racism, is one that I especially admire. Rummel did not “stay in his lane.” Unlike several other bishops throughout this country’s history, he did not prioritize keeping parishioners and the public happy above advancing racial justice. Instead, he began a long, patient campaign of moral suasion to change the opinions of pro-segregation White Catholics.

In 1948, he admitted two Black students to New Orleans’s Notre Dame Seminary. In 1951, he ordered the removal of “white” and “colored” signs from Catholic churches in the archdiocese. In a 1953 pastoral letter, he ordered an end to segregation throughout the archdiocese of New Orleans, telling White Catholics that, because their “Colored Catholic brethren share … the same spiritual life and destiny,” there could be “no further discrimination or segregation in the pews, at the Communion rail, at the confessional and in parish meetings.”

In 1955, Rummel closed a church for refusing to accept a Black priest. In a 1956 pastoral letter, he declared: “Racial segregation as such is morally wrong and sinful because it is a denial of the unity and solidarity of the human race as conceived by God in the creation of Adam and Eve.” On March 27, 1962, Rummel formally announced the end of segregation in the New Orleans Catholic schools.

Many White Catholics were furious at this disruption of the long-entrenched segregationist status quo. They staged protests and boycotts. Rummel patiently sent letters urging a conversion of heart, but he was also willing to threaten opponents of desegregation with excommunication.

On April 16, 1962, he followed through, excommunicating a former judge, a well-known writer and a segregationist community organizer. Two of the three later repented and died Catholics in good standing.

Was that wrong? Was that weaponizing the Eucharist? No. Rummel recognized that prominent, high-profile public advocacy for racism was scandalous: It violated core Catholic teachings and basic principles of justice, and also led others to sin.

In our own time, what could be a more egregious “denial of the unity and solidarity of the human race” than abortion? Abortion kills a unique, irreplaceable human being growing in his or her mother’s womb. Everyone who advocates for abortion, in public or private life, who funds it or who presents it as a legitimate choice participates in a great moral evil.

Since the Roe decision, more than 60 million lives have been lost to abortion. Many millions more have been scarred by this experience, wounded victims whom society ignores.

Abortion is therefore the most pressing human rights challenge of our time. Can we pastors speak softly when the blood of 60 million innocent American children cries out for justice? When their mothers are condemned to silence, secretly suffering the injuries of the culture of “choice”?

Yes, we need to speak just as strongly
California lawmakers have passed legislation to replace a statue of St. Junípero Serra at the Capitol in Sacramento with a new monument honoring the state’s native peoples. The Serra statue has been in storage since it was torn down by protesters in July 2020.

A humble 18th-century Franciscan priest, Serra would surely approve of a new monument honoring the indigenous Californians he spent his life serving. Unfortunately, the legislature has gone further, slandering his name and pushing a false narrative about the mission period in California.

“Enslavement of both adults and children, mutilation, genocide, and assault on women were all part of the mission period initiated and overseen by Father Serra,” declares Assembly Bill 338, which passed both chambers by wide margins and now awaits Gov. Gavin Newsom’s signature. None of that is true. While there is much to criticize from this period, no serious historian has ever made such outrageous claims about Serra or the mission system, the network of 21 communities that Franciscans established along the California coast to evangelize native people. The lawmakers behind the bill drew their ideas from a single tendentious book written by journalist Elias Castillo.

As leaders of the state’s two largest Catholic communities, we serve thousands of native Californians who trace their faith to ancestors who helped build the missions. The legislature claims that native Californians who trace their faith to ancestors who helped build the missions. The legislature claims that native

Serra was a complex character, but he defended indigenous people's humanity, decried the abuse of indigenous women and argued against imposing the death penalty on natives who had burned down a mission and murdered one of his friends. At age 60, ill and with a chronically sore leg, Serra traveled 2,000 miles to Mexico City to demand that authorities adopt a native bill of rights he had written. As Pope Francis said when he canonized him in 2015, Serra is not only the country's first Hispanic saint, but should be considered “one of the founding fathers of the United States.”

Mr. Newsom knows California history well enough to see that the claims against Serra aren’t true. In 2019 he apologized for the state's history of injustice against native people, acknowledging that it was California’s first governor, Peter Burnett, who launched what Burnett called “a war of extermination.” That was in 1851. Serra died in 1784. The destruction of the state’s native people happened long after he was gone and many of the missions had been taken over by the government.

We can think of no better symbol for this multiethnic state committed to human dignity and equality than to place two statues at the California Capitol — one celebrating the living heritage of California’s indigenous peoples, another reflecting the faith and leadership of their defender St. Junípero Serra.

BY SALVATORE J. CORDILEONE AND JOSÉ GOMEZ
Archbishop Cordileone leads the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco. Archbishop Gomez leads the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. This article appeared in the Sept. 12 issue of The Wall Street Journal and is available at www.sfarchdiocese.org.
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

THE MOST REV. MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ, BISHOP OF OAKLAND HAS MADE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:

PASTORS AND PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATORS
Effective Nov. 1, 2021
• Father Tom Khue as parochial administrator, Our Lady Queen World Parish, Bay Point
• Father Peter Ngo as pastor, St. Felicitas Parish, San Leandro

PAROCHIAL VICARS
Effective Oct. 1, 2021
• Father Arturo Bazan to St. Bede Parish, Hayward
• Father Christopher Berbena to St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Livermore
• Father Javier Ramirez to St. Cornelius Parish, Richmond
• Father Mark Ruiz to Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Brentwood

Effective November 1, 2021
• Father Eddie Castanas to Holy Spirit Parish, Fremont
• Father Rafal Duda to St. Felicitas Parish, San Leandro
• Father Joseph Le to St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Concord

RETIREMENT
• Father Francisco Figueroa-Esquer has been granted permission to retire and will be living in residence at St. Joseph Parish, Pinole.

OFFICIAL SCHEDULE

NOV. 1
9:45 a.m. All Saints’ Day Mass, Bishop O’Dowd High School, Oakland
12:10 p.m. All Saints’ Day Mass, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

NOV. 2
7 p.m. All Souls’ Requiem Mass with Cathedral Schola Lumen Gentium, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

NOV. 3
Catholic Telemedia Network Board Meeting, St. Patrick’s Seminary and University, Menlo Park

NOV. 13-18
USCCB Meetings in Baltimore Maryland, including:
• Doctrine Committee
• Administrative Committee
• Committee on Catholic Education
• General Assembly

NOV. 20
12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Jarlah Parish, Oakland
5 p.m. Mass for Vocations, St. Michael Parish, Livermore

For Bishop Barber’s complete and updated schedule, visit oakdiocese.org/bishop.
Remembering those who we have laid to rest in our Catholic Cemeteries during the month of August.

† HOLY SEPULCHRE
John Bailey
Philip Ballard
Robert Batacan
Norberto Bolarinho
Steven Brancato
Odessa Broussard
Catherine Brown
Julia Bustamante
Albano Cardoso
Corrine Carrol
Earl Cava
Vito Ciampaglio
Ernest Comelo
Catherine Contreras Hernandez
Teresa Da Costa
Maria Da Ponte
Maria Da Rosa
Marco Del Cio
John Delucchi
Jason Denoncourt
Harh Dinh
James Duarte
Dina Fisher
Dianne Fisi
Regina Franklin
Gilma Geronimo
Jessica Gomez
Thelma Gonsalves
Colleen Goode
Patricia Govin
Nicanor Granados
Lilia Gueniba
Carl Halper
Shirley Heal
Patrick Herb
Maria Hernandez
Juana Hernandez
Michel Lancer
Viola Koonze
Marion Kremer
Veronica Lamb
Edward Lee
Dena Martin
Antonio Martinez
Lucille Martinez
John Melendez
John Melendez
Maria Mendoza
Elizabeth Milam
Felix Morales
Patricia Nava
Sally Ortiz
Paulette Parker
Kathy Perez
Ernest Perez
Vicente Pestano
Walter Pierson
Bertha Pine
Renato Pinheiro
Ludevina Pocasangre
John Potis
Encaracion Ramirez
Ralph Robinson
Alice Rodrigues
Jos Rodrigues
Ann Rodriguez
Ray Rojo
Albert Salas
Eloise Sanchez
Joao Sarmico
Albert Scheweika
Anne Smith
Myron Standish
Ashley Torres
Natalie Torres
Robert Vanston
Ruby Vanston
Albert Vinella
Venus White
Consuelo Yanez
Rebecca Young
Thomas Young

† QUEEN OF HEAVEN
Lou Adams
June Alameida
Lebica Alvarez
Calvin Bendixsen
Gary Blanco, Sr.
William Braga
Rae Ellen Conneally
Rebe Conroy
Ryan Dair
Theresa Demers
Francisco Espinoza
Deacon Alfred Fleischer
Mary Giocho
Elifce Goncalves
Diane Hewson
Armond Clay Jordan
Jennifer Kosta
Ronald Lau
James Livingstone
Dana Melnicheck
Nathan Pettit
Helen Politakes
Juan Ramirez
Ritz Ramirez
Cirilo Roman
Rebecca Roy
Donald Roy
Paul Shea
Michelle Sylvester
Robert Henry Wright

† ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY
Maria E. Alancon Garcia
Peter T. Borja
Celina Cardoso
Edward J. Chavez
William Curial
Carlos Fonseca
Veronica M. Garcia
Walter J. Garcia
Ernesto Garlit
Ray Gionchio
Michael A. Giovanni
James Lee Larson
Joyce M. Lavin
Lawrence E. Mannion
Mary Ann M. Mcmahon
Jason Melgoza
Mauro E. Ortiz-Vergara
Robert Paiffota
Rodney Rogello
Victoria Romulada
Maria Del Carmen
Rueda De Pat
Edwin A. Santos
Sri Koo Sivanthong
Olive Traverso
Lorena Velez
Paul D. Veridiano
Dalai Vegas
Dorothy Wakefield

† HOLY CROSS
Bessie Andres
John Anthony Buffo
Emma Rey Diaz
Hoa Thi Doan
Clenton Easter
Rachel Ford
Rosewell Ford
Kelly Garduno McDougall
Salvador Guerra Martinez
Rosalia Guerrero
Rose Faith Lopez
Miguel Juan Martinez Lugo
Richard Wayne Maestretti
Trinidad Rodriguez Mahl
Gloria Pacheco
Hortencia Medina
Gloria Pacheco
Mary Michaela Henriques
Francesca Consuelo Harris
Mary Michaela Henriques
Ralph Martinez
Evangelina Ordaz-Cruz
Antonio Munoz Rodriguez
Fernando Soza Romero

† ST. AUGUSTINE
Michelle Montoya Crane
David Horner Hughes
Maxine Regalia
Bill Selway
Richard Lee Sharp

† ST. MARY’S
Christine Callaway
Edward Delaney
Armando Gutierrez
Mary Hildebrand
Ferdinand Martinez
Helen Martinez
Elizabeth Pao
Ruth Ann Pruss
Grace Marie Rigor
Freddy Ritter
Frances Tanner
Fredy Utleras
Mary Wohlers

† CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT
Bernard Fichterkent
Jean Kelly Sprees
Sharon Marjorie Sutton
Irene Valencia
Nestor Valenzuela
Armando Velayo
Jose Zeyala

Two new priests for Diocese – p. 3

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VOL. 59, NO. 6

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