A nun’s story: ‘I felt a call and I couldn’t give it up.’

By Michele Jurich  
Staff writer

For Sister Teresita of the Infant Jesus, who made her solemn profession at the Carmel of Jesus, Mary and Joseph on Sept. 8, the call to the contemplative life was interior. “It was always on mind,” she said, behind the grille of the speak room of the Kensington car-

mell where she has vowed to live her days in prayer and, mostly, silence. “I just kept thinking about it, it was the same, even after I left; I kept thinking about it and longing for it. I even told my mom I could have a religious,” she said. “My mom was looking into religion.”  

Sister Teresita was interested in it. She started RCIA when she was 18. It didn’t seem very pressing at that time. After her high school graduation, “I went to Hollywood,” she said. “I thought I might want to be in the movies. I’m shy. That didn’t quite work out.”  

She began her studies at community col-

lege, and transferred to UC-Santa Barbara, where she studied literature. As part of an art class, she journeyed to Paris. “My neighbor — she’s my godmother now. Patricia Henri — gave me a copy of The Story of a Soul by the Little Flower to read on the plane.”  

When she was there, she suddenly realized how important the faith was. “It was a grace. I think that’s when I received the gift of faith. I decided on that trip, when I came home, I would come into the Church. I felt my first call to the religious life.”  

(Continued on Page 12.)
Fathers, not Pharisees

The Catholic Church must be a place of justice and mercy, and its members must be catalysts for change, some young priests said at the beginning of the 25th-annual Synod of Bishops Oct. 11. “In order to teach justice and mercy to our young people, the church must first be a place of justice and mercy for our young people,” said Joseph Moene-Koloi from Samoa, who was representing the Catholic International Youth Forum and young people from the Pacific Islands.

Bishops expelled

In an unprecedented move, Pope Francis removed from the priesthood two Chilean bishops accused of sexual abuse. In a statement released Oct. 12, the Vatican said 84-year-old Francisco Jose Cox, the former Archbishop of Iquique, 73-year-old Marco Antonio Jose Cox, the former Archbishop of La Serena, and 53-year-old Juan Bardina, the former bishop of Valparaíso, were dismissed from the clerical state by the pope and there would be no appeal.

Source of all evil

Procurating an abortion is wrong, inhumane and like hiring a hit man “to fix a problem,” Pope Francis said. It is a contradiction to allow for killing a human life in a mother’s womb “in the name of protecting other rights,” he said during his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square Oct. 10. “How can an act that suppresses the innocent and defenseless budding life be therapeutic, curative or simply human?” he asked the more than 26,000 people present. “Is it right to snuff out a human life to solve a problem?” he asked, until the crowd shouted loudly. “No. Is it right to hire a hit man to solve a problem? No, it can’t. It’s not right to take out a human being, a small one, too, in order to fix a problem. It is like hiring a professional killer,” he said. — Catholic News Service

THE VATICAN

THE DIOCESE

Malta Clinic celebrates 10 years

Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit, left, Order of Malta Clinic of Northern California President John Christian and Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, of Oakland were among those celebrating the 10th anniversary of the medical clinic at the Oct. 2 Silver Chalice Awards at the St. Francis Yacht Club in San Francisco. When Archbishop Vigneron was serving as bishop of Oakland, he visited Lourdes, France, with a local group of Knights and Dames of Malta in 2005. He was inspired to open a medical clinic on the grounds of the Cathedral of Christ the Light. The clinic opened its doors Oct. 13, 2009. Since then, the clinic has logged 30,000 visits by uninsured patients and launched a mobile clinic to serve patients who are unable to come to Oakland.

“Let the Catholic voice... be spread in every diocese, in every parish, in every association, in every family.” — Pope Paul VI

Published by: Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ

THE CATHEDRAL

All Saints, All Souls

In honor of the solemnity of All Saints, Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, will celebrate Mass at 12:10 p.m. Nov. 1 at the Cathedral of Christ the Light, 2121 Harrison St., Oakland. All Saints Day is a holy day of obligation to remember all those who have lived lives of heroic holiness.

In remembrance of the faithful departed, Bishop Barber will celebrate Mass at 7 p.m. Nov. 2 at the Cathedral of Christ the Light, a day to remember all those who have died.

All those who have lost a family member or friend during the past year are especially invited to attend this Commemoration Mass.

Bishop Barber will celebrate the Novus Ordo in Latin. A worship aid will be available, in English and Latin. The readings will be in English.

For the first time, the Cathedral Choir of Men & Boys will present Gabriel Fauré’s “Requiem,” accompanied by the Cathedral String Ensemble.

Malta Clinic celebrates 10 years

Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit, left, Order of Malta Clinic of Northern California President John Christian and Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, of Oakland were among those celebrating the 10th anniversary of the medical clinic at the Oct. 2 Silver Chalice Awards at the St. Francis Yacht Club in San Francisco. When Archbishop Vigneron was serving as bishop of Oakland, he visited Lourdes, France, with a local group of Knights and Dames of Malta in 2005. He was inspired to open a medical clinic on the grounds of the Cathedral of Christ the Light. The clinic opened its doors Oct. 13, 2009. Since then, the clinic has logged 30,000 visits by uninsured patients and launched a mobile clinic to serve patients who are unable to come to Oakland.

“Let the Catholic voice... be spread in every diocese, in every parish, in every association, in every family.” — Pope Paul VI

Published by: Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ
Police and firefighters are our angels, Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, noted at the beginning of a Thanksgiving Mass for first responders on Oct. 7 at the Cathedral of Christ the Light.

If your house is on fire, they will come night or day, 365 days of the year, the bishop said. “God wants us to be protected.”

The fifth annual Blue Mass moved to a Sunday this year, drawing a larger crowd as more families and friends could attend.

The bishop welcomed the first responders, police, fire and others, and Navy personnel who were in the Bay Area for Fleet Week.

The day’s Scripture readings, the bishop said, included many references to angels.

Pray for the police and firefighters, he said, they are servants of God’s people.

“There is a power to prayer,” he said in his homily. “We’re mortal and spiritual.”

“What good do prayers do?” he asked. “Prayer makes a difference.”

In the Navy, Bishop Barber said, no one ever refused when he asked if he could pray for them. Bishop Barber served more than two decades as a chaplain in the Naval Reserve.

The bishop referred to an article in the New England Journal of Medicine, which recounted an experiment in which after six weeks, patients who were prayed for healed at a faster rate than a control group who didn’t receive prayers.

“Pay attention to the spiritual side,” the bishop advised. “We’re not going to be on earth forever.”
Relics a reminder saints were real people

Catholic News Service

Pope Francis and many people attending the canonization Mass at St. Peter’s Square on Oct. 14 held relics of seven new saints in their hands on calendar day.

Saints were flesh-and-blood people who lived holy lives. They faced the same challenges and temptations that ordinary people do. Their holiness is not something that can only be achieved in the future, but something that is already present in the present.

St. Oscar Romero was alive when St. Paul VI was alive, but the new saints relics of those five other people were alive when St. Oscar Romero was alive, but the new saints relics of those five other people were alive when St. Oscar Romero was alive.

The very formal relics present in reliquaries with a red-wax seal were set at the feet of a statue of Mary during the canonization ceremony.

Each of the new saints lived lives marked by prayer and sacrifice — including from within the church — and all of them dedicated themselves with passionate love to following Jesus and caring for the poor, called for justice and was assassinated.

The new saints are: Pope Francis, who led the last sessions of the Second Vatican Council and its initial implementation; Romero, who defended the poor, called for justice and was assassinated; Nazaria Ignacia March Mesa, a Spanish nun who ministered in Mexico and Bolivia and died in 1943; Catherine Kasper, the 19th-century German founder of a religious order; Francesco Spinelli, a 19th-century priest and founder of a religious order; and Nunsun Suprizio, a layman died in Naples in 1836 at the age of 19.

Cardinal Wuerl resigns

Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl as archbishop of Washington but did not name a successor. When the pope’s decision was announced Oct. 12, the Archdiocese of Washington released a letter from Pope Francis to the cardinal, making clear his support for Cardinal Wuerl’s ministry and leadership, but also prasing the cardinal for putting the good of the church first.

The archdiocese also announced the pope has named Cardinal Wuerl as apostolic administrator to oversee the archdiocese until a successor is named. Cardinal Wuerl had been facing pressure to resign after an Aug. 14 grand jury report detailing sexual abuse claims in six Pennsylvania dioceses painted a mixed picture of how he handled some of the cases when he was bishop in Pittsburgh from 1988 until 2006.

Death penalty penalized

SEATTLE — The Catholic bishops of Washington state Oct. 11 applauded the unanimous decision of the state Supreme Court striking down the death penalty as unconstitutional. The court ruled its use is arbitrary and random and condemned and converted the sentences for the state’s eight death-row inmates to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Executions have been rare in Washington. Five prisoners have been put to death in recent decades.

DC publishes names

WASHINGTON — The Archdiocese of Washington has voluntarily released the names of abusive priests and stated that there have been no credible claims of abuse made against archdiocesan priests in almost 20 years. On Oct. 15, church officials posted on the archdiocesan website, https://bit.ly/2DqWgWP, the names of 28 former clergy of the archdiocese who were credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors from 1948 onward. The list also includes three religious order priests who served in temporary roles in archdiocesan parishes or schools. The list was assembled as part of a comprehensive review of the archdiocese’s archives ordered in 2017 by Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl as Washington’s archbishop.

Pittsburgh consolidates

PITTSBURGH — An interim Mass and confession schedule went into effect Oct. 15 in the Diocese of Pittsburgh as the six-county diocese moves to condense its parishes into groups, with the eventual goal of creating new multi-site parishes. Bishop David Zubik announced in May that the 186 parishes of the Pittsburgh diocese would be combined into 57 multi-parish groups. After parishioners from each former parish build relationships with each other, each group will become a new parish between 2020 and 2023. The Pittsburgh diocese last went through a major restructuring during 1992-94, when the diocese shrunk from 333 parishes to 218. The current consolidation plan is a response to declining Mass attendance overall and the financial struggles of some parishes. Materials provided by the diocese show Mass attendance down nearly 40 percent across the board since 2000.

The Diocese of Oakland offers support to persons with same-sex attraction and looking for answers within the Catholic Church!

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The Diocese of Oakland offers support to persons with same-sex attraction through the ministry of Courage, an apostolate of the Roman Catholic Church. For more information please contact us at CRC@Oakdiocese.org or call 650-450-2286 for information about Courage chapters throughout the Bay Area, and Encourage, which ministers to relatives and friends of persons with same-sex attractions.

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Information about administrative offices, schools, service organizations and religious orders of men and women in the diocese, plus an alphabetical telephone directory.
Women’s retreat celebrates its silver anniversary

By Michele Jurich

The women’s retreat at St. Bonaventure Parish in Concord is celebrating its silver anniversary with a much-anticipated retreat in the Santa Cruz Mountains in February.

The retreat has its roots in prayer; specifically, in mothers praying together. “We were part of a prayer group for Moms in Touch International,” said Patti Collyer, one of the founders of St. Bonaventure Women’s Christian Fellowship which hosts the retreat. (Moms in Touch International has become Moms in Prayer International.)

The St. Bonaventure mothers draw the attention of nearby Calvary Temple Church, which invited the women to speak to its young mothers.

Martha Sartelich, Kathy Geyerman and Collyer accepted the invitation. “We spoke about the power of praying together and the impact it has on us as moms,” Collyer said. “The talk drew about 60 to 70 women. Collyer said: “At the time, we had a parish of 2,500 families; she said. Her small prayer group started to think bigger. They started the Women’s Christian Fellowship.

“We all believe in Jesus Christ,” she said. “We had four events a year, including speakers, and a special dinner event in May honoring the Blessed Mother. Some women in the parish would go to a retreat at San Damiano. They suggested the Women’s Christian Fellowship start its own retreat.

In 1994, they went to the Salvation Army camp near Mount Hermon in the Santa Cruz Mountains. “Seventy women came, and they loved it,” Collyer said. “It was very spiritual, very Catholic, very prayerful and very rustic; she said, so rustic that there were bunk beds. The younger women reserved the lower bunks for their elders.

Fast-forward 25 years, and the retreat is taking reservations for the anniversary retreat, which has the theme, “Mercy Falls Like Gentle Rain.” Rev. Richard McAlear, OMI, will be the retreat master. This will be his fourth retreat with the group.

“It is a biggie,” said Joy Keen, who speaks for the fellowship’s core group, which has doubled from seven in the beginning. Keen went on her first St. Bonaventure Women’s Christian Fellowship retreat in 2000.

This year, the women will return to St. Clare’s Retreat House Center in Soquel for the three-day, two-night retreat. The timing should get them home before kickoff of the Super Bowl — but well after the prep work is done for Super Bowl parties. The retreat is just one element of the Women Christian Fellowship’s mission. “There’s a whole year of activities, on a quarterly basis, to continue the relationships with women and faith sharing,” Keen said. (Continued on Page 6.)
A core team plans the retreat each year, as well as other events during the year, including a May celebration in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

A Spirituality of Heart with David Richo, 11/3
Radical Hope in the Cosmic Womb of Mercy with Sr. Mickey McGrath, 11/9 - 11/11
Remember, This Pain Will Not Last Forever (Grief Retreat) with Fr. Padraig Greene, 11/16 - 11/18
Attitude of Gratitude as Thanksgiving (Healing & Wholeness Retreat) with Tom Gorham and Staff from Options Recovery
Christian Meditation: Silence & God’s Unconditional Love is Available for Each of Us with Donna Lock, Claire La Scola, and June Pangelinan, 11/24
Women in the Ancestry of Jesus with Jan Stegner, 11/27 - 12/18 (Tuesdays)

To register, call 650.329.8518 or email daughtersofcarmel@gmail.com
Daughters of Carmel Nuns (DOC)
Dec. 14-16 Men’s & Women’s Non-Silent Retreat
Advent Through the Eyes of St. Joseph
Fr. Paul McDonnell, OSJ
Nov. 30 - Dec. 2 Men’s & Women’s Silent Retreat
Fr. Roberto Vera
Nov. 9 - 11 Retiro en Español 1 (Señor y Señora)
JESÚS Una Biografía y Quién Fue Realmente Jesús de Nazaret
Fr. Eugenio Aramburo
Nov. 2 - 4 Retiro en Español 1 (Señora)
November – December 2018
Auxiliary Bishop Robert Christian
July 26-31: Annual 6 Day Retreat with Mary Abinante & Rita O’Malley
May 12: Mary Abinante Day Retreat for Mother’s with Mary Abinante & Rita O’Malley
April 28: Spiritual Spring with Mary Abinante & Rita O’Malley
February 23: Ignatian Spirituality for Women
November 17: Ignatian Spirituality for Men

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PHOTOS COURTESY TINA ZINGMARK
CCHD aids 12 groups with $240,000

By Carrie McClish  
Staff writer

A dozen East Bay organizations that help empower residents in low-income communities received a total of $240,000 in grants from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. The grants were announced Oct. 8 during a luncheon hosted at St. Columba Parish Hall in Oakland.

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, who offered a prayer at the start of the luncheon, said the grant recipients “do amazing work to transform people’s lives.” He added that the work of these organizations is especially important at a time when local communities are experiencing “increased homelessness.”

The CCHD was established by the U.S. Catholic Bishops in 1969 to provide funding for groups that work to combat poverty in the U.S. The funds come from the annual CCHD collection that takes place in parishes across the country. Twenty-five percent of the funds collected stay in local dioceses and the remainder is distributed across the country.

A high point of the luncheon came with the presentation of the Community Leadership Award, given by the CCHD local committee, to Emma Paulino, a senior organizer with OCO. Ron Snyder, a former OCO director who presented the award to Paulino described her as a “woman of deep faith” who embodies the CCHD’s dedication to community and service. He said that Paulino helped immigrant families threatened with arrest and deportation and he credited her with helping empower countless young people in the East Bay.

“Emma is one of my favorite people,” Snyder said. “She is one of my heroes.”

Paulino credited Our Lady of Guadalupe with inspiring her work in the community. “My faith is what calls me to do the work that I am doing,” she said.

While grateful for the recognition, Paulino said there is much work that needs to be done to help people in need. She noted, for instance, thousands of people are homeless, are homeless and are without health care.

“You all challenged us to do things better for our children,” she said. “It is not time to sit back but to step out. Let us do this in dignity, with dignity and humanity for our brothers and sisters.”

Four East Bay organizations received a total of $185,000 in national grants. They are:

- Congregations Organizing for Renewal (CORN), $25,000
- Genesis Interfaith Community Organizing Inc., $50,000
- Northern California Land Trust Inc., $75,000
- Oakland Community Organizations (OCO), $35,000
- Eight local grant recipients received a total of $55,000

Representatives of the East Bay Sanctuary Covenant are joined by Marc McKinney, CRE/CCHD coordinator, in back, and Cristina Hernandez, Office for Life and Justice coordinator of the Oakland diocese. The covenant will use its $55,000 grant to support a project aimed at preventing immigrants holding Temporary Protective Status from deportation.

Grants proposals accepted

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is accepting proposals for 2019-20 CCHD National Grants to fund East Bay nonprofit groups engaged in community organizing and/or economic development with low-income residents. Grants from $25,000 to $75,000 will be awarded next summer.

For any organization, which is not a current CCHD National Grant recipient, a pre-application must be submitted. The pre-application deadline is 11:59 p.m., EDT, Nov. 1.

For more information, contact Marc McKinney at 510-768-3176 or mmckimmey@cceb.org.

The annual CCHD collection will be taken up in parishes Nov. 17-18.

Up close and personal with the past

Our Lady of Grace School fifth grade pupils Aiden Lee, Gabriell Tovel, Kiley Nguyen and Rohan Panneer join other classmates using magnifying glasses to examine rich, colorful patterns on a larger tapestry woven by the Yoruba people who live in the Orteshe, Cameroon area. Nancy Villarreal, whose granddaughter, Carly Dilson, is a member of the class, brought the Native American Indian art as part of the class’s recent study of regional tribal groups around North America in Social Studies. The artifacts come from Mrs. Villarreal’s family travels.

The faithful... (Continued from Page 1)

Those responses were collected, and lead into the trust to sharing them with their pastor, Rev. Paulson Mundadi, who is a pastor during the service.

The service was tailored to the needs of the community. A prayer for all faithful priests, crafted by Briggs, was one of the additions to the service.

“We can’t continue to consider ourselves just the laity,” Peters said. The lady needs to discern its leadership role. “We have to become adults in our faith.”

In the parish hall of St. Mary Magdalen Parish in Berkeley, Julie Rubio, professor of social ethics at the Santa Clara University Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, facilitated a Sept. 12 discussion among parishioners who shared their emotional responses, sought additional information and began to share ideas on how to restore their faith in the Church.

In the bulletin of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Livermore, Rev. Mark Weisen analyzed highlighted three issues that had come to the forefront of discussion during a Sept. 19 listening session attended by 70 people.

They included:

• Change in the culture of the Church must begin in the seminary.
• Change in the culture of the Church means lay people need to be more involved in the governance of the Church and have real power.
• Change in the culture of the Church will require transparency.

Denver visit by St. John Paul II still energizes after 25 years

By Al Donner  
Special to The Catholic Voice

Twenty-five years after Pope St. John Paul II energized the Church at World Youth Day in Denver, the Catholic community there continues to be energized by his message: “We gave them spiritual food,” Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila declared recently at a presentation in the Oakland diocese. “At this time in history, it is the liberating message of the Gospel.”

The World Youth Day transformed the Catholic community in Denver. It fostered a wide range of apostles reaching throughout the archdiocese involving young and old. The programs continue to reverberate throughout the archdiocese involving all aspects of life among its people.

“John Paul II witnessed to that abundant life and joy in Denver,” so much that a few months later he said that he had expected the revitalization of faith to come from youth in eastern Europe but, based on his experience in Denver, he concluded that it would grow both from Europe and America.

Aquilia spoke to more than 200 people in a Catholics at Work evening program at St. Raymond’s in Dublin. Oakland Bishop Michael C Barber, SJ, joined his Denver colleague for the program.

The message is one that Catholics in Denver strengthened their faith in a wide range of activities, from youth engagement in good work to family growth in the faith and family efforts. Many of the fruits of WYD continue today in parishes and programs around the archdiocese.

One example of a program that started in Denver shortly after WYD is the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) that builds faith-based communities among students on college campuses. The founder of FOCUS, Curtis Martin, will be the Catholics at Work speaker at 6 p.m. Nov. 13 at St. Joan of Arc in San Ramon.

Today the rapidly growing effort has programs on 141 college campuses. Moreover, nearly 700 FOCUS graduates have followed the call to religious life.

FOCUS seeks to form people with the hearts, minds and habits of joyful, discip- lined followers of Jesus. It encourages them to imitate Jesus and be Spirit-filled evangelists going on to win, build and send others.
National Vocations Awareness Week

By Rev. Wayne Campbell

In this time of so many disclosures of clerical abuse of minors and the consequential coverups, people often ask me if anyone still thinks about becoming a priest. I just recently attended the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors in Phoenix and this was certainly on the mind of everyone who works in the ministry of vocational discernment to the priesthood.

In working with any man who comes to ask about a possible vocation to the priesthood, the first thing you suggest to him is to find out if this is what God really wants. One should not want to be a priest because nothing else is working out or he can’t seem to get his love life in order.

For someone who is truly seeking any vocation in life, it would be necessary to desire to know what God’s will is for him. Discernment is at the core of any true Christian’s life. While not an easy task, it is the heart of what it means to be a happy and peaceful Christian.

I have found, and so have many other vocation directors found, that even today God is calling men into the vocation of priesthood. The call seems separate from the news of abuse and scandals that have permeated so many conversations in the past weeks. Even the heartache and shame of these stories seem not to affect those who are presently in the seminary and those who are thinking about it.

I might also say that people today still fall in love with each other and get married in spite of all of the news of broken vows, promises and divorce. Love wins. God triumphs. Good outweighs the evil.

One of the things I find is essential in discerning the call of God is the idea of attraction and desire. God seduces the heart and we are attracted to life, to beauty, to love and (Continued on Page 10.)
I find great joy in serving the Church as a deacon.

By Rev. Mr. Mark Ruiz

It has been a little over two months since my ordination to the diaconate. The days that followed were grace-filled. Only hours after my ordination, I ministered to the homeless at People’s Park in Berkeley. I blessed another cousin’s home. I preached at Sunday Mass. These events were my inauguration to diaconal ministry. I have since returned to Boston for my final year of seminary formation. In addition to exercising my diaconal ministry here at the seminary, I have been assigned to the Lynnfield Catholic Collaborative in Lynnfield, Massachusetts. It has been a great experience.

Essentially, a collaborative is where one or more parishes share a pastor (in some cases, a parochial vicar). This is becoming more and more the norm in the United States as the number of priests available to serve has decreased. What I have learned in this short time is the importance of securing a strong leadership team. It brings together people, with different gifts and skills, to serve the local Church. What I think is important is not that there are two or three worshipping sites, but that we share a common doctrine and tradition. We participate in the same Eucharist, and we are united in our love for the Lord Jesus.

My ministry in Lynnfield is no different than that of any other parish and certainly says that I am very happy and fulfilled in my vocation.

I really enjoy being able to bless the people of God.

By Rev. Mr. Javier Ramirez

I am Deacon Javier Ramirez and I was assigned to perform my diaconal service at St. Mark Parish in the city of Richmond. A little more than two months after my ordination as a transitional deacon for the Diocese of Oakland, I still find it very strange that people call me deacon because it makes me think they are calling to someone else. Nevertheless, I can certainly say that I am very happy and fulfilled in my vocation.

St. Mark Parish is a mostly Hispanic community that is quite vibrant, active and with very good people who have many desires to worship and serve God. I am sure that the Holy Spirit never makes a mistake and giving me the assignment to this parish as my first job as a deacon has confirmed that. It has really been a blessing in my vocation.

What most attracts me about the diaconate is the call to be configured with Christ the Servant. Here at St. Mark, I have had the opportunity to serve in every corner of the parish. Every day of the week there are multiple parish activities and a large number of liturgical and sacramental celebrations during the weekend.

Thankfully, from my first days as a deacon, Father Ruben Morales, the parochial administrator of St. Mark, has given me the opportunity to fully exercise my diaconal service. A funny yet embarrassing moment was that during my first Mass serving as a deacon at this parish, I could not even pronounce well the only three sentences (Continued on Page 10.)
The joyous privilege of accompanying the People of God

By Rev. Mr. Peter Lawongkerd

Discernment...

The truth is that I really enjoy being able to bless the people of God. It is a great declaration to have the privilege to give God's blessing and to grant it over people. Due to the great amount of activities that occur in this parish and that we are only the priest and me, it has been necessary to divide the parish work. This situation has given me the opportunity to be able to help the priest in the Liturgy of the Word, preaching three days a week. Also, during the week I have been celebrating my first baptisms, some quinceañera celebrations, and organizing the Liturgy. It feels very good to be working hard here.

I can say that my parish life as a deacon at St. Mark has been fabulous. I have learned and enjoyed it a lot, and it is something I enjoy a little bit with Christ the Servant. At the same time, this assignment gives me a small glimpse of what the next stage of my vocation as a priest will be like.

I find great joy... (Continued from Page 9)

I found great joy in serving the Church as a deacon. I love all of the things that small Catholic community in Thailand and have always wanted to be a priest since I was a young boy. I entered a high school seminary and after I graduated I went to work and experienced life outside seminary boundary. I worked in a restaurant as a waiter, and at a coffee shop as a barista. Before coming to the United States, I worked at St. Louis Hospital located in downtown Bangkok. I have never suffered from any cardiovascular disease or from my time in the hospital. After working at the hospital for a year, the desire for the life of a priest was still in my heart. I came to the United States in December 1999 and applied to the Oakland diocese. My bishop sent me to Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon to study philosophy and literature. I studied there for four years. Then, I was sent to St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park to do my theological studies. I was ordained as a transitional deacon by Bishop Michael Barber, SJ, on Aug. 4, I am now finishing my final year of study at St. Patrick Seminary and am ready to be ordained as a deacon at St. John the Baptist Church in San Lorenzo.

It is quite challenging, being a full-time student on weekends and serving at the parish on the weekend. My experiences as a deacon at St. John the Baptist have been very educational and informative. Priests and parishioners alike have been very supportive. After being in the classroom for almost eight years learning the theory of philosophy and theology, I am really excited and enjoying being among the people and getting to know them.

I really enjoy... (Continued from Page 5)

I found great joy in serving the Church as a deacon. I wholeheartedly appreciate the faculty and staff of St. John XXIII Seminary for the solid formation that has prepared me for ministry. I owe a word of gratitude to Father Stephan Kappler for his supervision. In the past two summers, I have challenged me to go beyond my comfort zone, yet he was compassionate and understanding. For me, my life as a deacon is a foretaste of the priesthood. I look forward to many years of priestly ministry, I'm grateful to God for calling me to this life of service.

On Oct. 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Deacon John Pietruszka blesses animals at St. Edward Parish in Newark.

I had to say at Mass. In addition, I was stumbling over my stile throughout the celebration, not to mention the number of several mistakes while serving at the altar. But the reality is that the most important thing was that when the priest asked me to give my first blessing to the people at the end of the Mass, I forgot how to do it. Father Ruben literally had to dictate the words of blessing in my ear. After Mass, if I have memorized these words since I began my priestly formation in Mexico.

These last two months in my assignment at St. Edward Parish in Newark, I have baptized several children and done several car and house blessings. Yes, I have realized that what matters is not so much what I have done, but in whose name I have done it. In fall 2015, when I first inquired about applying to the Diocese of Oakland, I remember saying to Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, that I felt drawn not only to priestly service, but especially to service as a missionary of sorts working with the Hispanic population.

The last two months of diocesan ministry have affirmed that call. Scripture tells us that if we give up houses, family or lands for Jesus, we will be rewarded (cf. Matthew 19:29). As followers of Christ, we are called to place our gifts and talents at the service of the community.

While at my assignment at St. Edward I serve the entire community, because I am the only member of the priestly presiding community. I have the opportunity of accompanying the People of God in their extra special moments in their lives. They share with new parents, baptize their babies and walk with them as they grow up; preside at weddings, give them counsel when they struggle in life and visit them when they are sick, and bless them on their journey to their eternal home. Yes, I feel joy and hope in the midst of the pain-filled times. This is something for which I am deeply grateful.

I look forward to many years of priestly life of service.

By Rev. Mr. John Pietruszka

What matters is not so much what I have done, but in whose name I have done it

The Book of Hebrews says, “No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God” (Heb 5:4). This perspective vice appears to me, as my feeling and experiences in the last two months since my ordination as a deacon.

I must admit that in the first few days after the diaconal ordination on Aug. 4, I was in awe and in disbelief at the blessings that God had chosen to bestow upon me. Yet, these blessings are not for my own glorification, but for benefit and service of the people of God. Time and time again in the last two months, I have been touched by the realization of how he uses his ministers as an instrument to assist the faithful.

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I look forward to many years of priestly life of service.
On a pilgrimage, we are just like St. Ignatius, finding our new path

By Rev. Richard A. Mangini
Special to The Catholic Voice

Growing up Catholic in the generations of the '40s, '50s and early '60s, devotion to the Blessed Mother as Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Lourdes and Our Lady of Fatima were very much a part of our lives. And I remember very vividly the Rosary Crusades of Father Patrick Peyton in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park in the late '60s where more than a half million Catholics gathered to pray the Rosary.

I grew up reading about and practicing the devotions of St. Louis de Montfort, a 17th Century French preacher, “To Jesus through Mary.” This was fascinating for a young boy in the late '60s where more than a half million Catholics gathered to pray the Rosary.

So much happened and changed as the Catholic Church’s life began to focus more on Jesus and the Scriptures and on cultivating a more direct relationship with Jesus, To Jesus through prayer. To Jesus through the devotions of St. Louis de Montfort, a 17th Century French preacher, “To Jesus through Mary.” This was fascinating for a young boy in the Catholic School of the 1960s. That was then.

Almost always, Mary is holding the child Jesus in her shoulder arm or on her lap. Jesus came from within her, life sharing. While Jesus is God’s Son, He is also the Son of Mary. While Catholics are faulted when they pray “holy Mary, Mother of God,” we are saying what is truly the case; that is also who Mary is. She is the Mother of Jesus who is the Son of God.

At the end of his life, Jesus gave his mother to John as a son and she to him as a mother. Christian art recognizes that they and we belong together. What did Jesus learn from Mary, his mother, and ultimately what did Mary learn from Him?

To go on a pilgrimage is to remember that we are pilgrims just like St. Ignatius, always finding our new path. It may look like the same-old, same-old, but what we will see and how we will connect will be as new for us as it was for St. Ignatius.

(Patrick Richard A. Mangini, retired and most recently pastor at St. Bonaventure Parish, Concord, will lead The Catholic Voice’s Sept. 23-Oct. 2, 2019, Marian Shrines Pilgrimage.)

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The Catholic Voice invites you to enjoy an incredible journey!
Catholic Charities . . .

(Continued from Page 1.)

find an affordable place to call home. So many individuals, families, and seniors are one crisis away from homelessness. The situation is complex and traumatic, which is why Keep Oakland House is a much-needed and innovative approach to bringing partners together for the benefit of Oakland and the people who proudly call Oakland home," said Christopher Martinez, chief program officer at CCEB. East Bay Community Law Center will assist those with immediate needs, such as an eviction notice.

CCEB will focus on the housing needs of seniors — a senior is 55 years old — and families with children under 18, while Bay Area Community Services will help with the needs of individuals ages 18 to 54 and those with mental health issues.

Karen Erickson, director of housing and financial services, joined Catholic Charities this year. She brings more than 34 years of experience in the social service field. 10 of that with Catholic Charities in San Francisco. She has been with homeless services such as eviction prevention. Most of the funds Catholic Charities has been using to help people housed come from two sources. One is the San Francisco Chronicle’s annual Season of Sharing and the other is a small grant from FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Both come with restrictions, for example, limiting the payment of back rent to one month.

The San Francisco Foundation has allowed collaborating agencies discretion on how to use the money," Erickson said. This removes some barriers for those seeking assistance. "It opens the door to people who couldn’t be helped before."

Keep Oakland House, she said, underscores “how important it is to keep people housed.

Right now, Erickson is case manager assist clients. She said she expects to increase that staff by three: an intake specialist and two additional case managers.

The cost of preventing a person from becoming homeless is less than much of that in a shelter, at a cost of $20,000 to $20,000 a year.

Catholic Charities is often able to keep people in their homes for $800 to $1,500.

“It’s an amazingly better use of resources and it prevents the trauma of homelessness,” she said. Keep Oakland House services are available to all Oakland residents who are experiencing a housing crisis who have a household income at or below 50 percent of the area median income with priority given to extremely low-income households. Legal representation will be provided for tenants with an active eviction lawsuit.

Any low-income Oakland resident can come in and be assessed. Every applicant is asked to fill out an application and tell the agency about income and expenses. If expenses exceed income, “We talk of a plan to move to more affordable housing,” Erickson said.

In looking over expenses, an applicant might be encouraged to look for benefits such as CalFresh, the food program and low-income assistance from utility companies.

A case manager follows up with the client, at 60 days and then six months after the assistance.

One-third of Catholic Charities clients seeking housing assistance are seniors, who make up the fastest-growing segment of homeless people.

Hoffmann Family Foundation gives MSM

The Jean Hoffmann STEM Innovation Center represents a new era of second- ary education for young women at Cardonet High School, Grosse Pointe. The center will focus on teaching science, technology, engineering and math. The $15 million grant, said Lisa Hoffmann Morgan, “is given in the spirit of innovation and a commitment that Cardonet High School will remain accessible to all. With that in mind, we have created an endowed, needs-based scholarship fund to ensure quality Catholic education and access for those who could otherwise not afford it.” The second half of our commitment is to make the major, lead gift to build the Jean Hoffmann STEM Innovation Center, “where young women can stretch their minds and build their ingenuity and creativity.” At the groundbreaking, from left, Lisa Hoffmann Morgan, Jean Hoffmann, Bonnie Cotter, Cardonet president; John D’Anico, Sasha Williams ’19, and Kevan Cushing, principal.

A nun’s story . . .

(Continued from Page 1.)

After the two weeks in France, she re-entered RCIA. “When it get close to Easter that year; it was 2007. I called my mom, ‘I think I’m coming into the Catholic Church this year. She had independently decided she would come into the Church, too.’”

Sister drove back to Oakland. “We received the sacraments at St. Margaret Mary together,” she said.

After graduating from UC Santa Barbara, she began her master’s degree program in literature at Creighton University in Nebraska. “I started discerning my voca- tion and tell the agency about income and expenses. If expenses exceed income, “We talk of a plan to move to more affordable housing,” Erickson said.

After receiving her degree at Creighton, she visited the Dominicans in Nashville. “They told me I wasn’t welcomed there.”

She accepted a friend’s invitation to visit the Carmel in Nebraska, where she met Mother Sylvia Gemma, OCD, who is the superior at the Kensington Carmel.

“When we enter, we are given an angel,” Mother Sylvia Gemma said. The angel is a Sister who helps the new comers find her place in prayer, and at other times in the transition. “I was Sister’s angel.”

Sister Teresita discerned there for two years, ultimately deciding the large Nebraska Carmel wasn’t the quite right fit. “Every Carmel is a very unique religious family,” Mother Sylvia Gemma said. “Carmel is meant to be a small community. All the individuals make up the charism of that particular monastery. The monastery is a very large community. Sister probably was called to smaller community.”

Erikson returned to Castro Valley. “About a month after I got home, the Sisters made their foundation here, at Canyon.”

She visited the small community regularly at Canyon. She attended Mass and drew the attention — and prayers — of the people of St. Monica Parish in Moraga, which supported the fledging community.

Sister Teresita re-entered the Carmel in Canyon in 2013. “We were overjoyed when Sister came back and joined us here,” Mother Sylvia Gemma said.

“Canyon was a beautiful experience,” Sister Teresita said. “It was like a long, religious camping trip.”

Today the Sisters are at home in their Kensington monastery, where Sister Teresita of the Infant Jesus will live her life hidden from the world. She is able to use her talents in reading, and occasional writing. She is able to develop new talents, such as crafts. The Sisters sewed the novices the cloaks.

Of the day she professed her vows and received the veil, Erickson said, “When we enter, we are given an angel.”

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Icon of St. Teresa dedicated at Our Lady of Lourdes

By Erin Hallissy
Special to The Catholic Voice

An icon of St. Teresa of Calcutta—known throughout the world as Mother Teresa—was dedicated on Sept. 23 at Our Lady of Lourdes church near Lake Merritt in Oakland, and now hangs in a chapel off the main sanctuary.

The icon, a 30-by-40-inch painting by San Francisco icon artist Brian Nicholas Tsai, was commissioned by Henry Ushijima of Concord in memory of his mother, Alleen Haltley Ushijima, who died in March 2017 of ovarian cancer at age 60, a longtime parishioner and usher at Our Lady of Lourdes.

Rev. Jim Schexnayder, pastoral minister of Our Lady of Lourdes who dedicated and blessed the icon during Mass, told the story of Our Lady of Lourdes who dedicated herself to the poor for decades, died in 1997 and was canonized in 2015. “I assure you, our Lady of Lourdes is looking at us, and she’s looking at Christ,” said Tsai, who attended Our Lady of Lourdes in the 1980s, was commissioned by the church’s longtime pastor, the late Fr. Seamus Genovese, to paint four other icons at Our Lady of Lourdes. An Our Lady of Lourdes parish council member recommended that St. Teresa be the subject of the icon commissioned by Ushijima.

Tsai said he studied many photos of Mother Teresa before painting the icon, and watched the movie “Mother Teresa” starring Olivia Hussey. He also drew on the experience of a friend with AIDS who met Mother Teresa in the Bay Area.

“He said Mother Teresa walked up to him, got down on her knees, and kissed his feet. St. Teresa was living out Matthew 23:23-46, she was seeing Christ in the sick,” Tsai said. “In India, when people greet each other with hands folded in prayer, they’re recognizing the divine in the other person. (In a photo) her hands are slightly inclined toward the viewer, as if she’s pointing to the Christ she sees. This is how I wanted to depict Saint Teresa. She’s looking at us, and she’s looking at Christ.”

Tsai, who moved to San Francisco from Maryland in 1984, studied icon painting mainly under the iconographer Dmitry Shkotin, whose icons adorn Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco, as well as many other Orthodox churches across the country, and Marek Czarnecki, a talented Catholic iconographer.

Tsai has icons in churches in the San Francisco Bay Area, Alaska and the country of Georgia.

(“The author of this story is the sister of Aileen Hallissy, in whose memory the painting was commissioned.”)
**NEW EVENTS**

**Tuesday, October 23**

**Open House: Night of Heart with Saint Ann's**

St. Ann’s Sisters of the Daughters of Wisdom will have an Open House on Tuesday, October 23 from 6 to 7 p.m. at their facility located at 1140 E. 14th St., Richmond. All are invited to attend.

**Wednesday, October 24**

**Raices Women's Literary Festival**

Raices Women’s Literary Festival will be held on Wednesday, October 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose Parish, 2620 St. Raymond St., Oakland. The event will feature readings, a poetry reading, and a panel discussion on the role of women in literature. For more information, contact 510-741-3630.

**Friday, October 26**

**High Noon Holiday Gala and Boutique**

St. Bonaventure University will host the 2018 High Noon Holiday Gala and Boutique on Friday, October 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the school’s Parish Center, 2100 Pear St., Pinole. 510-741-4900.

**Saturday, October 27**

**St. Raymond Parish**

St. Raymond Parish will celebrate their annual Fall Concert at Holy Names University on Saturday, October 27 at 4:30 p.m. at the DSPT, after the talk. Open and free to the public.

**Saturday, November 3**

**Annunciation Parish Fall Gathering**

St. John the Baptist’s Annunciation Parish will host their annual Fall Gathering on Saturday, November 3 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1001 Camino Gorda Way, Danville. 925-837-2122.

**Saturday, November 10**

**Clarity**

Clarity’s Open House will be held on Saturday, November 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 2121 Harrison St., Oakland. RSVP by Oct. 25 to 510-893-4734 or by fax at 510-893-4734.

**Sunday, November 11**

**Fall Concert at Holy Names University**

Holy Names University’s Fall Concert will be held on Sunday, November 11 at 7 p.m. in the Soda Activity Center, 6336 Mission Circle (entrance off Mission Tierra), Fremont. For more information, contact 510-499-8707.

**Sunday, November 18**

**Ralph’s Vineyard Retreat**

Ralph’s Vineyard Retreat will be held on Sunday, November 18 at 10 a.m. at the Calvary Chapel, 2100 Pear St., Pinole. 510-741-3630.

**Tuesday, November 20**

**First Wednesdays**

First Wednesdays will be held on Tuesday, November 20 at 7 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church, 2039 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek. For more information, contact michael@alga1025@gmail.com.

**Wednesday, November 21**

**First Thursdays**

First Thursdays will be held on Wednesday, November 21 from 6:30 to 7 p.m. at the Chapel at St. Raymond Parish, Moran Hall, 11555 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-237-1531.

**Thursday, November 22**

**First Fridays**

First Fridays will be held on Thursday, November 22 from 6:30 to 7 p.m. at Mission San Jose Church, 2039 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek. 510-351-5444.

**Thursday, November 29**

**First Saturdays**

First Saturdays will be held on Friday, November 30 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at St. John the Baptist’s Annunciation Parish, 2039 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek. For more information, contact sandynca@sbcglobal.net.

**Friday, November 30**

**First Sundays**

First Sundays will be held on Saturday, December 1 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Chapel at St. Raymond Parish, Moran Hall, 11555 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-237-1531.

**Saturday, December 1**

**First Sundays**

First Sundays will be held on Sunday, December 2 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Chapel at St. Raymond Parish, Moran Hall, 11555 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-237-1531.
Letters to the editor provide a forum for readers to engage in an open exchange of opinions and commentary.

Letters to the editor should be limited to 250 words.

Letters should include the writer's address and phone number for verification purposes.

Letters are subject to editing for space and clarity.

Letters limited to four letters in any 30-day period.

Letters to: The Catholic Voice, 2121 Harrison St., Suite 100, Oakland, CA 94612, Fax: 510-893-4744. 

Comments should be submitted online at: Forum@oakvoice.org

An on-air commentary of St. Chrysostom as one of the disciples who met Jesus during the Road to Emmaus, by Most Rev. Josef von Führich, 1837, at the Kunsthalle (Art Hall) in Bremen, Germany.

A new apologetics: Intelligently give reason for hope

By Most Rev. Robert Barron

Irresolvable surveys, protests, and other public activities over the past 10 years have confirmed that young people frequently cite intellectual reasons when asked what has prompted them to leave the Church or lose confidence in it. Chairing a group that can save you the remainder of its existence. To suggest, or more importantly, to support a person or political figure who does not support a person brave enough to come forward—and nothing less than turning your back, not only on what our country should stand for but what our Church should stand for.

There are plenty of judges to choose from. Conservative judges who have not been rightly accused of sexual assault. Judge Kavanaugh should be investigated no differently than any or priest or layperson in the Church. They have been accused of sexual assault. Innocent or guilty, a seri- ose accusation must not be ignored. Our church has learned this lesson. I hope it will set the hearts of the young on fire. Then we can be ready intelligently to give a reason for the hope that is within us.

There is a consensus among pastoral theologians that, at least in the Western Church, some clergy of the Catholic Church were found to be guilty of a cover-up of sexual abuse. The Church failed to warn parents, to lead them to leave the Church or lose confidence in it.

A new apologetics should look deep and long into the question of the relationship between religion and science. For many people today, scientific and rational are simply equivalent or co-extensive terms. And therefore, since religion is obviously not science, it must be irrational. Without any moment for denominating the sciences, we have to show that there are non-scientific and yet eminently rational paths that conduct toward knowledge of the real. Literature, drama, philosophy, the fine arts—all close cousins of religion—not theology, which is written like truths that are unanswerable in another way.

A renewed apologetics might cultivate these approaches.

Thirdly, our apologists and catechists should seek the via pulchritudinis, as Pope Francis characterized it in “Evangelii Gaudium.” Especially in our postmodern cultural context, commencing with the true and the good—what to believe and how to believe—there is a counter-discourse, one that is a twin to the ideology of self-invention is so firmly entrenched, the third transcendent, the beautiful, the altruistic, more winsome, less threatening, path. And part of the genius of Catholicism is that we have so consistently embraced the beauty of politics, painting, sculpture and liturgy. All of this provides a powerful matrix for evangeliza- tion, as well as for all.”

When Jesus explained himself to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, their hearts began to burn within them. The same is true today. Let us listen to them with attention and love, and let us be ready to give them the reason for the hope that is within us. This, I trust, will set the hearts of the young on fire.

(Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.)

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By Most Rev. Robert Barron

Irresolvable surveys, protests, and other public activities over the past 10 years have confirmed that young people frequently cite intellectual reasons when asked what has prompted them to leave the Church or lose confidence in it. Chairing a group that can save you the remainder of its existence. To suggest, or more importantly, to support a person or political figure who does not support a person brave enough to come forward—and nothing less than turning your back, not only on what our country should stand for but what our Church should stand for.

There are plenty of judges to choose from. Conservative judges who have not been rightly accused of sexual assault. Judge Kavanaugh should be investigated no differently than any or priest or layperson in the Church. They have been accused of sexual assault. Innocent or guilty, a seri- ose accusation must not be ignored. Our church has learned this lesson. I hope it will set the hearts of the young on fire. Then we can be ready intelligently to give a reason for the hope that is within us.

There is a consensus among pastoral theologians that, at least in the Western Church, some clergy of the Catholic Church were found to be guilty of a cover-up of sexual abuse. The Church failed to warn parents, to lead them to leave the Church or lose confidence in it.

A new apologetics should look deep and long into the question of the relationship between religion and science. For many people today, scientific and rational are simply equivalent or co-extensive terms. And therefore, since religion is obviously not science, it must be irrational. Without any moment for denominating the sciences, we have to show that there are non-scientific and yet eminently rational paths that conduct toward knowledge of the real. Literature, drama, philosophy, the fine arts—all close cousins of religion—not theology, which is written like truths that are unanswerable in another way.

A renewed apologetics might cultivate these approaches.

Thirdly, our apologists and catechists should seek the via pulchritudinis, as Pope Francis characterized it in “Evangelii Gaudium.” Especially in our postmodern cultural context, commencing with the true and the good—what to believe and how to believe—there is a counter-discourse, one that is a twin to the ideology of self-invention is so firmly entrenched, the third transcendent, the beautiful, the altruistic, more winsome, less threatening, path. And part of the genius of Catholicism is that we have so consistently embraced the beauty of politics, painting, sculpture and liturgy. All of this provides a powerful matrix for evangeliza- tion, as well as for all.”

When Jesus explained himself to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, their hearts began to burn within them. The same is true today. Let us listen to them with attention and love, and let us be ready to give them the reason for the hope that is within us. This, I trust, will set the hearts of the young on fire.

(Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.)
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