Christmas comes early to Santa Rita Jail

By Michele Jurich  
Staff writer

In a first at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin, male and female inmates attended Mass together on Dec. 21. Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, celebrated the Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent at the jail, telling the 60 inmates present that Jesus, whose coming we celebrate at Christmas, would come to them that morning, too, as he consecrated bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

He encouraged them to seek forgiveness in reconciliation. Even though they are incarcerated, he reminded them that they could love their family from where they are. “You can be a place where Christ’s love is reborn.”

As the inmates entered the designated room, which is the jail’s transition center, each was given a worship aid and song sheet to assist them in participating in the Mass.

Nelly Strawn of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton said, “I was surprised they knew everything in the Bible.”

Strawn said, “They really read the Bible,” she said. Georgetti volunteers, visiting inmates on Wednesday evenings. “We tell them it’s a Catholic service but every song is a Catholic song,” he said.

Families who have been helped by the St. Joseph Conference in Mission San Jose signed a card of thanks for the CRS Rice Bowl grant received by the Fremont parish. With Richard Sehar, the St. Joseph Conference representative, center, are Marc McKinney, left, and Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ.

CRS Rice Bowl grants awarded

By Michele Jurich  
Staff writer

More than 40 organizations that feed the hungry in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including a St. Vincent de Paul council and 20 parish-based conferences, received checks totaling almost $30,000 at the annual CRS Rice Bowl Grant Awards Breakfast on Dec. 11 at St. John Vianney Parish in Walnut Creek.

The funds represent 25 percent of the funds donated by parishes and schools in the diocese to the annual Lenten CRS Rice Bowl program of prayer, fasting, education and almsgiving. The majority of the contributions support Catholic Relief Services programs in other nations.

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, thanked those who feed the poor, a corporal work of mercy. His first two goals for the Diocese of Oakland, he said, are improving the Sunday Mass experience and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Their work, he said, is “right smack in the middle of this goal for our diocese,” he said. The work, too, is involved in forming missionary disciples, the third goal for the diocese. “We invite people to join us in our works of mercy and in worshipping Christ at Sunday Mass,” he said.

Drawing on his own experience serving at St. Vincent de Paul Dining Room and with Catholic Worker at People Park’s in Berkeley, he said many volunteers are not members of the Catholic Church.

“I just like being here,” they have told him. “They’re drawn, I believe, by the Holy Spirit to participate in a divine work of mercy that starts in the heart of Christ, passes through our church and through you, to people who are in need,” he said.

“We make the connection,” he said. “The Catholic Church has been doing this for 2,000 years.”

At the breakfast, the Outstanding Service Award was presented to Janey Castillo, coordinator for Seniors for Hope and Justice at St. Mary’s Center in Oakland.
**THE DIOCESE**

**Special collection**

A special collection will be taken to support our seminarians during the weekend of Jan. 11-12. The diocese has 16 seminarians attending five seminaries. Quality leadership requires solid spiritual, academic and pastoral formation of our future priests. Please help support them.

**THE VATICAN**

**Secrecy obligation lifted**

Pope Francis has abolished the obligation of secrecy for those who report having been sexually abused by a priest and for those who testify in a church trial or process having to do with clerical sexual abuse. “The person who files the report, the person who alleges to have been harmed and the witnesses shall not be bound by any obligation of silence with regard to matters involving the case,” the pope ordered in a new “Instruction On the Confidentiality of Legal Proceedings,” published Dec. 17.

**French nuncio resigns**

Pope Francis has accepted the resigna- tion of Archbishop Luis Ventura, the nuncio to France, who has been under investi- gation for sexual misconduct in France and in Canada. Announcing the archbishop’s retirement Dec. 17, the Vatican provided no reason why he stepped down. A state- ment released by the nunciature in Paris said the French government gave its formal approval to the resigna- tion “for reasons of age.”

**Elder prayers powerful**

On the eve of his 83rd birthday, Pope Francis met with a group of priests — although many were a few years younger than his own age — and told them that “old age is a time of grace.” Grandparents, who have received the blessing of seeing their children’s children, are entrusted with a great task — transmitting the experience of life and the history of the family, the community, the people,” the pope said Dec. 16 during an audience with members of the Italian National Association of Senior Workers.

**Priestly anniversary**

As part of the celebrations for his 50th anniversary of priesthood, Pope Francis chose to personally present a multi-volume collection of writings by his longtime spiritual director, the late Jesuit Father Miguel Angel Fiorito. In addition to presenting the Spanish-language collection, “Escritos” (“Writings”), at a conference at the Jesuit headquarters Dec. 13, Pope Francis wrote an introduction to it, saying the publication is “a consolation for those of us who, for many years, were nourished by his teachings. These writings will be a great good for the whole church.”

**Scandalous rhetoric**

Pope Francis told Jesuits in Thailand he was “scandalized” by some of the anti-migrant rhetoric he hears in Europe, and he is convinced people are being manipulated into thinking the only way they can defend their territories is by building walls. “The phenomenon of migration is compounded by war, hunger and a ‘defen- sive mindset,’ which makes us think only from a state of fear and that by reinforcing borders we can defend ourselves,” Pope Francis said Nov. 22 when he met 33 Jesuits in Thailand. — Catholic News Service

**Regina Mundi Mass**

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, celebrated Mass on Dec. 14, the Feast of St. John of the Cross, for donors to the Regina Mundi Society at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland. Major supporters of the Bishop’s Appeal, Family Aid — Catholic Education and the Lumen Christi Academies enjoyed breakfast after Mass.

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

Publisher: Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ

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By Al Donner
Special to The Catholic Voice

The goals of Oakland Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, for 2020 might be summed up in three Ms — Mass, mercy and missionaries.

Speaking to the December Catholics at Work breakfast, Bishop Barber said his personal focus for the coming year will be in three specific areas: improving the Sunday Mass experience for Catholics; energizing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; and strengthening missionary discipleship. Coincidently all begin with the letter M.

If they are undertaken together, Bishop Barber believes, they can make Catholic parishes grow “from a maintenance model to a missionary model.” Bishop Barber pointed out that strengthening parish life was a central theme explored at the Napa Institute last summer, Barber pointed out that strengthening parish life was a central theme explored at the Napa Institute last summer, and often is seen as an urgent focus for the Church today.

Bishop Barber’s first focus is to improve the experience that people have on Sundays at Mass. Attendance at Mass has declined over decades, and there is a growing recognition of the need to bring Catholics back to weekly attendance, a core element of Catholic life.

The challenge parishes often face is “come home to what?” Making Mass participation a stronger, more powerful part of Catholics’ involvement is the starting point for building a stronger faith life.

Bishop Barber’s second objective for 2020 is to strengthen the works of mercy that Catholics are involved with. That opens a wide range of activities Catholics can engage in to help people in need or less fortunate. The opportunities are many, but often present challenges.

Bishop Barber cited as one example the diocese’s on-going effort to establish Claire’s House, a safe haven for girls and young women who have been captured into the sex trade. The diocese undertook the effort at the urging of Alameda County District Attorney Nancy O’Malley and worked on it for four years. Licensing agencies of the state of California ended up as the biggest hurdle to overcome, prompting Bishop Barber to wonder why the state moved so slowly to approve a project that helps young people in desperate need.

When it finally opened O’Malley praised the long effort, saying “how proud she is to be Catholic.” Bishop Barber’s third goal seems to flow naturally from the first two.

Bishop Barber’s third goal is to strengthen the missionary disciples in the diocese’s Catholic parishes should make stronger Catholics who also will be better able to carry out the charge Christ gave to his disciples.

It will take hard work, for as Bishop Barber observed, they face significant hurdles along the way. He will discuss them further in his ad limina (five-year) visit to Rome with other California bishops at the end of January. Bishop Barber sees it as an opportunity to explore these ideas and needs with Pope Francis and other senior officials in the Vatican.

“...we have to have a missionary heart,” he explained, “we have to form missionary disciples.” Developing missionary disciples in the diocese’s Catholic parishes should make stronger Catholics who also will be better able to carry out the charge Christ gave to his disciples.

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The opportunities are many, but often present challenges.
Trade deal better
WASHINGTON — The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, a new trade deal unveiled Dec. 10 by President Donald Trump and House Democratic leaders, is no panacea, according to Catholics involved in labor matters, but it is better than the North American Free Trade Agreement it is designed to replace.

Fired teachers in court
WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court will take a deeper dive into laws governing church and state next year when it examines two Catholic school firings. The court agreed Dec. 18 to take up the combined cases of two California Catholic schools that were sued by teachers they had fired who claimed they had been victims of job discrimination. The schools, both in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, argued in lower courts that they were exempt from discrimination laws by “ministerial exception.” This exception is based on a 2012 Supreme Court decision that said church and religious school employees are exempt from anti-discrimination laws for employees who are ministers of the faith.

Catholic sermons short
WASHINGTON — If experience can’t prove it, data scraping will: Catholic sermons are shorter than their Protestant counterparts. According to an analysis of nearly 50,000 sermons — Catholics commonly refer to theirs as homilies — the Pew Research Center determined that the median Catholic sermon is 14 minutes long. The next shortest are mainline Protestant sermons, at 25 minutes. Evangelical Christian sermons are nearly three times as long as Catholic sermons at 39 minutes. But the longest median sermon belongs to churches in the African American Protestant tradition, clocking in at 54 minutes, nearly four times as long as their Catholic counterparts.

Daleiden trial to proceed
SAN FRANCISCO — A California judge ruled Dec. 6 to let a criminal trial proceed against David Daleiden and Sandra Merritt on nine counts of violating California’s anti-subeavesdropping law. The charges stem from undercover investigative videos filmed in 2015 by Daleiden and Merritt, who are with the Center for Medical Progress, which showed Planned Parenthood officials discussing fees related to selling fetal tissue. The two posed as representatives of a mythical fetal tissue procurement firm.

Novena for beatification
PEORIA, Ill. — Supporters of the canonization cause for Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen were invited to take part in a novena starting Dec. 12 to “petition God unceasingly to remove all obstacles” for the beatification of the media pioneer, author and evangelist. “We are confident in the power of prayer,” Peoria Bishop Daniel R. Jenky said in a video message released Dec. 9, the 40th anniversary of Archbishop Sheen’s death. The video and prayers for the nine-day devotion are found at www.celebratesheen.com.

Netflix satire infuriates
SAO PAULO — The latest episode of Brazil’s comedy group Porta dos Fundos on Netflix has angered thousands of Catholics, not because of any controversy related to selling fetal tissue, but because the parody of “The First Temptation of Christ” ("The First Temptation of Christ") is a satire about a gay Jesus bringing his boyfriend home to meet Mary and Joseph. Reaction to the 40-minute show was quick. Brazilians took to social media and the internet, calling for a boycott of Netflix and the cancellation of the parody.

— Catholic News Service
St. Columba concert celebrates Christmas music


By Carrie McClish
Staff writer

When Dr. Thomas Wallace, a retired neurologist, joined the medical staff at the Order of Malta Clinic in Oakland about five years ago, he brought with him a resume that extended back over six decades.
He trained and practiced at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio where he spent a total of 24 years. Then he practiced medicine in Livermore and Pleasanton for almost 24 years until he retired to take care of his wife who had developed a progressive paralysis problem in 2001. After her death in 2012 he did some worker compensation evaluations for about 15 years.

“That kind of balances my age,” he said with a laugh during a recent interview.

Today the physician, who continues to practice medicine at age 89, receives inspiration and purpose for his vocation through his devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

All of this is through “Our Blessed Mother Mary,” Wallace said of his current medical practice at the Malta Clinic, where he and many members of the staff are volunteers. “It’s totally in Her hands. She brought me into this clinic and then into the Order of Malta as a member of the order.”

Wallace spends four days a week practicing his craft at the clinic. “It is a good place to practice,” he said.

What makes it good? The absence of insurance, paperwork and money, according to the doctor. “We see anybody who has no insurance regardless of race,” he said. Because those visits take place “without money or insurance involved you just go and have a direct relationship with the patient, there is no computer interfering … which is really rewarding.”

The clinic offers a variety of health care services and treatment for a vulnerable population that is made up of people who are uninsured or underinsured. These services range from flu shots and physical exams to paperwork and money, according to the doctor. “We see patients — some are new and some are follow-ups,” he said.

Among the many great things about the clinic, the doctor said, is the break room where other doctors and specialists are working patients — some are new and some are follow-ups,” he said.

A typical day begins with daily Mass at St. Theresa Church in Oakland. After the morning liturgy he arrives at the clinic about a quarter after nine or 9:30 a.m. “The clinic has been open for about an hour and I start seeing patients — some are new and some are follow-ups,” he said.

Another aspect of Dr. Thomas Wallace’s volunteer work, said the director of Malta Clinic is outreach and care for the Carmelite Sisters in Kensington.

“A typical day begins with daily Mass at St. Theresa Church in Oakland. After the morning liturgy he arrives at the clinic about a quarter after nine or 9:30 a.m. “The clinic has been open for about an hour and I start seeing patients — some are new and some are follow-ups,” he said.

Among the many great things about the clinic, the doctor said, is the break room where other doctors and specialists are usually available. “If I have a question about a patient that I am seeing I can just go in there and we talk about it a little bit and then I know what to do. So there are instant consultations. It’s pretty good. Excellent. I don’t know anywhere else where you can do this,” he said.

In addition to membership in the Order of Malta, Wallace said his relationship with the clinic has gotten him into a number of other “satisfying situations.” These include yearly pilgrimages to Lourdes in which he travels as a member of the medical team. He has also attended pilgrimages to Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wisconsin, the only church-approved Marian apparition site in the U.S.

Wallace, a non-practicing Protestant who converted to Catholicism in 1987, developed a deep affection for and devotion to the Blessed Virgin early on in his discernment process. The late Msgr. Bernard J. Moran, a former pastor at St. Theresa, “got me started right away,” the physician said.

In discussing his conversion, the doctor said he had been troubled by a lot of anxiety and stress, so much so that he felt his situation was hopeless. But his journey to the Catholic faith found him relief. “I said, ‘Jesus help me,’ and he brought me into His Church and gave me His Mother. It went that way, that fast. So, I am satisfied, I’m a happy guy.”

Another satisfying aspect of his volunteer work at the clinic is its outreach and care for the Carmelite Sisters in Kensington. “Most (of the Sisters) have no medical insurance so we are a really good medical support for them,” Wallace said. “They are a wonderful group.”

In November Wallace, who is also on the board of Catholics Care, was recognized by a local magazine for his volunteer service at the Malta Clinic. The awards celebration gave him an unexpected opportunity to express publicly his devotion to the Virgin public and it played out that people don’t want to know anywhere else where you can do this,” he said.

Another aspect of Dr. Thomas Wallace’s volunteer work, said the director of Malta Clinic is outreach and care for the Carmelite Sisters in Kensington.

“It was a group of people, probably not many were Catholic, there were those of the Order of Malta, they were kind of my gang, but it went over so well. That was very, very pleasing to me.”

He also received an unexpected referral of another kind when the award recipients gathered for photos. “Do you know what one of the guys said to me, ‘Do you work out?’ That made my night!”

By David Schoiz
Special to the Catholic Voice

Call it “the new talk.”

Not a revamped 2.0 version about the birds and bees for teenagers who find love for the first time. Rather it is a conversa-

tion that parents and family members, begrudgingly, are having with aging loved ones about their end-of-life wishes and preferences for use in advanced directives.

“The Conversation Project, an initiative of the Boston-based not-for-profit Institute for Healthcare Improvement, is among of handful groups nationwide leading efforts to get people talking about this issue, which for many is a difficult one.”

“There is a cultural aversion to death and it plays out that people don’t want to mention this ad when calling. AZ ROC 278722, CA 942619, MN LC670698, OK 50110, OR CCB 198506, RI 88, WA ACORNSI894OB, WV WV049654, MA HIC169936, NJ 13VH07752300, PA 101967, CT ELV 0425003-R5, AK 134057.

Having ‘new talk’ today makes end-of-life decisions less burdensome
Empowering seniors toward advocacy

By Michele Jurich
staff writer

In presenting the Outstanding Service Award, CRS Rice Bowl diocesan committee member Meg Bowerman offered three phrases that came to her mind in honoring the recipient, Janny Castillo, coordinator of the Seniors for Hope & Justice Program at St. Mary’s Center in Oakland.

Castillo, she said, has worked in human resources, “and she puts human in that phrase.”

“She is a community builder. She’s brought dignity to all those she serves,” Bowerman said.

Bowerman recounted a bus trip to Sacramento she had made with the senior advocates. On Hunger Day, the seniors told their stories to legislators and their aides.

“I was so impressed about how she gave the dignity to the homeless seniors, taught them what they already knew and how they taught legislators,” Bowerman said.

An enthusiastic round of applause came from the table seated directly in front of the dais.

Janny Castillo has been an advocate for social justice and seniors.

Supporters of St. Mary’s Center, which cares for people from preschool to seniors, were seated there, and among them were senior advocates.

In accepting her award at the Dec. 11 event, Castillo recounted a turning point in her life.

“Almost 30 years ago, I was a working mom and living in poverty,” she said. “It was a day-to-day struggle to feed and care for my four children. I was also exhausted and overworked. I was working as a church secretary at St. Mark’s [Parish in Richmond].”

“I was staring at the television,” she said. “Nelson Mandela was being released from prison. I knew in my heart it was a world-changing moment, but I had no one to talk to and no one to share with it.”

“Way before I was aware of it,” she said, “she was a social justice activist.”

“I am blessed to stand in solidarity with powerful, socially conscious elders,” she said. “Not only do I have someone to talk to, I have people who will rally for the dignification of homelessness.”

St. Mary’s Center hosts an emergency winter shelter for seniors — the Almost Home Senior Shelter — hosting 30 each night, with the ultimate goal of finding permanent housing for them.

Castillo has developed a program to help those in need find affordable housing.

At the very least, Zalot emphasized the importance of designating a health care power of attorney to assure that there is someone making medical decisions for the loved one when that person cannot do it for him or herself.

“Decisions need to be made in the moment,” Zalot added.

Regarding POLST (Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) forms that hospitals present to families of loved ones, these do not necessarily need to be signed. Pitfalls include locking in medical decisions that are ethically problematic.

Also, what this document offers patients could conflict with Catholic teachings. “If you feel pressured, you do not have to sign it,” said Zalot, speaking of the advice he gave his own parents. “There is no problem with ripping it up in front of hospital staff.”

Tom Greerty, the attorney who directs the Pope Francis Legal Clinic in Oakland, said people need health care directives because “who’s in charge” gets resolved by a health care directive. This can be described broadly or narrowly. It depends upon the person who is executing the directive.

If you have chosen a good agent who knows your wishes then you can give broad authority to make health care decisions for you. It is a good practice for people to educate their agent as to any limitations of their authority and even put it into writing,” said Greerty, citing issues of use of a ventilator or wanting to be resuscitated.

“Doctors are willing to do what patients want, but oftentimes there is no record of what the patient wants. An advance directive helps convey this information,” Zalot said.

* * *

Elder Care Alliance, a nonprofit organization, is cosponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas West Midwest Community and the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. RCFE Lic # 015600255. COA #245 SNF #CA020000237.
The descriptions of senior services in this section were provided by the service agencies, which are responsible for the accuracy of the content. — The Catholic Voice

Carefield Castro Valley
Carefield Castro Valley community offers exemplary services in all amenities, with a professional care staff to accommodate our residents’ individual needs. We encourage our residents to eat well, make new friends, seek out creative pursuits and discover new passions in a warm and welcoming community. Call Patricia Ashton, community relations director, at 510-982-2765 to schedule your tour today. Carefield Castro Valley is located at 19960 Santa Maria Ave., Castro Valley.

Carefield Pleasanton
Carefield Pleasanton offers residents with Alzheimer’s and other dementias an active lifestyle full of fun and engaging activities, delicious meals prepared from fresh ingredients and plenty of opportunities to celebrate each day. Our LightHouse Memory Care program focuses on the individual by providing person-centered care. Call Diane Tran, community relations director, at 925-461-8409 to schedule your tour of our newly remodeled community. Carefield Pleasanton is located at 4115 Mohr Ave., Pleasanton.

Faith, compassion at Mercy Center
Established in 1872, Mercy Retirement & Care Center was founded on a deep sense of faith, dignity and compassion. Today, this tradition continues through our dedication to caring for every aspect of physical, emotional and spiritual wellness of the older adults we serve. Situated on a lush campus in Oakland, Mercy provides a continuum of services to meet a variety of health care needs, including assisted living, memory care, independent, assisted-living and memory care. Consistently providing a home-like atmosphere, Mercy Retirement & Care Center was founded on a deep sense of faith, dignity and compassion for those in need of care. Today, this tradition continues through our commitment to providing person-centered care. Call Diane Tran, community relations director, at 925-461-8409 to schedule your tour of our newly remodeled community. Carefield Pleasanton is located at 4115 Mohr Ave., Pleasanton.

New assisted ride service available in Bay Area
Both Uber and Lyft started in the Bay Area, and now there’s a new service specifically designed for seniors or those who need extra assistance. Onward has its own drivers who are compassion-ate and friendly individuals who love to help. Whether this is assisting to get into a car or going to a medical appointment and waiting in the waiting room for it to finish, Onward drivers will do whatever is needed to get the passenger to their destination.

The care we provide on each trip. We capture this so the specific needs of each rider. We ask for the level of cognitive, physical and sensory impairment. This allows us to design a ride plan that can be adjusted in real-time to accommodate any changes in the person’s needs. Finally, we’ve built a system that requires none of our riders or customers use any technology at all. You need to do to do to use us is call us, no smartphone required.

For more information, call 510-658-9266.

Safe and reliable assisted rides for seniors
By Mike Lewis
Special to The Catholic Voice
This December I celebrated my grandmother, Edith Lewis’ 99th birthday with our family. She’s in great shape and I’m amazed by her energy. In fact, we had some wine after dinner and she was the last one to leave the couch and wanted to keep talking through the night.

I’m amazed, at that age, how little help she needs from others — except when it comes to driving. Like many at that age, she’s at a point in her life where she requires help getting to where she needs to go.

Onward and Lyft are new services that have emerged in the past few years and offer the convenience of a ride at the push of a button on your smartphone. However, these services don’t work for older adults like my grandmother.

Not only does she not have a smartphone but the lack of patience and assistance they provide makes them unrealistic options. My grandmother needs help getting to and from the car and often help folding up a walker and putting it in the trunk.

To allow for this extra help, we charge by the hour to provide extra assistance on a ride. They are willing, helpful and feel more comfortable seeing a familiar face.

To make it easier for our clients, we have a system that requires none of our riders or customers use any technology at all. You need to do to do to use us is call us, no smartphone required.

We’ll answer the phone seven days a week to help coordinate or adjust a ride. But don’t worry, if you don’t need the extra help, we’re more than happy to provide a basic ride.

As of Dec. 3, my grandmother is 99-years-old. Even at that age she wants to go to birthday parties and social events with her friends — just like we all do. Now with a service like Onward, she can make every one of them.

For more information, call 510-658-9266.

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Senior Helpers can ready to serve your family’s needs with personalized in-home care and expertly trained, professional caregivers.

Let us ease your mind with a complimentary in-home care initial appointment.

Call today to learn more.

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The Shrines of France Pilgrimage

Paris, Lisieux, Chartres, Nevers, Ars, Lourdes

April 13-21, 2020 (9 days)

$4,199* from (SFO)

Roundtrip airfare on Air France, hotel, breakfast & dinner per itinerary, air-conditioned motor coach, full-time tour manager, departure tax and current fuel charge, "double occupancy"

Highlights Include:

Paris – Sacred Coeur, Notre Dame Cathedral, Sainte-Chapelle, the Eiffel Tower, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal on the Rue de Bac, Shrine of St. Vincent de Paul!

Lisieux – Visit where St. Therese lived, Carmel Chapel, the Basilica of St. Therese

Chartres – View the impressive Our Lady of Chartres Cathedral

Nevers – The convent of St. Gildard, where Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes spent the final years of her life

Ars – Shrine of St. John Vianney, saint of parish priests

Lourdes – Celebrate Mass at the Grotto & join the candlelight procession, the legendary blessing of the sick and the healing waters of the miraculous Lourdes spring

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Camille Tompkins at The Catholic Voice
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Spiritual Guide
Father Jim Schexnayder
Pilgrimages

Is Italy on the bucket list for you to see?

By Rev. Richard A. Mangini

What is on your bucket list of places to go? Some months ago, a couple from St. Bonaventure Parish inquired when I might be leading a pilgrimage tour of Italy. They have never travelled to Italy before and wanted to go if I would lead the trip. They are in their mid-70s, and this was on their bucket list of things to do.

Well, there may just be many other Catholic Voice readers and other parishioners of many other parishes with the same thought in mind, just waiting for an opportunity to join a group and to realize a dream of a lifetime.

I have been to a Rome a good number of times, especially when my cousin, Cardinal William Levada, was Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Coming to Rome more than once fills out the personal, spiritual awareness and practice. At the heart of a pilgrimage is what a person needs to give up — a certain amount of complaining. It is a Tauck or Rick Steves tour which is more a secular appreciation of art and history, and perhaps a little more upscale, but you will find the Unitours style very comfortable. We will be staying in very comfortable hotels centered along the way. The Italian countryside is beautiful and pleasing to the eye. There will be free periods of time to be on one’s own or for small groups to look into other activities, searching out other museums and places of particular interest to those on the tour. Our tour is including three extra days to the normal pilgrimage time.

When I led last year’s pilgrimage to the Holy Land, there were a number of older friends in their 80s and early 90s. One person even rented a scooter wheelchair chair. If you can walk, that is better, of course. I use my two trekking poles because I have knee neuropathy. So, bring canes and poles along if they are helpful to you.

A pilgrimage is different from a tour. A pilgrimage provides daily Mass, morning prayer as we drive along and other spiritual moments along the way. We will spend a whole day in Vatican City visiting the Vatican Museum, the Sistine Chapel and St. Peter’s Basilica, and of course the most Roman Spanish Steps and Trevi Fountain coins plus the Piazza Navona and the Pantheon. And of course, there is the Italian trattoria and restaurants. And we will see, perhaps the most famous of Michelangelo’s sculptures, the Moses, in the church of St. Peter in Chains, part of the tomb of Pope Julius II. There is so much to see.

I have been to a Rome a good number of times, especially when my cousin, Cardinal William Levada, was Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Coming to Rome more than once fills out the opportunity to see so many other places, monuments and shrines. One of the most beautiful buildings in Rome is the Jewish Synagogue built in the neo classical Egyptian architecture style. There is always more to investigate and to appreciate.

A pilgrimage is not a Tauck or Rick Steves tour which is more a secular appreciation of art and history, and perhaps a little more upscale, but you will find the Unitours style very comfortable. We will be staying in very comfortable hotels centered close to what needs to be seen. There will be scrumptious buffets and private suppers. The food is affordable, gracious, accommodating and first class. Unitours is always scouting around for the best affordable accommodations possible. Lunch is not on the tab. That you will have to pay for each day.

A pilgrimage also involves personal, spiritual awareness and practice. At the heart of a pilgrimage is what a person needs to give up — a certain amount of complaining, a certain amount of convenience, a certain amount of comfort, a certain amount of control, and very definitely, a certain amount of complain- ing. They are called the four practices of pilgrimage.

If each traveler understands what is necessary to make a pilgrimage, the outcome will be a powerful life-resetting experience that anchors our lives in history, in beauty, in art and in what is eternal.

(Rav. Richard A. Mangini, retired, was formerly pastor at St. Bonaventure Parish, Concord.)

Catholic Italy Pilgrimage

March 15-27, 2021

13 DAYS FROM SFO

ROME • ASSISI • FLORENCE • PADUA • VENICE • MILAN

This pilgrimage is not sponsored by the Diocese of Oakland or The Catholic Voice

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The Catholic Voice

10 — THE CATHOLIC VOICE

January 6, 2020

$50 Early Bird Discount if booked before February 10

Rome: Papal audience with the Holy Father at St. Peter’s Basilica (subject to confirmation). Vatican museums, Sistine Chapel, La Scala, Basilica of St. Paul, Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain.


Venice: Walk the Piazza San Marco and the most famous Basilica for Mass, view the Torre Dell’Orologio, enjoy first time for a gondola ride or to visit Murano.

Promotional Code: Mangini2021

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Rice Bowl ...

A Special Recognition Award went to Jovenes Para Cristo (Youth for Christ), an organization of Spanish-speaking young people that meets in six parishes in the diocese for faith-sharing opportunities. The young people have responded generously not to CRS emergency appeals, but to the annual CRS Rice Bowl program, said Marc McKinney, CRS/CCHILD coordinator for the Diocese of Oakland. Benjamin Hernandez and Santa Clara students sponsored Jovenes Para Cristo, which has chapters in six parishes at St. Peter Martyr, Pittsburg; St. Anthony, Mary Help of Christians, Oakland; St. Leander; San Leandro; St. Edward, Newark; and Curgius Church, Eastmont. The Our Lady of Guadalupe, both in Fremont.

The high cost of housing in the Bay Area continues to force many to make a hard choice between a roof over their head or food in the pantry, McKinney said, noting reports of increased activity at food pantries and requests for assistance received by the St. Vincent de Paul conference.

Catholic Community of Pleasanton assisted the Livermore Homeless Refuge in writing its grant application that resulted in an $893 award. All Saints Church and All parishes each received $50; and Sacred Heart, Hayward, $50. The Our Lady of Guadalupe, both in Fremont.

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New memoir recounts two priests’ world travels

By Michele Jurich

Rev. Don Osuna, whose 2011 memoir “How Awesome Is This Place!” chronicled his almost 20 years at St. Francis de Sales Cathedral, has published a second memoir.

The book, “Two Padres on Holiday” recounts a half-century of travel by Father Osuna and his seminary classmate, Rev. Mgr. Antonio “Tony” Valdivia. The friends, who were ordained to the priesthood in 1963, traveled the globe together.

“I hope that my book will in some way show that the priesthood offers an opportunity for a man not only to serve people, but to enrich his life through friendship and travel, which in turn enhances his ministry,” Father Osuna said.

The book is full of anecdotes not only of the places they visited but of the people they met. And there is the food, including a Spanish family meal that will leave the reader feeling both full and hungry at the same time.

Father Osuna will sign books at the Cathedral Shop from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Jan. 8 and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 2. He is likely to be joined by his fellow traveler.

Copies of the book are available in the Cathedral Shop and will also be available at the book signings. The shop also copies of Father Osuna’s first book available.

Q: Fifty years of travel ... did you keep journals, note-books, travelogues?

A: I kept them in the computer. I also kept the names and dates, places and incidents with people. I never did write them up until I got some time at St. Mary’s in Walnut Creek (where he served as pastor 2001-2007) when I wrote about 10 chapters, a very rough draft of what I did. I kept them in the computer. I also kept the other things in the computer.

Q: What prompted you to write this book?

A: I had intended all along to write not just a travelogue, but to say significant things about what traveling contributes to a person’s life, friendship, how travel renews one’s perspective, how travel enriches one’s work, how it can make one’s labor much richer. And I was traveling with an extraordinary, funny person. He is such a delight to be with, he is laid-back and open minded and open hearted. And so flexible.

Q: How did you and the monsignor meet?

A: We were classmates. I entered the seminary three years after him, I had been in the seminary in Mexico. Because he was Spanish-speaking and Hispanic and because I had just come from Mexico, we became friends. We started singing together the Mexican folk music. And we made that sort of a hobby. After we were ordained we had established this friendship. We complement each other. When we go on vacation we relax, he relaxes with me and I with him.

Q: Although retired, both you and Monsignor Valdivia remain active in ministry. Where might we find you these days?

A: Tony, of course, continues to travel all over the diocese serving the Hispanic community. We continue to get together frequently. And these days are short ones but equally as enriching and full of fun.

Mary "Jean" Alvernaz (née Bettencourt) (1939 - 2019)

Peaceful service Tuesday, October 8, 2019, surrounded by the love of her family and close friends.

She is survived by her husband Rodolfo "Red" Alvernaz of over 61 years and their children: Rodolfo Alvernaz, Maria Alvernaz (Jade), Anne Albernaz, and Gene Albernaz (Joe); 9 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her brother Anthony Bettencourt (Valentina) of Chico, Ca. and 14 nieces and nephews, both here in the States and in Portugal.

Born in Oroville to Anna M. and Mary L. (née Bettencourt), Jean was raised on the family’s dairy. She graduated Notre Dame High School in Marysville, and was an alumnus of the College of Notre Dame in Belmont (now Notre Dame de Namur University).

She was a banker for 30 years in Castro Valley, and active in a number of service organizations.

Jean served 30 years on the Board of the Selective Service System, and was also active in the Portuguese community especially the Luso-American Education Foundation.

Dedicated to her church Jean volunteered at St. Helens Church, San Leandro, was Past President of the Parish Council of Our Lady of Grace Church, Castro Valley; and was a member of Transfiguration Church, Castro Valley. She belonged to both the Dominican, and National Councils of Catholic Women. In 1977 Pope Paul VI, as a member of Bishop Roy Pope, named her a Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice award.

Retired, Jean became active in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Castro Valley, and served 17 years on the board of Friedelich of Brentwood.

A Rosary Mass was celebrated Nov. 4 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, with a reception at the SDES Hall, Union City.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, or the Luso-American Education Foundation.

Knights deliver gifts to families

Deputy Grand Knight Walter MacInnes of the Livermore Knights of Columbus watches as Christmas gift baskets delivered to families around Livermore on Dec. 14. The Knights were able to distribute a variety of food, including a Spanish family meal toi and other items to 1,300 families help sort and wrap gifts during the preceding week.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

The Catholic Voice next edition: January 20

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**Crab feeds for the New Year**

**Saturday, Jan. 18**

Ray Anna Blanchard, Parish Center’s 20th Annual Crab Feed, 5 to 11 p.m. Gannereta Center, Campolindo High School, 11313 Winton Drive, Concord. Cost: $55. Information: cotchey@concordunited.org/crabfeed.

**Saturday, Jan. 25**

Moravia High School Crab Feed Dinner and Auction, 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the Isidore Student Center. Sponsored by the school’s Department of Athletics and the Booster Club, this event is a fundraiser that supports Moravia’s Athletics and other co-curricular programs. Information: contact Erica Eisenalt, 510-878-3485 or ericaesieal@moraviahs.org.

**Saturday, Feb. 1**

Dave Rose Memorial Crab Feed, 6 p.m. (hosted bar and hors d’oeuvres), 7 p.m. (dinner) at the Mag. 18415 Main St., San Ramon, 3108 Van Buren, corner of High and Van Buren. Sponsored by the Italian Catholic Federation East Bay District. Cost: $55 adults, $10 children 10 and under. Chicken may be ordered instead of crab when reservations are made. A raffle ticket to the Westin Hotel, San Francisco, will be awarded to the highest bidder. Proceeds will support the CYO program. Cost: $55. Information: http://bit.ly/2B64HLU.

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**THE CATHOLIC VOICE — JANUARY 6, 2020**

**The Future of Togetherness**

Easter Vigil and the Communion Service provide intimate opportunities for unity as the faithful gather to celebrate the resurrection. It is in these moments of togetherness that we are invited to remember that we are called to be the body of Christ, a body that is united in Him through the sacraments and the two other Eucharistic species, bread and wine. In this season of Epiphany, let us focus on the way that we come together as a community and the ways that we live into the promise of the Holy Spirit's gift.

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**NEW EVENTS**

**Saturday, Jan. 11**

Italian Catholic Federation Branch 10 Polenta Dinner. 6 p.m. (no-host social hour), 7 p.m. dinner at Mag., 18415 Main St., San Ramon. Proceeds: $25 for adults, $12 for children, $20 for seniors. Check to Italian Catholic Federation San Ramon. rsudall2@gmail.com or 510-523-1559.

**Sunday, Jan. 12**

Emo Stallings, Mary Oliver and Gerard Manley Hopkins: Companions on Our Spiritual Journey, 2 to 4 p.m. at Dominican Life Center, 2200 Mission Circle entrance off Mission Tierra. Facilitator: Presenter: Sister Kathrinna Joan Courten. OP, will explore spirituality and prayer, suggesting how the poetry of Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero and Thomas Merton can help deepen these within us. RSVP by Jan. 8, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Info: 510-633-6060 or visit www.mjdimensionmi.org.

**Jan. 12 to 26**

**GIFTING IN GRACE** (Faith Together), St. Jean Baptiste Parish, 2120 Polenta Drive. Gifts are items that donors have made or received as gifts in their lifetime. St. John Vianney Loss of Child Grief Ministry. (For exact dates, contact Kaye在深圳的电邮 can be found at the back portal of the church. Facilitator: St. Joseph the Worker Church, 1942 Addison St., Berkeley. Contact: Facebook/DaveRoseOfficial; dave@brandon9.com or 510-364-7215.

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** EVENTS**

**Saturday, Jan. 18**

Cathedral Organ Recital, 3 p.m. in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 2127 Hampshire St., Oakland. A celebration of the 10th anniversary of the blessing and dedication of the Cathedral Organ: Recital with organist and bravura recital with the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Second Wednesday

Slingo, 6 p.m. in the St. Alphonsus Room at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, 3439 Somerset Ave., Castro Valley. Sponsored by St. Maximilian Kolbe Council 1670 Knights of Columbus.

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**RETREATS**

**Jan. 8, Feb. 12, Mar. 11**

Days of Prayer at Santa Barbara Retreat, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Mercy Center, 2300 Adeline St., Berkeley. Workshop Theme: The depth of touching, intimate bond between Mother and Child, because the metaphor for Catherine of Siena’s prayer is: prophetic prayer: Cost: $55/nondeductible registration: 4:00 registration and lunch. Information: 510-340-7474 or www.mercy-center.org.

**Jan. 24 to 26**

‘French Heart of Thomas Merton’ with Father Dan Horan, OFM. At San Damiano Retreat, 710 Highland Drive, Danville. Cost: $250 (private room) or $230 (shared room). Information/registration: visit www.sandamiano.org or 925-837-6511, ext. 315.

**Jan. 31 to Feb. 2**

“St. John Vianney’s Christian Fellowship Retreat, At St. Clare’s Retreat Center, 2381 Laurel Glen Road, Danville. The theme of the annual retreat is ‘Be Still and Know that I Am Good’. Rev. Richard Mullins, 1109 Chestnut St., Walnut Creek, former pastor at St. Clare’s Parish in Concord, will direct the retreat through concrete prayer experiences that invite us to ‘be’ in the presence of God and draw us closer to His loving heart. Questions? Rev. Richard Mullins, 925-523-7675, or email jvianneyconcord@gmail.com. St. Clare’s, 925-514-3784.

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**TAÏZÉ**

(A contemplative, candlelit service of prayer in an arts-centered setting, silent worship and veneration of the cross.)

**Friday, Jan. 17**


**Sunday, Jan. 19**

7:30 p.m. at Christ the King Church, 1194 Brandon Road, Pleasant Hill. Facilitator: Emmanuel Episcopal Church. Information: www.sanramonvalley.org.

**Friday, Jan. 24**

8 p.m. St. Joseph Basilica, 1109 Chelmsford St., San Francisco. Information: www.sandamiano.org or 925-363-6511, ext. 315.

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**SUPPORT GROUPS**

**Jan. 9, Feb. 13, Mar. 17, April 24**

Military Peer Support Group. 7 p.m. in the rectory at St. Augustine Church, 3999 Bernal Ave., Richmond. Military Peer Support Group.

Second Saturdays

St. John Vianney Loss of Child Grief Ministry, 1 p.m. at Church of the Good Shepherd, 300 Harbor St., Pittsburg. For details, call Sandy Heinisch, 510-513-4142 or sandynca@sbcglobal.net.

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**ART/MUSIC**

Through Feb., 2020

Lightning Strikes 8, At the Doby Chukwudi Gallery, 210 Polenta Dr., San Francisco. The second edition of a prolific exhibit that celebrates the work of Melvin C. Doby. The exhibit features the works of 22 poets and visual artists, writers, editors, curators, musicians, dancers, and a Buddhist priest. For more information, contact Kaye Cary in 510-419-5081 or knct10@att.net.
We are here to be helpers for a hurting world

By Rev. Lawrence D’Anjou

Recently I had lunch with a friend who recommended to me the movie, “A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood.” Intrigued, I went to see it on my day off. In case you don’t know, it is a story based on the life of Fred Rogers, who hosted the long-running PBC children’s program “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.” From the opening scene it takes you into the world of Mister Rogers, with close-ups of what appears to be a toy re-creation of a neighborhood within the city of Pittsburgh.

Tom Hanks plays Fred Rogers and in the opening scene he does something quite unexpected. Opening little doors to reveal pictures of people and characters from the program, he opens a door to reveal a friend of his whose face had been bloodied in a fist fight. He wants to tell the story of a special friend of his, which sets up the story of a real-life relationship. Fred Rogers had with Lloyd Vogel, an investigative journalist for Esquire magazine.

In real life, Fred was a highly affluent Catholic who finds himself in opposition to the pope. Why does he seem so angry, divisive and upset that things are changing? His ideas are upset that things are changing.

First, Bishop Barron recommended that the Church has to stop dumbing down. “This is how most people find us,” he said. Using this tool, which didn’t exist even 10 years ago, we can now reach into their world,” he said. “We didn’t exist even 10 years ago, we can reach into their world.”

WEIGEL

Bad Weigel

Two articles by George Weigel (Forum, Whole Church believes Oct. 21), and “The Amazon Synod: A masque sonted with clichés, Nov. 25) make me very sad. Why would a man of great experience and stature—caught in the middle of his career—resort to ad hominem attacks in polemics against his colleagues? Bishop Robert Barron, auxiliary of Los Angeles and chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, suggested five ways he believes would be useful in reaching out to people who are alienated from the Church.

Five paths to bring back the unaffiliated to the Church

By Gretchen R. Crowe

Recently, I had lunch with a friend who recommended to me the movie, “A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood.” Intrigued, I went to see it on my day off.

In the beginning, it appears that Weigel, and those who share his views, have given up on historical context. To the present it must resonate within the historical context.

The Catholic Voice, 2121 Harrison Street, Ste.100
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Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.

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LETTERS

(continued from page 14) the pedophilia scandal and its heinous cover-up is it not dangerous to promote and maintain this clerical-reality reality? Vatican II taught that the Church was first of all “the people of God” not an all-powerful hierarchy. Christ acts through the Church’s people to maintain and uphold this clerical-reality reality?

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Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Services

Have you finalized your cemetery and funeral services?

CFCS is your complete resource for all your end-of-life services.

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