



THE EAGLE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL PUBLISHED BY
THE BASILICA OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT



VOLUME 4, NUMBER 7

online @ www.stjohnsstamford.com/the-eagle

SEPTEMBER 2013

“A fellow pilgrim in the journey of faith”

From Brooklyn to Bridgeport, our new Shepherd

On July 31, 2013, Pope Francis named Auxiliary Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Brooklyn, NY as the new bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, succeeding Archbishop William E. Lori. Bishop Caggiano, 54, will be installed as the fifth Bishop of Bridgeport on September 19 at St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull.

Born in Brooklyn, Bishop Caggiano attended Yale University, Cathedral College in Queens, NY, and Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, NY. He holds a licentiate and doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained a priest for the Brooklyn Diocese in 1987 and elevated to auxiliary bishop in 2006. Here is his statement from his first press conference, held in Bridgeport on July 31.

Allow me to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for the trust and confidence he has shown me by appointing me to be the Shepherd of this wonderful, vibrant, and diverse Diocese. It is an awesome and exciting ministry that I know will bring



BISHOP-ELECT FRANK CAGGIANO MEETS THE PRESS
ON JULY 31 IN BRIDGEPORT. (AP PHOTO)

with it many opportunities to bring people together to pray, and to invite each and every one of us to grow in holiness of life.

There are always challenges in ministry, but

I have every confidence that the Lord will always provide us with whatever we need to meet the challenges that we face and, through the struggles that we have together, as we do as any family, to deepen our faith in the Lord and, really, the love that we should have for one another. . .

“Jesus is alive here in Bridgeport. We are willing to share Him with anyone who is willing to walk with us.”

My friends, I come to you today as a fellow pilgrim on the journey of faith and I am very eager to learn about all the good that is already being done in the Diocese each and every day. I am ready to listen and learn more about the needs of God’s people.

I stand here committed to collaborate with all who are in leadership, in our parishes, our schools, our colleges, our institutions that serve the poor, and, in a very special way, with

➡ PLEASE TURN TO **BISHOP** ON PAGE 2

ON THE INSIDE

Pope Francis Inspires World’s Youth to Go, Be Not Afraid, and Serve..... page 4
Archbishop Charles Chaput on Culture Change Via the Fire of Faith page 8
Siobhan Heekin-Canedy on Being an Olympic “Athlete of Christ” page 12
Deacon Pat Toole, Jr. on the Transfiguration and Our Hope in the Cross page 14
Fr. Al Audette Discovers Wonders and a “Saint” on the African Serengeti ... page 16
Fr. Terry Walsh Says It’s Time to Join a Parish Group or Ministry page 18
Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni Offers “The Last Word” on Renewal page 36

“Sometimes God whispers; He is not easily heard”

You worked as a textbook salesman before becoming a priest. How does experience in the secular world help your ministry?

I worked for McGraw Hill as a sales rep for a year and a half. On a personal level it helped me to discern my vocation as a priest. There was a point in my life where I thought that I knew everything I wanted and needed. I thought I needed a good job, a great salary, a company car, and an expense account. God, in all of His wisdom, gave me all that.

And then I realized that I was not happy. I realized that there was something more to life. I realized that the Lord wanted to do it His way. When I overcame that initial stubbornness and started to do it His way, I have never been happier. So, it has helped me listen better to the will and voice of God. I hope to bring that to my ministry as well.

What qualities do you think Pope Francis saw in you that prompted him to give you this honor?

I honestly cannot answer this on the Holy Father's behalf, but allow me to

answer it this way. What do I hope to bring? First and foremost, a gentle and compassionate heart. I think what the world needs to see is the mercy of God. Pope Francis is receiving such an enormous welcome from believers and non-believers alike because he very beautifully is presenting the merciful love of God. To the extent in my own way that I can do that, I am hoping that I can bring that to this ministry.

*“What do I hope to bring?
A gentle and compassionate
heart, and a great love for
all that has to do with the
transmission of the faith.”*

I also hope to bring a great love for all that has to do with the transmission of the faith. It is all about the Good News of being a Catholic Christian, of the message of the salvation in Jesus. I love catechesis, faith formation, and education. This is what I am involved with back home in Brooklyn, and I hope that can be of help here.


What do you think will be your biggest challenge as Bishop of Bridgeport?

The challenges here in Bridgeport are perhaps universal challenges. If you were to ask me coming in, *tabula rasa*, what would be the concerns I have, it would be to invite everyone to become evangelizers. To be witnesses to the gospel, to invite people of good will to know what we know, He whom we know, He whom we love. We have the best of news to share and we don't always do it effectively, perhaps, in part, because there is a lot of noise in the modern world. Sometimes God whispers; He is not easily heard.

Do you think the legacy of the priest abuse scandal hangs over your new diocese?

I see this as a question of trust. When trust is broken it takes a while to rebuild that trust. Perhaps now, 11 years after, we are still working to rebuild trust among some individuals who may have felt as if that trust certainly was broken and therefore needs to be mended and healed.

Archbishop Lori should be commended for the work that he did. He was a national leader in making sure our

 **BISHOP** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
my brother priests, deacons, and women and men in consecrated life who lead us throughout this great Diocese. I ask each and every one of you for your prayers and for your support and, particularly, for your help. Let us work together in the years ahead to grow into deeper love of the Lord and His people. Let us recommit ourselves to bring the Good News of salvation that comes to us in Jesus to anyone who is willing to listen.

I have in my mind and, particularly, in my heart, a very special place for our young people. Recently, I was in Rio de Janeiro for World Youth Day

with Pope Francis. It was a truly graced moment in the life of the Church. While I was there, I was filled with an even greater sense of hope and excitement that the Church is very much alive in the hearts of our young people. Many are on fire with the joy and enthusiasm and energy that they want to share with the whole Church.

So, as I stand before you and prepare in the coming weeks to take up this awesome mystery, I want to say to all of the young people of our Diocese and to those young people who are searching, wandering, wondering what the direction of their life is going to be, that I am here to serve them and to walk with them in their journey of faith to discover anew a profound personal relationship with Jesus Christ. For when they, like

we, have found Jesus, they will have found everything they need to have a happy and joyful life.

Let me end by saying that I ask for your prayers, and I ask our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, and St. Augustine, our patron, to pray for all of us that, together, as sisters and brothers, we will go forward in faith. We will bring a renewed sense to the mission of the gospel that Jesus is alive here in Bridgeport and we are willing to share Him with anyone who is willing to walk with us. I thank you all very much and look forward to meeting you all individually in the weeks and months ahead.

children are protected, and every Bishop in this country stands committed to do exactly the same thing.

You have taken a special interest in young people and, especially, their use of social media.

In my catechesis sessions at World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro I had a magnificent, energetic group of young people. They are the first generation that was actually born into this electronic world. A person like myself uses it fairly competently, I hope, but they were actually born into it, which means they are formed by it. They see the world a certain way. They socialize a certain way. You know what I mean if you have young children or teenagers. That is the venue of their lives. And the Church need not to run away from that venue but – allow me to put it this way – to “baptize” the venue, for there are many individuals who are using the electronic world to their own benefit which is *not* to the benefit of our young people. It is, in many ways, the Wild, Wild West.

So, I have a keen interest in listening to young people who will be able to teach me and teach us about this world and be able to go into it to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. I look forward to working with all of you to make that happen.

What your position on gay people in the Catholic Church?

In Rio this was the very first question that young people raised, because it is a burning issue in the life of the Church. First and foremost, we have to be very clear as Catholic Christians that the love of God is universal, that gay and lesbian Catholics and those who are straight are loved by the Lord and we are to love them as well. Everyone is welcome into the life of the Church. But, there is a need for all of us to live an authentic Catholic life. And, therefore, chastity is an important issue in all of our lives.

For those who are homosexual, they certainly have aspirations to be loved, to seek friendship, and there are appropriate ways to do that. But marriage is

not one of them because in the natural law we all know that marriage is a man and a woman called together in a lifetime of love and to procreate as a sign of their love.

My position, which is the Church’s and the Holy Father’s position, is that the Church



BISHOP CAGGIANO CELEBRATES MASS AT THE CATHOLIC CENTER. (PHOTO BY AMY MORTENSEN)

“I have a keen interest in listening to young people to teach us about social media to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

welcomes and invites all people, that the love of God is extended to all people. Everyone is to be invited to live authentic Christian lives, whatever that means to the individual person.

What are your impressions of Pope Francis and this new chapter for the Church?

He is a great gift to the Church. You know, every Pope brings gifts that are needed in the time and age in which he is called to serve through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis has given a remarkable opportunity for people, even who do not believe, to take a second look at the Church through his humility, his simplicity. And he has a way of connecting in the heart that is tremendous. It is an inspired gift.

I saw it with the young people in Rio. The

enthusiasm, the tears, the joy, the dancing. He is almost like a grandfather to them in his gestures and his symbols, which are authentic. There is no showmanship there. He is allowing people to realize that our God, first and foremost, is a loving God who will reach out to you wherever you are.

In my catechesis in Rio, I said to the young people that there is a part of your heart that probably is shrouded. There are secrets that you are carrying in your life that you desperately want no one to know. There is a part of you that you think is ugly that no one will love. And the Lord knows all of your secrets and has seen all of your shadows and loves you as you are. The Holy Father is absolutely brilliant in allowing people to feel that as well as know Him. To the extent that I could follow in a small way in his footsteps, I would be very grateful.

You were born on Easter. Does that have any special significance to you?

Yes. My mother never let me forget it. For my mother it was a great sign. Perhaps it was. When I announced that I wanted to be a priest my father was furious. My mother was absolutely thrilled.

Also, my doctor never let me forget that I ruined his Easter dinner. I was born at 1:40 in the afternoon, right when the pasta would have been served.

Do you have any hobbies?

I am an avid Mets fan, so I am a man of hope. I like to do, believe it or not, manual labor. I love painting and wallpapering, and carpentry. I love gardening. I find it to be a tremendous release. Plus, it has a beginning, middle, and end. You know when you get your jobs done.

I also like to read. The book that changed me the most while growing up was the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. I read it for the first time in freshman year in high school when I went to the beach. I read it every summer after, and I think that it is a brilliant parable of many of the basic themes of Christian life. It opened up my imagination. Imagination is an under-utilized road to faith.

Three simple ideas: Go, do not be afraid, and serve

More than 3 million young people gathered on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the concluding Mass of World Youth Day on July 28, and heard Pope Francis say that the enormous enthusiasm on display "must not remain locked up." "Faith is a flame that grows stronger the more it is shared," the Pope told the young people. Warning them against keeping their faith to themselves, he said: "That would be like withholding oxygen from a flame that was burning strongly." Instead he challenged them to help spread the faith across the world. The Holy Father's homily follows.

“Go and make disciples of all nations.” With these words, Jesus is speaking to each one of us, saying: *“It was wonderful to take part in World Youth Day, to live the faith together with young people from the four corners of the earth, but now you must go, now you must pass on this experience to others.”* Jesus is calling you to be a disciple with a mission!

Today, in the light of the word of God that we have heard, what is the Lord saying to us? What is the Lord saying to us? Three simple ideas: Go, do not be afraid, and serve.

Go. During these days here in Rio, you have been able to enjoy the wonderful experience of meeting Jesus, meeting him together with others, and you have sensed the joy of faith. But the experience of this encounter must not remain locked up in your life or in the small group of your parish, your movement, or your community. That would be like withholding oxygen from a flame that was burning strongly. Faith is a flame that grows stronger the more it is shared and passed on, so that everyone may know, love, and confess Jesus Christ, the Lord of life and history (cf. Romans 10:9).

Careful, though! Jesus did not say: *“Go, if you would like to, if you have*

the time,” but He said: *“Go and make disciples of all nations.”* Sharing the experience of faith, bearing witness to the faith, proclaiming the Gospel: this is a command that the Lord entrusts to the whole Church, and that includes you; but it is a command that is born not from a desire for domination, from the desire for power, but from the force of love, from the fact that Jesus first came into our midst. He did not give us just

feel the warmth of His mercy and His love.

In particular, I would like Christ’s command, “Go,” to resonate in you young people from the Church in Latin America, engaged in the continental mission promoted by the Bishops. Brazil, Latin America, the whole world needs Christ! St. Paul says: *“Woe to me if I do*



a part of Himself, but He gave us the whole of Himself. He gave His life in order to save us and to show us the love and mercy of God. Jesus does not treat us as slaves, but as people who are free, as friends, as brothers and sisters; and He not only sends us, He accompanies us. He is always beside us in our mission of love.

Where does Jesus send us? There are no borders, no limits: He sends us to everyone. The Gospel is for everyone, not just for some. It is not only for those who seem closer to us, more receptive, more welcoming. It is for everyone. Do not be afraid to go and to bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away, most indifferent. The Lord seeks all; He wants everyone to

not preach the Gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16). This continent has received the proclamation of the Gospel which has marked its history and borne much fruit. Now this proclamation is entrusted also to you, that it may resound with fresh power. The Church needs you, your enthusiasm, your creativity, and the joy that is so characteristic of you.

A great Apostle of Brazil, Blessed José de Anchieta, set off on the mission when he was only nineteen years old. Do you know what the best tool is for evangelizing the young? Another young person. This is the path for all of you to follow!

Do not be afraid. Some people might



POPE FRANCIS WAVES FROM THE POPEMOBILE (LEFT) ALONG COPACABANA BEACH, WHERE THREE MILLION PEOPLE GATHERED (ABOVE) FOR THE CLOSING MASS OF WORLD YOUTH DAY ON JULY 28. (AP PHOTOS)

think: *"I have no particular preparation. How can I go and proclaim the Gospel?"* My dear friend, your fear is not so very different from that of Jeremiah, as we have just heard in the reading, when he was called by God to be a prophet. *"Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth."* God says the same thing to you as He said to Jeremiah: *"Be not afraid . . . for I am with you to deliver you"* (Jeremiah 1:7, 8). He is with us!

"Do not be afraid!" When we go to proclaim Christ, it is He Himself who goes before us and guides us. When He sent His disciples on mission, He promised: *"I am with you always"* (Matthew 28:20). And this is also true for us! Jesus never leaves anyone alone! He always accompanies us. And then, Jesus did not say: *"One of you go,"* but *"All of you go":* we are sent together.

Dear young friends, be aware of the companionship of the whole Church and also the communion of the saints on this mission. When we face challenges together, then we are strong, we discover resources we did not know we had. Jesus did not call the Apostles to live in isolation; He called them to

form a group, a community.

I would like to address you, dear priests concelebrating with me at this Eucharist: you have come to accompany your young people, and this is wonderful, to share this experience of faith with them! Certainly He has rejuvenated all of you. The young make

"Bringing the Gospel is bringing God's power to pluck up and break down evil and violence, to destroy and overthrow the barriers of selfishness, intolerance, and hatred, so as to build a new world."

everyone feel young. But this experience is only a stage on the journey. Please, continue to accompany them with generosity and joy, help them to become actively engaged in the Church; never let them feel alone! And here I wish to thank from the heart the youth ministry teams from the movements and new communities that are accompanying the young people in their experience of being Church, in such a creative and bold

way. Go forth and don't be afraid!

The final word: serve. The opening words of the psalm that we proclaimed are: *"Sing to the Lord a new song"* (Psalm 95:1). What is this new song? It does not consist of words, it is not a melody. It is the song of your life; it is allowing our life to be identified with that of Jesus, it is sharing His sentiments, thoughts, and actions. And the life of Jesus is a life for others. It is a life of service.

In our Second Reading today, St. Paul says: *"I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more"* (1 Corinthians 9:19). In order to proclaim Jesus, Paul made himself "a slave to all." Evangelizing means bearing personal witness to the love of God. It is overcoming our selfishness; it is serving by bending down to wash the feet of our brethren, as Jesus did.

Three ideas: Go, do not be afraid, and serve. If you follow these three ideas, you will experience that the one who evangelizes is evangelized, the one who transmits the joy of faith receives more joy.

Dear young friends, as you return to your homes, do not be afraid to be generous with Christ, to bear witness to His Gospel. In the first Reading, when God sends the prophet Jeremiah, He gives him the power to *"pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant"* (1:10).

It is the same for you. Bringing the Gospel is bringing God's power to pluck up and break down evil and violence, to destroy and overthrow the barriers of selfishness, intolerance, and hatred, so as to build a new world.

Dear young friends, Jesus Christ is counting on you! The Church is counting on you! The Pope is counting on you! May Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, always accompany you with her tenderness. *"Go and make disciples of all nations."* Amen.

– Pope Francis

Illuminating the mystery and the reality of Faith

Not infrequently, it is a disservice to summarize an encyclical before it has had a reasonable chance to make its own direct impact on readers around the world. I think this is very much the case with Pope Francis' first encyclical, *Lumen Fidei* (*The Light of Faith*), dated June 29, 2013.

For some encyclicals, such reticence might not be justified, but everyone should be encouraged to read for himself this relatively short and tightly-structured reflection on Faith.

I recall that Pope Benedict's large 2009 social encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* (*Charity in Truth*), was a horse of a different color, affording a good argument for extensive commentary. That encyclical incorporated a number of different themes, and relied heavily on the whole body of prior social teaching. Few would read it in its entirety; it would be the subject of endless claims by those desiring to score points in contemporary social, political, and economic debates; and many people would need at least some help to make sense out of it – to extract what was new and identify the thematic trajectory within the many topics addressed.

Lumen Fidei, however, demands a different sort of response. Here we have a work of some 60 paragraphs devoted to the fundamental religious question of our age: How are we to understand faith in a world which dismisses it as mere sentiment and, moreover, does not even understand the concept of universal truth? Indeed, the introduction to the encyclical traces briefly the history of man's response to faith to the present moment, faith which now starts at a disadvantage in comparison with the other claims on a busy life.

The proper thing to do, then, is to whet the appetite for reading the

encyclical, hopefully slowly and prayerfully, on our own. *Lumen Fidei* is divided into four chapters, each drawn from a passage in Scripture:

1. **We have believed in love.** (1 John 4:16)
2. **Unless you believe, you will not understand.** (Isaiah 7:9)
3. **I delivered to you what I also received.** (1 Corinthians 15:3)
4. **God prepares a city for them.** (Hebrews 11:16)

truth, in that faith enables us to see reality more deeply, to know the good, and – secure in this knowledge – to stand firm in the course of our lives. Indeed, the deepest knowledge of the truth comes through the love of God and of others which faith enables. As faith comes through hearing and sight, it is an intensely personal experience which opens out into a unique trustworthy knowledge, stimulating a constant dialogue between faith and reason.

The Pope notes that the Hellenic impulse, taken to represent the thrust



“Here we have a work of some 60 paragraphs devoted to the fundamental religious question of our age: How are we to understand faith in a world which dismisses it as mere sentiment and, moreover, does not even understand the concept of universal truth?”

In the first chapter, Pope Francis – who has deliberately drawn on the previous preparations for this encyclical by his predecessor – explores the rootedness of faith in the absolute fidelity of God, Who is completely trustworthy. Thus faith opens up an understanding of God's plan and God's promise, which gives us a deeper understanding of reality, and enables us to know how to live in response to the seemingly more immediate vagaries of life in the world.

This faith is relational. God enters human history and invites each person to participate in His plan of love. Thus faith reaches its fullness in the community of the Church, where the love of God is manifested in the one body of Christ. St. Augustine captured the bond created by faith when he explained: “*Man is faithful when he believes in God and His promises; God is faithful when He grants to man what He has promised.*” And God is fidelity incarnate.

In the second chapter, the Pope explores the intrinsic connections between faith and

of reason, is contained within Scripture itself, as the philosophical interplay with faith was expressed under divine inspiration in the course of Jewish history. But the truth of faith, a fruit of love, is not some totalitarian imposition. It is a true gift for the common good. Its light is a light within the believing subject, which is the whole Church.

This leads directly to the third chapter, in which Francis explains that faith is not passed on as if from individual to individual, which can only produce an increasing distance from and uncertainty about the original events on which faith is based. Rather, it is transmitted whole and entire by the Church which, under the real authority of Christ in the Magisterium, always contains the entire content of faith – the entire ecclesial memory and the full life of Christ.

Thus the Church extends the relational reality of Faith not only through her doctrines, but through her very sacramental

life. The Creed becomes an invitation to enter the Divine mystery and be transformed in love. This ecclesial life is also transmitted in the path of the Ten Commandments and, of course, in prayer. This faith in the one God, directed toward the one Lord, is shared in the one Church, and so must be professed in its full unity and integrity.

Finally, in the fourth chapter, Pope Francis more thoroughly explores the impact of the gift of faith on the community. He had already noted its role in securing the common good, for from the first those who put their faith in God have been preserved not only individually but as a people. Thus the great Old Testament mediators of faith, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, brought all who believe to the fulfillment of God's promises.

This principle of mediation enables others to participate in the vision of the mediator, preparing us to participate in the vision of Christ Himself, who irrevocably places God's action in the context of human history and so secures the dignity of the human person. Without Christ, this sense of human dignity is always lost. With Christ, all the saints mediate this vision to others, fruitful with new life and new hope. To all those who suffer, the Church provides a service of hope against a new horizon of absolute confidence in the reality of the faithfulness of God.

I hope that it is easy to see, from these brief highlights, the richness and depth of *Lumen Fidei*. Faith is very difficult in the modern period, and almost never understood. Clearly, if we can read only one explanation of the mystery and reality of faith, we should read this jewel of an encyclical, given to us in the first year of the pontificate of Pope Francis – the Year of Faith, the year of the New Evangelization.

– Dr. Jeff Mirus

Dr. Mirus founded Trinity Communications, the non-profit organization which runs CatholicCulture.org, the premier source for Catholic news and information on the web. To read Pope Francis' encyclical, visit the Resources section of CatholicCulture.org.

*An excerpt from **Lumen Fidei***

To believe, we need the Church

The Church is a Mother who teaches us to speak the language of faith. St. John brings this out in his Gospel by closely uniting faith and memory and associating both with the working of the Holy Spirit, who, as Jesus says, “will remind you of all that I have said to you” (John 14:26). The love which is the Holy Spirit and which dwells in the Church unites every age and makes us contemporaries of Jesus, thus guiding us along our pilgrimage of faith.

It is impossible to believe on our own. Faith is not simply an individual decision which takes place in the depths of the believer's heart, nor a completely private relationship between the “I” of the believer and the divine “Thou,” between an autonomous subject and God. By its very nature, faith is open to the “We” of the Church; it always takes place within her communion.

We are reminded of this by the dialogical format of the Creed used in the baptismal liturgy. Our belief is expressed in response to an invitation, to a word which must be heard and which is not my own; it exists as part of a dialogue and cannot be merely a profession originating in an individual. We can respond in the singular — “I believe”

— only because we are part of a greater fellowship, only because we also say “We believe.” This openness to the ecclesial “We” reflects the openness of God's own love, which is not only a relationship between the Father and the Son, between an “I” and a “Thou,” but is also, in the Spirit, a “We,” a communion of persons.

Here we see why those who believe are never alone, and why faith tends to spread, as it invites others to share in its joy. Those who receive faith discover that their horizons expand as new and enriching relationships come to life. Tertullian puts this well when he describes the catechumens who, “after the cleansing which gives new birth” are welcomed into the house of their mother and, as part of a new family, pray the Our Father together with their brothers and sisters.

The Church, like every family, passes on to her children the whole store of her memories. But how does this come about in a way that nothing is lost, but rather everything in the patrimony of faith comes to be more deeply understood? It is through the apostolic Tradition preserved in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit that we enjoy a living contact with the foundational memory. What was handed down by the Apostles — as the Second Vatican Council states — “comprises everything that serves to make the people of God live their lives in holiness and increase their faith. In this way the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes.”

Faith, in fact, needs a setting in which it can be witnessed to and communicated, a means which is suitable and proportionate to what is communicated. For transmitting a purely doctrinal content, an idea might suffice, or perhaps a book, or the repetition of a spoken message. But what is communicated in the Church, what is handed down in her living Tradition, is the new light born of an encounter with the true God, a light which touches us at the core of our being and engages our minds, wills, and emotions, opening us to relationships lived in communion.

“It is impossible to believe on our own. Faith is open to the ‘We’ of the Church; it always takes place within her communion.”

Changing our culture with the fire of our Faith

In his address to the Laity Engaging Laity Conference in Colorado Springs, CO, on August 13, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., of Philadelphia spoke about American culture and how the fire of faith could change and renew it. "The Christian faith is not simply a habit," the Archbishop insisted. "It's not a useful moral code. It's not an exercise in nostalgia. It's a restlessness, a consuming fire in the heart to experience the love of Jesus Christ and then share it with others – or it's nothing at all." His address follows.

My task today is talking about our culture, and how we might change and renew it. And I'm glad to do that. But I'd like to begin with a few observations.

Some years ago I was browsing through the newspapers, and I came across a story from *The New York Times*. The headline read: "Why the ignorant are blissful: Inept individuals ooze confidence, study shows." It turns out that David Dunning, a professor at Cornell University, did a study of incompetence. And what he found is that most incompetent people *don't know* they're incompetent. In fact, people who do things badly tend to be very confident about their ability. They're often *more* confident than the people who do things well.

Dunning went on to find that the ignorant overestimate their abilities for a good reason. The skills they lack for competence are usually the same skills they need to recognize their own incompetence. In fact, according to one of Dunning's colleagues, "*not only do [incompetent people] reach erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but their incompetence robs them of the ability to realize it.*"

I should add that, as a result of his study, Dr. Dunning soon began worrying about his *own* competence.

Now that's a true story, and we can



ARCHBISHOP CHARLES CHAPUT OF PHILADELPHIA ANNOUNCES THAT HIS ARCHDIOCESE WILL HOST THE EIGHTH WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES, A GLOBAL EVENT, IN SEPTEMBER 2015. (AP PHOTO)

smile at it. But the lesson we need to draw from it today is a serious one.

As a nation and as individuals, we're not as smart as we think we are. What we learned – or should have learned – from 9/11, Iraq, and Afghanistan, is that we stumble and bleed just like everyone else. We pay for our overconfidence and self-absorption just like everyone else. Fools with tools are still fools. Technology, wealth, and power may feed our vanity, but they're not the same as wisdom, moral purpose, and character. And they don't give us any security, because only God can do that.

I believe that Americans are a great people, a *good* people, and that, even today, America remains a great experiment in human dignity. But it's an experiment that depends on our respect for the sanctity of

the human person. And "sanctity" is an idea that makes no sense without God, who seems less and less welcome in our national discourse. The historian Gertrude Himmelfarb once noted that America in our lifetime is "*living off the religious capital of a previous generation, and [that] capital is being perilously depleted.*" When the capital is gone, we may not like the results, because the more we delete God from our public life and our private behavior, the more we remove the moral vocabulary that gives our culture meaning.

We need to understand that the more secular we become, the more our sense of community erodes, and the more we feed four problems that cripple us as a society.

Here's the first problem: **More and more often, we're unable to think clearly.** The American Founders created a political system that depends for its success on a literate, reasoning population grounded in moral maturity. Reasoning requires time. It demands a reverence for ideas. It involves the testing and comparison of arguments.

But the America we have today is a culture built on marketing – and marketing works in exactly the opposite way. Marketing appeals to desire and emotion. It depends on the suppression of critical thought, because thinking can get in the way of buying the product or believing the message. And that explains why marketing is tied so tightly to images. Images operate below the radar of critical thought. This is why car dealers put an attractive female model next to their latest sports car, instead of a stack of performance statistics.

Here's the second problem: **More and more often, we're unable to remember.** The scholar and critic Christopher Lasch often argued that Americans have an addiction to the new. We're a people of the "now." We enjoy nostalgia, because it's a kind of entertainment. But

we don't really like *history* because the past – as it really happened – burdens us with memories and unfinished business. It imposes obligations on the present. Americans like to think that we can invent and reinvent ourselves, unencumbered by our mistakes and promises. But the cost of that illusion is that we tend to have a very poor grasp of history. We learn too little, too late, from the lessons of the past.

Here's problem three: **More and more often, we're unable to imagine and hope.** At least until recently, Americans have never been ideologues. We're pragmatists and toolmakers. We believe in results. So it's really no surprise that we built the strongest economic machine in the world; or that we excel at science and technology; or that these disciplines enjoy such esteem in our culture.

But science and technology always carries with them a "revenge of unintended consequences." And one of the unintended consequences of our science is that we've become its objects and its victims. C.S. Lewis saw this coming 70 years ago when he published his extraordinary book, *The Abolition of Man*. The price tag for our science has been a decline in our vocabulary of the soul, a rise in the materialist view of the world, and a collapse in our confidence that humanity is somehow unique or sacred in creation. Hope and imagination depend on things we can't measure. They flow out of a belief in a higher purpose to our lives. If all we are is a collection of intelligent carbon atoms, then hope and imagination are just sentimental quirks of our species. And so is any talk about the sanctity of the human person, or human rights, or human dignity.

Here's problem four: **More and more often, we're unable to recognize and live real freedom.** Freedom is more than just an endless supply of options and choices. Choice for its own sake is just another form of idolatry. Freedom is the ability to see – and the courage to do – what is morally right. But if

Americans stop believing that any absolute principles of right and wrong exist, then how can we even begin to discuss things like freedom, truth, and the dignity of the human person in a common vocabulary? How can we agree on which rights take precedence, or who has responsibility for what obligations?

What we get in place of freedom is a kind of anarchy of conflicting appetites, pressure groups, and personal agendas, refereed by the state and held together by just one fragile thread: the economy we all share – and money is rarely the best glue for brotherhood, or good will, or community. In fact our economy, more than anything else in American life today, teaches us to see *almost everything* as a commodity to be bought or sold.

Jeremy Rifkin, the author and social critic, once described modern culture – in the

"Americans are a great people, a good people. Even today, America remains a great experiment in human dignity. But it's an experiment that depends on our respect for the sanctity of the human person. And 'sanctity' is an idea that makes no sense without God, who seems less and less welcome in our national discourse."

United States and elsewhere in the developed world – as a "paid-for experience" based on the commodification of passion, ideals, relationships, and even time. That's a hard judgment, but too often it seems to be true. If we want freedom, we try to *buy* it by purchasing this car or that smartphone. If we want romance, we try to *buy* it by purchasing this vacation cruise or that hotel package.

And if we want to skip the romance and get straight to the sex, we can *buy* that, too. More than 11,000 new pornography films get produced in the United States every year. More than 116,000 Internet searches for child pornography happen every day. Americans spend well over \$4 billion on pornography annually – more than on any major sport. That revenue includes the rental of more than 800 million porn videos. But it *doesn't* include the ocean of free pornography anyone can find online.

The results are predictable. Pornography wrecks thousands of marriages and families every year. It ruins the vocations of thousands of rabbis, priests, and ministers every year. It infantilizes our ideas about sex; it cripples our imagination as a people; and it makes permanence and selflessness more and more difficult to secure in relations between men and women. Nonetheless, in a sense, pornography is the perfect proof of Rifkin's observation about modern culture. Pornography reduces even the most intimate dimension of the human person to a product available for purchase.

My point is this: The more our economy misuses the language of our desires, dreams, and ideals to sell products, to create new hungers and to commodify life, then the darker our appetites grow, and the more mixed up our dreams and ideals become. We feed our spiritual longings with material things, and we end up starving morally. We confuse ourselves to a point where we no longer know what real love, real intimacy, honest work, personal maturity, freedom, virtue, duty, family – and even a meaningful life itself – look like. We're left with a chronic aching for more; more of everything and anything, except the one thing that matters: God. We end up cocooned in unreality; a Fantasyland of our own making.

This is the culture we're called to change in a "new evangelization." And here's what that means.

All evangelization begins with two questions: **Why should we do it? And how should we do it?** The "why" has two very obvious answers: First, Jesus commands it in Matthew 28:19-20: "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you . . .*" We can't call ourselves His disciples and not be missionaries.

➡ PLEASE TURN TO **CHANGE** ON PAGE 10

We're hard-wired into the mission of Jesus Christ by virtue of our Baptism. We need to be active witnesses of our faith, or we're lying to ourselves when we claim to be Catholic.

Second, despite all the distractions and comforts that surround us in American culture, the stakes involved in every human life are real. The blood and brutal suffering of Jesus on the Cross were the cost required for our redemption. Christ bought us at a very high price. We needed to be saved from something terrible. We needed to be ransomed *from* an Evil One bent on our destruction. Which means that evil is more than just a metaphor; more than just the sum of our human moral or psychological deficiencies. Evil is something real and conscious and murderous.

Baptism makes us disciples of Jesus Christ. It involves us in a struggle for the soul of the world. As we've already seen, the world today makes it very easy to delude ourselves. The natural and social sciences have weakened man's ability to believe in unseen things by exalting the material world and *implying* that human knowledge alone can explain reality – but without actually disproving anything about God or the supernatural. Modern unbelief is vigorous, confident, and also a very clever cheat.

Yet people still suffer and die. And because they suffer and die, they hunger ultimately for a higher, comprehensive meaning to their lives. Which means they still can be, and still need to be, reached by the Word of God. Eternity is real, and the content of eternity for every human person depends on knowing and loving God. So as disciples of Jesus Christ, we need to be as vigorous and confident as those who oppose Jesus Christ.

So much for the “why” of evangelization. The “how” of a new evangelization, or *any* evangelization, needs to

begin with our own repentance and conversion. That hasn't changed since St. Paul walked the roads of Asia Minor. We can't give what we don't have. As individuals, we control very little in life; but we do control what we do with our hearts. We can at least make ourselves available to God as His agents. Personal conversion is the essential first step of real discipleship. It immediately affects the people around us.

The “how” of evangelization also means trying to understand the future shape of our culture, a shape that's emerging even as we meet here today.

The future belongs to the young. And what this future may hold is worth some concern. Christian Smith, Notre Dame's distinguished

“Any evangelization needs to begin with our own repentance and conversion. That hasn't changed since St. Paul walked the roads of Asia Minor. We can't give what we don't have. As individuals, we control very little in life; but we do control what we do with our hearts. We can at least make ourselves available to God as His agents. Personal conversion is the essential first step of real discipleship. It immediately affects the people around us.”

social researcher, suggests that – already, today – the *de facto* dominant religion among American teenagers is something he calls “moralistic therapeutic deism.” He frames the creed of the new religion in this way:

First, a God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth. Second, God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other as taught in the Bible and most world religions. Third, the central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself. Fourth, God doesn't need to be involved in one's life except when he's needed to fix a problem. And fifth, good people go to Heaven when they die.

Since teen religion largely derives from the world of adult religion, especially parental religion, it flows naturally from what the parents of these teens actually practice. At the everyday level, old patterns of religious

faith among many adults have faded into a kind of vague “spirituality.” This ambiguity then shapes the world into which American adolescents are socialized.

For many young people, the moralistic part of “moralistic therapeutic deism” simply means being pleasant and responsible, working on “self-improvement,” taking care of one's health, and doing one's best to succeed. “Therapeutic” means focusing on feeling good and happy, being secure and at peace. It's about subjective well-being and getting along amiably with other persons. And “deism” means that God exists – He created our world – but He's not particularly involved in

our affairs, especially when we don't want Him around. He's available to meet *our* needs. He's not demanding on us, but we can be demanding on Him.

Obviously very little of this has anything to do with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And that's a problem. Morality is not simply a matter of “self-improvement.” The goal of feeling good and happy, secure and at peace, is not the faith of the martyrs. Genuine charity demands much more

than just getting along amiably with others. And God is not our butler. We need to make ourselves available to God before we can reasonably ask God to be available to us.

In practice, American society now breeds a kind of radical self-focus and practical atheism – not by refuting faith in God, but by rendering God irrelevant to people's needs and urgencies of the moment. As Christopher Lasch wrote in *The Culture of Narcissism*, consumer culture tends to create weak personalities dependent on group behavior and approval, and therefore more susceptible to advertising and product consumption. The natural and social sciences replace the clergy as a source of guidance and meaning. And social media and mass entertainment abolish solitude and personal reflection.

So in an age of massive self-absorption, real individuality and self-mastery are actually withering. Why? Because the communities that root and shape an individual in distinctive moral codes and histories – in other words, our families, synagogues, churches, and fraternal organizations – can't compete with the noise of consumer society.

As a result, many self-described Christians *don't* know Jesus Christ, have never met Him, and feel no need to change. They don't know the Word of God. They don't love the Church as Pope John XXIII loved her – in other words, as a mother and teacher. And they don't like to be told that they're on the wrong path.

But they are. The Christian faith is not simply a habit. It's not a useful moral code. It's not an exercise in nostalgia. It's a restlessness, a consuming fire in the heart to experience the love of Jesus Christ and then share it with others – *or it's nothing at all*. Mastering the new social and demographic data that describe today's world, and the new communications tools to reach it, are vitally important for the Church. But nothing can be accomplished if we lack faith and zeal ourselves.

We – and that means you and I – are the means God uses to change the world. The material tools are secondary. People, *not* things, are decisive – which means that changing our culture begins here, right now, in each one of our hearts. Jesus revolutionized all of human history starting with 12 simple men. God already did it once. And God can do it again, but it begins with us.

In the second book of *The Life of St. Francis* by Thomas of Celano we read this description of the 13th century man who sought to live the Gospel without gloss or compromise, and who inspires our current Holy Father so powerfully:

"In these last times, a new evangelist, like one of the rivers of

paradise, has poured out the streams of the Gospel in a holy flood over the whole world. [St. Francis] preached the way of the Son of God and the teaching of truth in his deeds. In him and through him an unexpected joy and a holy newness came into the



"It's fitting that our new Holy Father took the name of Francis. Just as St. Francis was raised up in his time to preach the Gospel with new passion in new kinds of ways, so God asks all of us here today to follow the same path, with the same unshakeable faith, to preach Jesus Christ by word and deed in our families, our friendships, our business dealings, and in every corner of daily life."

world. A shoot of the ancient religion suddenly renewed the old and decrepit. A new spirit was placed in the hearts of the elect, and a holy anointing has been poured out in their midst" (89).

Elsewhere Thomas of Celano writes:

"The brothers who lived with [St. Francis] knew that daily, constantly, talk of Jesus was always on his lips. He was always with Jesus: Jesus in his heart, Jesus in his mouth, Jesus in his ears, Jesus in his eyes, Jesus in his hands. He bore Jesus always in his whole body . . . Often as he walked along a road, thinking and singing of Jesus, he

would forget his destination and start inviting all the elements to praise Jesus" (115).

The heart of every new work of evangelization is this kind of ardor; a simple, passionate faith that can only come from seeking out and giving ourselves entirely to Jesus Christ, no matter what the cost. It's fitting that Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of Colorado, and that our new Holy Father took the name of Francis. Just as St. Francis was raised up in his time to preach the Gospel with new passion in new kinds of ways, so God asks all of us here today to follow the same path, with the same unshakeable faith, to preach Jesus Christ by word and deed in our families, our friendships, our business dealings, and in every corner of daily life.

The Word of God remains young and alive only to the degree that you and I live it zealously ourselves and share

it generously with others. If we do that one decisive thing, God will take care of the rest. God will make all things new. The irony, the glory, and the joy of faith in Jesus Christ is that, the more we give it away to others, the stronger it grows, and the more we have for ourselves to feed our own hearts.

George Bernard Shaw once said that *"When I was young, I observed that nine out of every ten things I did were failures, so I did ten times more work."* Shaw was never a friend of Christianity, but that just makes me happier to borrow his words. Young or old, we need to live our faith as St. Francis did – all in, 100 percent, holding nothing back, with charity, endurance, passion, and hope. That kind of faith changes lives and remakes the world.

Francis heard the Gospel, and believed, and acted on it. Today, here, beginning now, God calls us to the privilege of doing the same.

**– Archbishop Charles J. Chaput,
O.F.M. Cap.**

Siobhan Heekin-Canedy, ice dancing champion

Heading to the Olympics, with God as my partner

"Every Christian is called to become a strong athlete of Christ, that is, a faithful and courageous witness to his Gospel. But to succeed in this, he must persevere in prayer, be trained in virtue, and follow the divine Master in everything."

— Blessed Pope John Paul II

At first glance, the Holy Father's words, spoken at the Jubilee of Sports Celebration in 2000, may seem surprising. Why would the Pope use the example of athletics to describe the life of a Christian? What could sports and faith possibly have in common?

In my experience, quite a lot!

I first began taking figure skating lessons in Stamford when I was five years old, and I soon began dreaming of some day competing at the World and Olympic level. I have come a long way since then and, now 22, have already achieved many of my goals. With my ice dancing partner, who is Ukrainian, I am a two-time Ukrainian National Champion (my partner is Ukrainian, enabling me to represent Ukraine). I have also placed in the top 12 at the European Championships, and in the top 14 at the World Championships. My partner and I recently competed in the 2013 World Championships, where we earned an entry to the 2014 Olympics for Ukraine, to be held in Sochi, Russia, next February.

Last summer, I read an article about the Vatican's Church and Sport Section, a committee within the Pontifical Council for the Laity that was formed to explore the relation between the Church and athletics. This got me thinking: I had been a Catholic my entire life, and an athlete for almost as long. I felt I had done a fairly good job of growing in my faith even while training at an elite level.

However, I had never given much

thought to how the two aspects of my life were related. Soon I started noticing examples all around me: in the news, on the Internet, even in my daily life. In my own personal

experience, though, one theme stands out above all the rest: sacrifice.

Every athlete who wishes to achieve a high level must make sacrifices. I was no exception; once I reached a certain level, I had to start making some difficult decisions. For example, I was home-schooled from seventh through twelfth grade. Once I graduated from high school,

"At every turn, God has been there for me, finding a way to make everything turn out for the best. As long as I let Him guide me, I know I cannot make a wrong turn."

I was accepted to college, but I am deferring until I have finished my skating career.

I have missed out on many things because of my training — parties, vacations, even just hanging out with friends. However, I know that these sacrifices have been worth it, since they have allowed me to be where I am today.

I have had a harder time coming to terms with the sacrifices that were not of my own choosing. While I have had many wonderful experiences and worked with many

remarkable people, I have also been in some very difficult situations. I have had coaches who did not support or believe in me, whose approach was to break me down until I had lost all confidence in myself. I have had partners who treated me disrespectfully. I have been the victim of poor sportsmanship in practice and competition.

The emotional toll has been huge; at times I have felt

that I just could not go on. At more than one point

in my career, I thought I was ready to quit skating. Somehow, though, I always managed to push on just a little longer, until things changed for the better.

Looking back, I can now see how God has been active in my life. Of course, He is not the reason I suffer. I believe many of the roadblocks in my life are there because evil is present in the world, and the Devil does not want me to succeed.

However, God has a plan for me, and He always manages to make something good come out of a bad situation. He has strengthened me when I thought I had nothing left, and He has helped me to use adversity to grow stronger. At every turn, He has been there for me, finding a way to make everything turn out for the best. As long as I let Him guide me, I know I cannot make



a wrong turn.

For Catholics, sacrifice is an important theme. After all, Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice, giving up His life so that we might live. He taught us that sacrifice is not something to be dreaded or avoided, but to be embraced as the road to true life in God. Suffering is never easy, and in the moment it feels terribly unfair.

However, when we offer our hardships to God, we make room in our hearts for His love and healing. My experiences with skating have helped me to gain a deeper understanding of all this. I still struggle to accept the burdens I must bear, but I now know that I can do anything if I let God show me the way.

I hope that, even after my skating career is finished, I can use what I have learned to help me become a better “athlete of Christ.”

— Siobhan Heekin-Canedy

Siobhan lives in Stamford and is a member of St. John's, where she is one of the Young Adult Team Members for two parish groups, The Flock and the St. Francis & St. Clare Society (details on pages 14-15).



CHAMPION ICE DANCER SIOBHAN HEEKIN-CANEDY AND HER PARTNER, DIMITRI DUN, HOPE TO REPRESENT UKRAINE IN THE 2014 WINTER OLYMPICS.

The Catholic Difference

On really *really* not getting it

In the wake of late-term abortionist Kermit Gosnell's homicide convictions this past May, several state legislatures began crafting laws that would protect unborn life at earlier stages of gestation while shutting down horror houses like Gosnell's Philadelphia "clinic." Whether these laws will stand constitutional scrutiny remains to be seen; what is worth noting now is the degree to which deeply-entrenched supporters of the unrestricted abortion license created by the Supreme Court in 1973 still don't get it – and still continue to muddle the public debate with their confusions.

Thus a June 29 editorial in *The Washington Post* deplored the fact that these proposed state statutes would "...require abortion clinics to meet the same standards as surgery centers, like those in hospital wings." Moreover, "doctors who perform abortions would have to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals. . . . The case that such standards are needed to protect the health of abortion patient . . . is weak."

Say *what*? In many states, abortuaries are not required to meet health and safety standards required of the local McDonald's or Wendy's. After testimony in the Gosnell case depicted a foul, cluttered, ghoulis "clinic" in which basic sanitary standards were massively violated, how can anyone reasonably suggest that the case for protecting women by enforcing proper sanitation and safety standards for surgical procedures is "weak"?

How can anyone reasonably suggest that there is a "weak case" for requiring that those who perform those procedures have the minimal professional credentials of other surgeons and doctors? How can anyone plausibly and conscientiously claim to promote "women's health" by resisting such regulations?

The *Post*'s obfuscations were of a piece with the deep confusions of one of the paper's regular op-ed writers, Ruth Marcus, who, in an April column, described state legislative efforts to hollow out *Roe v. Wade*'s abortion license through state regulation of abortion clinics as "the result of a sincere and intense belief – one I do not share – that abortion is the taking of a human life."

Well, one wants to ask, what is it, then?

What, precisely, are those creatures whose spinal cords Kermit Gosnell cut with scissors? Why did all of Great Britain ask "Is it a baby girl or a baby boy?" when the Duchess of Cambridge became pregnant? Why did no one ask of the former Kate Middleton and future Queen of England, "Is it a male fetus or a female fetus?" Why does a widely-used embryology textbook state what every first-year biology student can see, absent ideological blinders: that the product of human conception is a human being with a unique genetic identity, capable

Why did all of Great Britain ask "Is it a baby girl or a baby boy?" when the Duchess of Cambridge became pregnant? Why did no one ask, "Is it a male fetus or a female fetus?"



PLEASE TURN TO **ABORT** ON PAGE 15

Transfiguration reminds us: our hope is in the Cross

Mountains and hills played an important role in Jesus' life. Upon the mountains and hills of Israel He was tempted, He preached, and He prayed. He was transfigured, experienced His great agony, was crucified, and then finally rose from the dead. Mountains represent a special closeness with God. They are a place of spiritual ascent, freedom from the burdens of everyday life. They give us a broader perspective, surround us with the beauty of God's creation, and fill us with a sense of wonder and awe.

On August 6, we celebrated the Feast of the Transfiguration where Jesus revealed His glory on Mount Tabor. The

"Mountains represent a special closeness with God. They are a place of spiritual ascent, freedom from the burdens of everyday life."

image of mountains and hills reminds me of a pilgrimage I made over six years ago. I was one of several chaperones who traveled with a group of teenagers to an international Catholic youth festival. There were about 40,000 people at the festival which ended on the Feast of the Transfiguration.

One of the students in our group was a young man from our Diocese named Ryan Boyle. At the age of 10, while riding a big wheel at a friend's house, Ryan lost control and went backwards down the steep driveway into the street. Tragically, a Dodge Daytona pickup truck was driving by at 40 miles per hour, couldn't stop, and ran over him. His skull was crushed at the base of his neck. Doctors gave him no chance to live.

Miraculously Ryan survived the surgery, two months in a coma, and years of painful rehabilitation. During his



"The Transfiguration" (DETAIL) BY RAPHAEL (1518-1520)

surgery about 20% of his brain had to be removed, so he had to relearn everything from breathing to talking.

I first met Ryan at the airport as we were about to leave for our pilgrimage. He could barely walk, even with the assistance of two canes with forearm braces. His mother walked next to him at all times to help him keep his balance.

The location of the youth festival had a small mountain. There was a very rough and rocky path cut from the bottom of the mountain to the top. Along the path were

the Stations of the Cross to pray as pilgrims made their ascent. At the base of the mountain, custom chairs were available to aid in carrying people who were unable to make the climb. We called them "King Tut" chairs because they looked like a chair made to carry royalty in ancient times. We decided that we were going to carry Ryan to the top of the mountain.

Ryan, now 19 years old, recently wrote a book about his life entitled, *When the Lights Go Out*. He devotes a chapter to our pilgrimage. This is what he wrote

about his experience climbing the mountain:

"It was amazing that I got to the top without a scratch or anything. I think this is when I started to realize that God is great, and I should thank Him for giving me a second lease on the gift of life. Maybe my life is really difficult, but just think about how much more difficult it could be... People came up to me and hugged and kissed me. At first I thought, 'I don't know you, and this is just plain weird so go away.' Later, I realized that these people saw God in me, so they wanted to get as close to me as they could."

This is what happens when we open ourselves to receive God's grace. Others begin to see God in us.

On our way back to the airport, people began to share their experiences from the pilgrimage. At one point everyone started chanting Ryan's name, so he made his way to the front of the bus. It was amazing that he was able to keep his balance while the bus was moving. He talked about how he had never had much faith even before his accident and only went to church because his parents made him. The pilgrimage changed all of that. He writes, *"Now I want to go to church... For the first time I understood [my purpose]: I was meant to inspire other people with my story."*

I visited Ryan and his family last summer in Atlanta, GA. He is now able to walk without any assistance, although sometimes he uses a cane. He has his driver's license, is attending college, and is training to make the 2016 U.S. Paralympic Cycling Team. The doctors can only describe his recovery as a miracle.

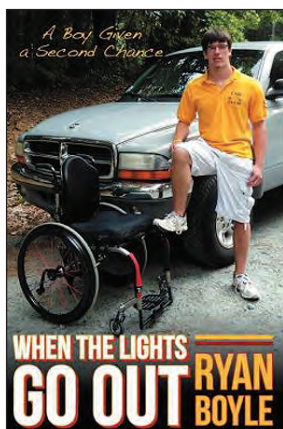
Just as both Moses and later Elijah witnessed the presence of God on Mount Horeb and then Peter, James, and John on Mount Tabor, so did Ryan spiritually ascend the mountain and witness the

glory of God. When we experience these grace-filled moments, we carry them with us for the rest of our lives. These moments give us the strength we need to persevere in difficult times.

The Transfiguration of Jesus made an enormous impression on St. Peter. Thirty-five years after witnessing Jesus' glorified body, St. Peter writes in his second letter:

"We did not follow myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of His maj-

esty. For He received honor and glory from God the Father when that unique declaration came to Him from the majestic glory, 'This is My Son, My beloved, with Whom I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice come from Heaven while we were with Him on the holy mountain" (2 Peter, 1:16-18).



We must not forget, though, what Jesus was discussing on the mountain with Moses and Elijah. Their conversation centered around Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven.

Jesus freed us from sin and death by His Cross. The glory of the Transfiguration reminds us that our hope is in the Cross. We unite ourselves with the Cross through prayer, fasting, and acts of charity. We challenge ourselves to grow in virtue as we ascend toward God. We experience healing through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Each Sunday we come to Mass to listen to Jesus' words and witness His glory in the Eucharist. May we be filled with the hope that one day we, too, will share in Jesus' resurrection and our lowly bodies will be glorified like His.

— Deacon Patrick Toole, Jr.

Deacon Toole serves as Permanent Deacon at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield. Ryan Boyle's book, When the Lights Go Out, can be ordered through his website, www.ryanboyle.me

ABORT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13
of self-directed development so long as neither nature (in the form of miscarriage) nor technology (in the form of abortion, chemical or surgical) intrudes?

Ms. Marcus's confusions do not stop at Embryology 101, however. After correctly noting that the legal battle for unborn human life was largely being won when the Supreme Court preempted the state legislative struggle in 1973, Marcus noted that, irrespective of what was happening in state capitols, a 1973 Gallup Poll "found 64 percent agreeing that 'the decision to have an abortion should be made solely by a woman and her physician.'"

And here is another of the canards of Those Who Really Don't Get It.

The abortion decision is most frequently made, not by a woman and "her physician," but by a frightened woman talking with a "counselor" in a clinic run by an agency like Planned Parenthood, which has a deep financial interest in abortion. That frightened woman, who has often been abandoned by an irresponsible man, is then remanded to an abortion "provider" who is no more "her physician" than he or she is "her hairdresser."

And in light of the Gosnell case, which revealed grotesqueries like infant feet and hands kept in jars in refrigerators, do Ruth Marcus and the *Post* editorial board really think of the Kermit Gosnells of this world as "physicians"? Are the Chinese doctors who remove organs from political prisoners "physicians?"

Is the abortion license worth this shameful abdication of decency and reason?

— George Weigel

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, DC.

“What happened to your priest?”

Finding wonders – and a “saint” – on the Serengeti

While in the U.S. Diplomatic Corps my family and I were fascinated with Africa talk. Almost every family posted to Africa avowed the beauty of that continent such that many wished to return for vacations – and many did.

Needless to say, my own thoughts to visit Africa germinated during those years; and so it happened, after some five decades, I talked some family and friends into joining me on safari, two weeks in Tanzania in July! Just as the diplomats vowed to return, so we twelve sipped a toast on our last eve to return one day.

Africa is grand, Africa is beautiful, Africa is mysterious – and, the central East of the continent is slowly entering the twenty-first century.

The questions most asked since my return dealt with what I thought to be the best of the safari, and the worst. There was no “worst.” Not only did our tour company (Thompson Tours) cater to every need, but it made sure that each day was more spectacular than the first – vast savannahs that swept into the next; ancient craters that define the origins of man; flora and fauna that feast and protect predator, fowl, and prey – dazzles of zebra, towers of giraffe, countless elephants, wildebeests, lions; endless numbers of hippopotamuses, and even more gazelles.

With all this beauty and the lure of the wild, why does one happenstance gnaw at my very bones?

For a few days, Ezekiel was our guide (it appears that most members of the Maasai People have Biblical names). He is a warrior, married with two children. He wears a Serengeti-green uniform and carries weapons to protect safari-travelers, especially at night.

He displayed his extraordinary bravery during the two nights when a solo rogue elephant insisted on



FR. AL AUDETTE WITH EZEKIEL, HIS MAASAI GUIDE AND FRIEND.

visiting our camp. His weapon of choice was neither his rifle nor his bow and arrow; rather, he and his companion waved torches from a respectable distance.

Ezekiel is also Roman Catholic, as are, from reports, some 40% of the Maasai People. The other dominant faiths are Muslim and Lutheran. When the Maasai learned that I

“Some 40% of the Maasai People are Catholic. When the Maasai learned that I was a Catholic priest, my stock went up a trillion percent!”

was a Catholic priest, my stock went up a trillion percent! Most of the Maasai asked if they could call me their father; even among the Lutherans I was called Father. This affection was strong enough to melt my heart every time I heard the familiar reference!

One day, when passing a near-by village, Ezekiel pointed to an old cinderblock Catholic church he referred to as his own, even though it had been closed some three years ago, when his priest had been taken away.

“What happened to him?” I asked.

Ezekiel answered, “Three years ago, the people were waiting for daily Mass to begin, but the priest didn’t appear. We sent someone to his house, and they found him in his bedroom, unable to get up. He’d collapsed and couldn’t stand up!”

“What had happened?” I asked, thinking the worst.

“He was such a great man. He was our pastor for over 62 years and had worked himself to exhaustion. The Diocese took him away. No one since has replaced him.”

I can’t describe my feelings as Ezekiel spoke. Well into his 90s, this old man had served as he’d vowed. I wanted to stop the car, go to his house, and pick up where this old and exhausted saint had left off.

Since that day, I’ve wondered about my own spirituality and motives. Am I as dedicated a priest? Could I even walk in the shadow of this man? I’d love to try. I tell you this with great sincerity. I may



A BALLOON FLOATS ABOVE THE VAST SERENGETI PLAIN, FILLED WITH MAJESTIC WILDLIFE OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.



never serve the Maasai in Tanzania, but I will press on in my ministry until I, too, am “unable to get up!”

In the shadow of this saintly priest, how can a Catholic priest, in conscience, ever retire? The great cloak of relativism influences the vast majority of our youth and, as a result, few have the courage to become priests or nuns or missionaries – and, not surprising, not many parents endorse a spiritual vocation.

Half a century ago, the United States sent Catholic missionaries throughout the world; today, other countries send missionaries to us.



So, in my opinion, the spiritual bottom line in Tanzania is not Catholicism. Though there is a shortage of Catholic priests, there are many Lutheran ministers. It is no wonder that the Lutheran Church is growing well in the Serengeti.

It is in the nature of man to seek God.

Without a solid Catholic presence, where else can a Christian family go?

– Rev. Al Audette, M.S., M.H.

Fr. Audette, St. John's Priest-in-Residence, is also a practicing psychotherapist and Life Coach.

Mark your calendars and prepare to be enriched

As the daylight hours begin to wane ever so slightly and the tips of the trees reveal the spectacular colors hidden within the leafy green canopy, the autumn air summons us back from our summer siesta to begin anew the many parish activities here at the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist. A simple glance over the Sunday bulletin unveils various opportunities for spiritual and cultural enrichment and a welcoming invitation to broaden one's understanding of the faith that we profess, as well as contribute to the good of the parish at large by enriching others with one's own insights and experiences.

In other words, come join us and help "build up the Body of Christ" and see the gift of your own Baptismal grace flourish and water the garden of our parish community!

Allow me to offer a simple glance over some of the opportunities that await you. Bear in mind that special events are scheduled throughout the course of the year, so keep a close eye on the bulletin each week.

Let's look at a typical week here at the parish. On **Monday** evenings, there is **Eucharistic Adoration** from 7-8 p.m., which typically includes praying the Joyful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary. What better way to begin the new week than by adoring our Lord and contemplating His love for us through our meditation on the Mysteries of His Life? Come for an hour and then join your friends for a late meal together.

Tuesdays in the Rectory, we offer the **Rite for Christian Initiation for Adults** (RCIA) program for anyone interested in becoming Catholic. The RCIA meets at 7 p.m. beginning **October 8** to teach the basic Truths of the Faith and prepare adults of all ages to be received into the Church. Many are already baptized (both Catholic and Protestant) and would like to receive the Sacraments of Holy Communion and



THE LEGION OF MARY OFFERS PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH THROUGH APOSTOLIC WORKS.

Help build up our parish by contributing your gifts and talents and joining in the wonderful experiences offered for your spiritual enrichment and fellowship.

Confirmation. Many uncover a new and profound understanding of the Church founded by our Lord and discover the deeply intimate love of God in a new and vibrant way. Like the sea of color hidden within the summer leaves, the RCIA meetings help to reveal the Presence of God and the vibrant life we are called to share with Him. Come join us!

On the **First Tuesday** each month, the **Moms and Tots Group** meets in the Basilica at the Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary for half an hour of Eucharistic Adoration at 10:30 a.m. One of our beautiful stained-glass windows illustrates the Gospel passage where Jesus invites the children to come near so He may bless them. That is precisely what happens in our monthly visit in front of Him, who pours out His graces from the Monstrance. Don't be deterred

for fear that your infant or young child can't sit still and quiet for the half hour. You'll be in good company. After Adoration, Moms and Tots meet in the Rectory Garden (weather permitting) or in the Msgr. Nagle Hall for refreshments and activities. It's a wonderful chance for Moms to spend time together.

"The Flock," the St. John's Young Adult Group, meets on **Tuesdays** in the Nagle Hall twice each month for faith, fellowship, and food. In addition to the bi-monthly program, these meetings also make known various social and volunteer opportunities for the young adults (20's and 30's), such as tree planting, gardening, and other volunteer projects. Social outings have included a Long Island Sound cruise, visits to New York for various cultural events, skiing, and hiking. Bring a friend and expand your horizons!

On **Wednesdays**, the **Legion of Mary**, under the title of "Our Lady of Sorrows" meets in the Nagle Hall from 7:30-9 p.m. The Legion of Mary is a world-wide lay organization of men and women under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was founded by Servant of God, Frank Duff, in 1921 in Ireland. The Legion of Mary attends to the personal spiritual growth of each member through a weekly prayer meeting, including the Rosary, as well as various apostolic works such as visiting the sick, teaching the faithful, and assisting in other needs of the parish. All are welcome!

Throughout **Wednesdays** in **October**, our Basilica's **St. Monica Institute for Patristic Studies** will present a series on St. Maximus the Confessor's *Life of the Virgin*, the oldest biography of Our Lady. Lectures begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Rectory. Wednesday nights in the Rectory will continue on **November 6** with a new **Bible Study** program (7-8 p.m.). This year we will study the Book of Isaiah, the great prophet who is

sometimes called the “Fifth Evangelist.” Bring your Bible!

Finally, those interested in brushing up on their **Latin** (Wednesdays, 6:15 p.m.) or **Greek** (Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.) will enjoy the friendly meetings each week in the Rectory while reading scriptural and patristic classics in the original ancient languages.

Friday mornings in the Rectory begin with the **Holy Name Society** at 7 a.m. Men of the parish gather for coffee and a bit of banter. At 7:20 a.m., Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament begins, along with a brief spiritual conference. The meeting concludes in time for 8 a.m. Mass, after which many of the men head out to breakfast. The Holy Name Society hosts two fraternal gatherings each year, along with other smaller excursions, such as boating in Long Island Sound.

Some of our Parishioners meet each **Friday** morning in support of Life by **praying for an end to abortion**. They gather from 7-10:30 a.m. on the sidewalk in front of Planned Parenthood on 1039 East Main Street in Stamford. Through their prayerful witness and moral support, they have had a significant impact in helping others grow in their understanding of the sanctity of human life. Many have seen the light and have chosen life.

Our **Religious Education** program resumes on **Sunday, September 22** at 8:30 a.m. How truly blessed we are to welcome back our faithful and dedicated volunteer teachers! Year after year they eagerly greet the children of our parish and lead them in the ways of faith. Classes meet on Sunday mornings from 8:30 to 9:45 and then all attend the 10 a.m. Family Mass.

In addition to the classroom obligations, the parish also has special programs for the older candidates. There are three distinct **youth groups** that students in grades 7-9 are required to attend. The **St. Dominic Savio Society** (boys in 7th and 8th grade, mandatory; high school boys welcome)

and the **St. Maria Goretti Society** (girls in 7th and 8th grade, mandatory; high school girls welcome) meet one Sunday a month for faith formation, fellowship, and food. Among their various activities, the Societies sponsor the Food Drive each November that benefits many families of our parish. There have also been social events such as ice skating and optional field trips to New York City.

The **St. Francis & St. Clare Society** is our parish youth group for high school girls and boys and coincides with the 9th grade Confirmation Program, although all



*FUN, FELLOWSHIP, AND ENRICHMENT FOR ALL AGES
AT THE ST. ANNE FAMILY SOCIETY.*

high schoolers (grades 9-12) are invited and encouraged to attend. They meet two **Sundays** a month (one Sunday is required for the Confirmation Class, the second is optional). The meetings offer students the opportunity to discuss current events through the eyes of our faith, as well as examining the faith in exciting and creative ways. Generous young adults of our parish prepare a specific program for each session that includes fun and games, creative ways to learn, and, of course, plenty of refreshments. The program is designed to complement the lessons the students learn in their classroom sessions on Sunday mornings. In particular, the Society focuses attention on the dignity of the human person and the respect we owe to one another. It is a wonderful opportunity to build lasting friendships as our young people walk the path to spiritual maturity and become faithful witnesses to Christ. This fall, the Society will visit the Cloisters Museum in New York City.

We hope all our high school parishioners will join us and build a vibrant, exciting parish youth group!

The **Sunday Morning Coffee Hour** resumes this month in the Nagle Hall following the 10 a.m. Family Mass. It's a wonderful opportunity to make new friends and learn about parish activities from those already well-engaged.

Three times a year, the **St. Anne Family Society** meets in the Nagle Hall following the 5 p.m. Sunday Mass for pizza, pasta, and other assorted foods. A brief talk on the faith and a spirited Q&A rounds out the evening over a variety of desserts. The next meeting is on **October 6**. The May meeting concludes the Religious Education year and features a “Celebration of the Sacraments” in honor of all our students, especially those who have received their First Holy Communion or Confirmation.

Remember to keep watch for special programs throughout the year. Our first special event, “**The Photographer and the Saint**,” will take place on Saturday, **September 21** at 5:30 p.m. in the Nagle Hall. Commemorating the 45th anniversary of the death of St. Padre Pio, the evening will include a book presentation and photo exhibit, followed by refreshments.

On **December 14**, join us for a **Marriage Retreat** at the Convent of St. Birgitta of Sweden in Darien. Organized by parishioners, the retreat will include talks by Msgr. Robert McCormick, Alice Von Hildebrand, Fr. Andrew Apostoli, C.F.R., and the priests of St. John's. Watch for details.

So, we're off and running! Please come join us. Help build up our Basilica parish by contributing your gifts and talents, and join in on the wonderful experiences offered for your spiritual enrichment and fellowship. Bring a friend!

— **Rev. Terry Walsh**

Fr. Walsh is Parochial Vicar and Director of Religious Education at the Basilica.

Thoughts inspired by the birth of Prince George

Much ado out there about the hair of the new heir

The birth of Prince George Alexander Louis stirred up much celebrating, save for a few curmudgeons like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of Russia's Liberal Democratic Party, who rather excessively predicted that the little prince would "suck the blood" of the Russian people by the middle of this century.

Choice of the name George was particularly gratifying to those under the patronage of that saint. He may well be the patron of more nations, provinces, and institutions than any saint save Our Lady. The removal of St. George to a third class minor saint by Pope Paul VI in 1963 was undone by Pope John Paul II when he restored him to the universal calendar and gave him special first class rank in England and India. George is the baptismal name of Pope Francis, and so April 23 will have special resonance during his reign.

Most iconography shows St. George with thick curly hair, which is strange since his demotion in 1963 was because supposedly little is known about him. Little Prince George Alexander Louis, like many babies, even royal ones, came into the world with fine but sparse hair. Some of the press occupied airtime remarking that his father is balding. This is also the case with Prince William's uncle, Prince Edward. Prince Harry has thick red hair, encouraging gossips to claim that he is not royal at all.

Prince George's maternal great grandfather, the 8th Earl Spencer, was pretty thin on top, as was the 2nd Earl, and his youngest son, the Venerable Ignatius Spencer, a Catholic convert and Passionist priest. Fr. Spencer collapsed and died in a ditch in 1864 in consummation of arduous preaching and begging for the poor.

The Queen has great hair and, being monarch of all she surveys and titular head of two billion people, she does



CELEBRATING THE ROYAL BIRTH AT THE ANNUAL
SCARECROW FESTIVAL IN MUSTON, ENGLAND.
(REX FEATURES VIA AP IMAGES)

not have any need to change styles. The first Elizabeth went bald and had at least 80 wigs, but she was a queen and not a king, and bald queens are not as handsome as bald kings.

Louis XIII regretted his hair loss and affected wigs, and they became the fashion for a long time. Emperor Joseph abolished them as court dress in 1780 but the final blow was the French Revolution when wigs were disdained as aristocratic symbols, and soon the guillotine saw to it that there were no heads to put them on.

In the early days of the Church they were condemned as vanities: St. Cyprian said that wearing a wig was worse than committing adultery, and St. Clement of Alexandria held that when a blessing was given, it was blocked by the wig and did not reach the soul. In the eighteenth century Clement XI forbade the wearing of wigs by local Roman clergy in the provincial councils of 1701

and 1706, and Benedict XIII ordered Cardinal Alberioni out of a procession for wearing one, but courtiers could wear them. Benedict XIV mitigated the strictures in 1725, and understandably so since he wore one in winter months.

Curiously, wigs assumed an almost liturgical significance in the Church of England and were required for official acts; there was a special design for the clerical wig, as there were for barristers and judges. In the early nineteenth century in New York, a question arose among Episcopalians about the validity of their bishops consecrated without wigs.

As for the hair of the Windsors, the roots go back well into Saxon mists, assuming that the most common form of male pattern baldness, *androgenic alopecia*, is hereditary. This genetic tradition is, according to experts, "autosomal dominant with mixed penetrance." I quote that without

➡ PLEASE TURN TO **HAIR** ON PAGE 22

Time is money, but where in the world does it go?

My father was never late a day in his life. In fact, on the day he died, he passed away at 5 a.m., the usual time he got up and ready for work throughout his adult life.

My mother, on the other hand, was never on time; her dreamy progress through the day, the perfect pique to his anxious punctuality. With seven children, she had earned the right to inhabit her own time zone.

I fall somewhere in between; managing to be on time for the important things, and running a bit late on everything else. For my father, being on time was a matter of character and respect and, in spite of my own routine lapses, I largely hold to that view.

In our culture, “time is money,” but we also wistfully ask, “Where does the time go?” We lose track of it, seem baffled and perplexed by its passage, wonder what it’s really about – this dimension of time that’s freed from the clock, so intimately tied with our sense of being, of living finite lives and not really understanding why we are here or what it means.

A few years back, George Will wrote an intriguing column about the amount of time we wait in line, get stuck in traffic, work at the office, brush our teeth, and perform other daily routines. When he added all of that up, there seemed to be very little time for anything else, as if we’ve made time servile and have lost the sense of the sacred.

Is it perhaps more Calvinist than Catholic to wonder how we work out our salvation between the lines of these mundane tasks that take up so much of our time? Just what are the choices we make that determine the character of our souls? Perhaps as much as we come to perceive our worthiness based on our actions and choices, we overlook the need for a moral imagination that connects us with all life in

sympathy and reverence.

Children have no sense of time, and they can sometimes shiver with a joy and delight that is no longer available to us. Their world is simultaneous. Then at some point they march in time like the rest of us, bound by plans and schedules.

Yet, if we live long enough, we lose our sense of time as decades disappear in the blink of an eye – the leap from 40 years old to 60 is like nothing at all.

Is time the distance between two places? Between deaths in the family? Between marriages and births? Do we



“Children have no sense of time. They can shiver with a joy and delight that is no longer available to us. Their world is simultaneous.”

stand still while time moves under us, so we are wind-burned by time even if for long stretches of our lives we seem unconsumed?

For a few years now, we’ve been hearing about the great proton collider in Switzerland that has unlocked the “God” particle and can explain the “Big Bang” origin of the universe. But the more scientists talk, the more it sounds like fiction; which is not to say that I don’t believe it, but simply to suggest that science (with its charmed quarks, string theory, and black holes) demands its own leap of faith and seems to be moving toward metaphor in its pursuit of the ineffable.

The more science explains the universe and the outline of our experience, the greater our sense of uncertainty and doubt. We can wander through life with all of the answers and still not have a clue; only religious experience opens the door to wholeness and acceptance.

After my mother died this spring, time stopped for me and life became a blur. Yet, early this summer I found myself drawn to the notion of “Ordinary Time” as the Church defines it; the celebration of Mass in between the major liturgical seasons such as Easter and Advent. We live in Ordinary Time, which the Church tells us is anything but ordinary because Christ has transformed our lives by entering into our pain, suffering, and death.

Their time is done now, I think, as I stand over my parents’ graves in the little St. Thomas Cemetery, a stone’s throw from the busy Post Road in Fairfield. His marker with birth and death dates already completed in stone; hers with only the birth date, November 25, 1925, where it has gone unanswered until April 12 of this year—the final date waiting to be chiseled in granite.

As I stand over it, my shadow falling on the grass alongside me, I wonder about the nature of time because, though out of reach, both parents are still so much alive to me and the conversation is intense as always.

– Brian D. Wallace

Brian, Director of Communications for the Diocese of Bridgeport, is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Fairfield.

HAIR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20
comment, since I do not know what it means, but I do know that bald royals tend to beget bald royals here and there.

In the present case of the Mountbatten-Windsors, one might check out the Count of Flanders, Baudouin I, born in 864, who passed the gene through the Princess Elfridam of Wessex. The present alopeciac Prince Edward is Earl of Wessex. The saintly (later canonized) king of the Angles, Aethelberht, son of Eormenric, was the first English king to convert to Christianity. On his return with his son Alfred from pilgrimage to Rome where he bestowed on the Pope lavish gifts of Saxon gold, he visited the court of Charles the Bald, king of the western Franks. There he married Charles' 12-year-old daughter Judith, his first wife, Bertha, having died. Bertha may have been key in persuading Pope Gregory I to send St. Augustine and his retinue to Britain.

"We do know that God's judgments are severe against those whose sense of humor is so primitive that they resort to telling bald jokes."

Aethelberht divided the Kentish kingdom between his eldest son Aethelbald and his favorite son Alfred. Aethelbald (whose name has nothing to do with hair) married his stepmother upon the death of this father and was succeeded by Alfred. The new king commissioned a book of charms, that is, Latin verses describing medical cures, which had been passed along to him by Elias, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. An extant version of the book is called "Bald's Leechbook" for its owner, mentioned in a colophon at the end of the Leechbook: "*Bald habet hunc librum Cild quem conscribere iussit* (Bald is the owner of this book which he ordered Cild to compile.)"

In early Anglo-Saxon usage, "bald" meant bold or courageous, and only gradually in Middle English did it come to mean a lack of hair. The Welsh equivalent for bold is *ddewr* and the word for bald is *foel*. When the Saxon king Aethelstan took the throne in 924, he joined forces against the Scots with the Welsh

ruler Idwal Foel (Idwal the Bald) but as that alliance ended on the death of Aethelstan, it cannot be proven that any genetic trait was passed through a royal marriage. The present Prince of Wales is thinning, appropriately, on the crown of his head.

Fast forwarding through the royal ages, *androgenic alopecia* cropped up in the reign of George III. His tenth child, Prince Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, was totally bald and became the uncle of Queen Victoria who married the prematurely balding Prince Albert. Prince Adolphus was also, through the Wurttemberg line, the grandfather of Mary of Teck, who became the queen consort of George V and the present Queen's grandmother. Queen Mary's brother took the name of his great great uncle as 1st Marquess of Cambridge and, as can be

seen in a chromolithograph by Sir Leslie Ward, was bald at an early age.

One wishes the best for every baby, and it is certainly hoped that the newborn Prince George will not be like Absalom,

the princely son of King David, with hair so long that it got caught in the branches of a terebinth tree, leading to his death.

What the Bible teaches us about all this is left for dispassionate exegetes to tell. We do know that God's judgments are severe against those whose sense of humor is so primitive that they resort to telling bald jokes.

A crowd of boys jeered at the prophet Elisha on his way to Bethel, shouting: "*Go up, baldhead! Go up, baldhead!*" The prophet cursed them in the name of the Lord. "*Then two she-bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the children to pieces*" (2 Kings 2:24).

The meaning of this edifying scene is for those wise enough to understand.

— Rev. George W. Rutler

Fr. Rutler is Pastor of St. Michael's Church in New York City. This article was published first in Crisis Magazine: www.crisismagazine.com.



Pope Francis' Prayer Intentions

Each month, the Holy Father issues prayer intentions and invites Catholics the world over to unite in prayer. These intentions may be prayed through the Morning Offering prayer:

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You all of my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world; in reparation for all my sins; for the intentions of all Your associates; for the reunion of Christendom; and in particular for [the Holy Father's monthly intentions, below], and I desire to gain all the indulgences, granted by the Church, for my prayers and good works of this day. Amen.

SEPTEMBER 2013

General Intention: Value of Silence. That people today, often overwhelmed by noise, may rediscover the value of silence and listen to the voice of God and their brothers and sisters.

Missionary Intention: Persecuted Christians. That Christians suffering persecution in many parts of the world may by their witness be prophets of Christ's love.

Where is Heaven? Where is communion with God?

It is not unusual, during classroom discussions of Heaven, for some student eventually to ask, “Where is Heaven, anyway?” It is not an unusual question because it is perfectly natural for us to understand any destination, any place to which we would go, as occupying a particular location.

Because the end of Luke’s Gospel and the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles tell us that after His Resurrection our Lord “ascended” into Heaven, we think of Heaven as “up there” (cf. Luke 24:50ff and Acts 1:6ff). Similarly, St. Paul exhorts us to set our minds on the things that are “above,” not on things that are on earth (Colossians 3:2).

Furthermore, the Scriptures and the Creed assure us that at the end of time our glorified bodies and souls will be reunited in some presently unfathomable way. It would seem that there must be some aspect of space or location to “contain” our resurrected bodies. However, if you were to sail in a rocket ship to the end of the universe, you could get no closer to God than by staying right where you are.

In order to grapple with this mystery it will be useful to set aside the idea of Heaven as a place. We can summarize the definition of Heaven given in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as follows: Heaven is communion with God. If Heaven is communion with God, we may rephrase our original question: Where is Communion with God? Or, more simply: Where is God?

Consider that God has revealed Himself to us as a Trinity of Persons. To be in communion with another person is to be spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, morally, or “personally” close to him. We speak of “being on the same page” as someone else, or of a “meeting of the minds.” Perhaps “being in love” with someone is the most common experience of this communion between persons.



“Heaven is not so much a place as it is a relationship with the Persons who are the Trinity. Where God is, is who God is. And who He is, is where He is.”

Notice that this emotional or spiritual closeness (communion) does not depend on place or location. For example, I may call on a student in my classroom sitting no more than 15 feet from me whose eyes look at me, who is breathing, whose heart must be beating, but who is completely unresponsive to my voice. They are in another “place” (emotionally or spiritually) while occupying the same “place” (physically) that I do. We are not in communion.

Leaving aside for the moment our understanding of God’s particular presence to us in the Eucharist, we could say that God is everywhere and nowhere. “Place” seems to be a concept that interferes with our understanding of Heaven.

Rather than thinking of God’s “where-ness,” let us consider His “who-ness.” If

to be in communion with another human person means to be spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually close him, regardless of location, the same must be true for communion with the Persons who are God. To be in Heaven means to be perfectly, completely, fully “where” God is emotionally, spiritually, morally, and intellectually. If this is true, the extent to which our “who-ness” is directed toward God determines how close we are to Heaven.

Thankfully, God’s “who-ness,” His Personhood, is always completely open and directed toward each of ours. The problem is that our “who-ness,” our personhood, is not always directed toward God’s. The task of the Christian life is the continual turning back toward God (conversion) to remain in communion with Him. If we die in communion with God in this world we will be in communion with Him in the next. The elusive “Heaven on earth” for which so many seek is, in fact, communion with God.

The Apostles were “filled with joy” when the Lord departed from them at the Ascension. Why would this be unless they understood that they would no longer have to look for Him in Galilee, or Jerusalem, or some other “place”?

Now, having directed His Personhood completely toward the Father’s and completed the Father’s will for Him, He “went to Heaven.” He was completely “with” the Father. He could now be more completely with the disciples than ever before because He was now always everywhere and nowhere.

Heaven is not so much a place, as it is a relationship with the Persons who are the Trinity. Where God is, is who God is. And who He is, is where He is.

— Rev. F. John Ringley, Jr.

Fr. Ringley is Spiritual Director of Kolbe-Cathedral High in Bridgeport.

Review: "The Ear of the Heart"

A remarkable journey from Hollywood to vows

Consider the following as a movie plotline: The setting is Los Angeles, 1957. An ordinary, but beautiful, teenager barely out of high school is discovered by an important Hollywood producer, whose credits include *Casablanca*. In her film debut she gives the biggest heartthrob in America his first screen kiss. She politely turns him down for a date, making her possibly the only person who ever did so to Elvis Presley.

Within a year she establishes herself as a serious actress, with a Tony nomination to her credit from a hit Broadway play. Her friends include Anthony Quinn and Gary Cooper. She has top-billing in MGM's highest grossing movie of 1961, the iconic teen film, *Where the Boys Are*.

Then, with career established and engaged to a handsome beau, she leaves Hollywood and the prospect of marriage for the life of a contemplative nun at a Benedictine monastery in Connecticut.

Sound too far-fetched? It is not. This is the story of Mother Dolores Hart, O.S.B., told in her new memoir, *The Ear of the Heart* (Ignatius Press).

The public became reacquainted with Mother Dolores last year through the Academy Award-nominated documentary *God Is the Bigger Elvis*. Her memoir fleshes out much greater detail of what the film established as a fascinating and rich life.

Dolores came from a broken home and spent much of her youth living with grandparents. Her grandfather was a projectionist at a movie theater in Chicago. Accompanying him to work, little Dolores enjoyed acting out mannerisms of screen actresses.

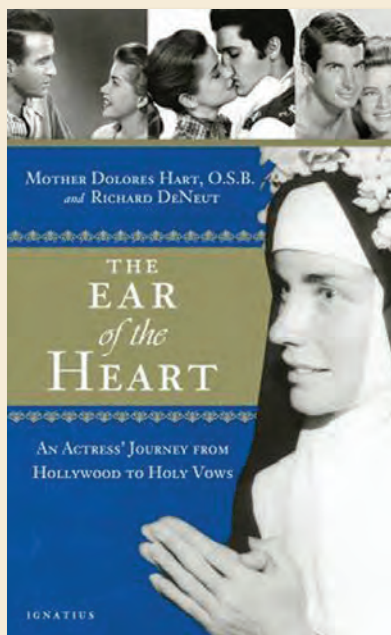
A Catholic convert, Dolores' first attraction to the faith was the result of envy, observing the Catholic students in her third-grade class at St. Gregory's being treated to hot chocolate and sweet cakes after morning Mass. Non-Catholic students, such as Dolores, were expected to have eaten breakfast at home, not being required to fast before Mass.

Soon Dolores' appreciation of the Faith deepened beyond hot chocolate. Early on she was attracted by the sense of com-

"A vocation is a call – one you don't necessarily want. The only thing I ever wanted to be was an actress. But I was called by God."

munity among Catholics, and derived peace from the Real Presence of Christ in church. Her adolescence progressed uneventfully until enrolling at Loyola University. A rigid-minded nun refused to reschedule a final exam which conflicted with an audition at Paramount Studios. Decades later her failing grade in the course was offset by an honorary degree from what had become Loyola Marymount University. Mother Dolores observed, *"The Lord has the last laugh."*

While her vocation caught the public unawares, it was not something that came upon her suddenly. Nearly five years elapsed between her first visit to the Regina Laudis Abbey in Bethlehem, CT and her decision to enter. As she explains:



"I left the world in order to re-enter it on a more profound level. Many people don't understand the difference between a vocation and your own idea about something. A vocation is a call – one you don't necessarily want. The only thing I ever wanted to be was an actress. But I was called by God."

Mother Dolores gives witness in her book to a strong and mature Faith. Her adjustment to monastic life was difficult. This was not the bliss and serenity of a Buddhist ashram. She cried herself to sleep every night for her first three years. A journal entry during her first year read: *"It is harder than I ever dreamed. It is so real it hurts and yet anything less would be unbearable in its sham."*

She persevered, realizing that suffering is inextricably bound to God's plan of salvation. She reflects: *"If the price of loving Him is the pain of having to look for Him, then the price of finding Him is the pain of having to share His loneliness in the Garden of Gethsemane."* Her perseverance as a faithful religious has lasted fifty years.

The seriousness of her vocation notwithstanding, what is also engaging about *The Ear of the Heart* is the humanity and sense of fun that resounds throughout its pages. We

➡ PLEASE TURN TO [EAR](#) ON PAGE 29

Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni answers your questions about the Catholic Faith and the Catholic Church. Send questions to: MailTheEagle@gmail.com.

In a church where Holy Communion is offered under both species, is it disrespectful to decline receiving the Precious Blood? Some people think Catholics are obligated to receive both species, while others think consuming the Host and drinking the Precious Blood offers double the grace/twice the benefit.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* answers this:

"Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species [bread or wine], communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace. For pastoral reasons this manner of receiving communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite. But 'the sign of communion is more complete when

given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the Eucharistic meal appears more clearly' [General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 240]. This is the usual form of receiving communion in the Eastern rites" (Catechism, 1390).

The term "concomitance" (from the Latin *concomitantia*, meaning "accompaniment") applies to the reality that the fullness of Christ: His Divinity and Humanity, His Body and Blood, are fully present in both Eucharistic species of bread and wine. So that, when one receives either, one receives the whole Christ: He is indivisible, and the words of consecration at Mass are His own by which He instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass during the Last Supper: *"This is My Body; This is My Blood."*

So no, it is not disrespectful to decline the

Precious Blood, and no, you do not receive an "extra share" of Eucharist.

A Catholic wedding must be conducted in a Catholic Church, but a Mass is optional. Why?

Catholic marriage is an act of worship of God, and, so, the most proper place to worship God is in a church. In various unique circumstances, and the local bishop's instructions, a marriage may be conducted outside a

church. Being married in the context of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is optional, especially when one of the persons marrying is not a Catholic. Sometimes non-Catholic families feel uncomfortable at a religious ceremony to which they are unaccustomed. In such a case, a simple scriptural service is usually offered instead.



Quick Answers to Short Questions

BASILICA CALENDAR: AUTUMN 2013

Every Monday: Holy Hour, with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Rosary: 7 p.m. in the Basilica.

Every Wednesday: Latin Reading Group, 6:15 p.m. in the Rectory.

Every Thursday: Introduction to Biblical Greek class, 6:30 p.m. in the Rectory. New students welcome.

Every Friday: Holy Name Men's Society, 7-8 a.m., the Rectory. All men are welcome.

Thursday, September 19: Installation of Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, 2 p.m., St. Theresa Parish, Trumbull. Attendance is by ticket only. The installation will be broadcast live on www.bridgeportdiocese.com



Saturday, September 21: "The Photographer and the Saint," a multimedia presentation marking the 45th anniversary of the passing of St. Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio), 5:30 p.m. in the Msgr. Nagle Hall. All welcome.

Beginning Sunday, September 22: First Day of Religious Education Classes. Please pre-register by calling the Basilica Office: (203) 324-1553, ext. 21.

Beginning Wednesday, October 2: St. Monica Institute for Patristic Studies, 7:30 p.m. in the Rectory. Join us for a new weekly discussion of *The Life of the Virgin* by St. Maximus the Confessor, the oldest biography of Jesus' mother.

Sunday, October 6: St. Anne's Family Society, after the 5 p.m. Mass. Benediction, prayer, supper, and a talk by Dr. Joan Kelly on the Rosary. All families are welcome.

Sunday, October 13: Re-Consecration of the Basilica Parish to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, during the 10 a.m. Family Mass. Please join us.

Beginning Wednesday, November 6: Bible Study, 7 p.m. in the Rectory. Explore the Book of Isaiah every week with Fr. Terry Walsh. All are welcome.

For the latest news, calendar updates, and 24/7 webcam, visit www.stjohnsstamford.com

Not the same as loneliness

Solitude is necessary for all to seek the face of God

"I will allure her, and will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart." — Hosea 2:14

Our culture encourages us to socialize continually. So many advertisements imply that all free time is to be interactive time. The writer Erica Jong observed how *"solitude is un-American . . . This country seems to be the official home of the big dinners and the party hearty."* A French writer has advanced the seeming paradox that very few Americans know how to take a walk.

It seems to me that many Catholics today want us to think of faith as a collective thing, as something that has to do almost exclusively with "fellowship." The good Catholic is always community centered. *"You're all by yourself"* is always said in a tone of sadness and concern.

We have coined a derogatory term for the person who likes now and then to be alone — we call such a person "anti-social," as though s/he were an enemy of society.

Yet the ancient Christian Desert Fathers had a saying about being "never less alone than when alone." A basic principle of the spiritual life is that solitude is an essential condition for any spiritual deepening. St. Athanasius (who wrote a biography of St. Anthony of the Desert) said that *"solitude is an essential to the spiritual life as water is to the survival of a fish."* The psychologist Carl Jung said that *"true maturity or depth of soul happens when solitude becomes our best life's companion."* Solitude is not the same as loneliness.

Solitude is more congenial for some than for others. Some people have a taste for solitude; indeed, they have a need for solitude, that can be like the need for eating or sleeping. They have an irresistible urge to be alone at times, away from people, away from the



"THE TEMPTATION OF SAINT ANTHONY" BY CORNELIS SAFTLEVEN (1629)

"Some people shudder at the idea of solitude; they experience only boredom and even paralyzing fear when alone with themselves."

necessity to talk or explain or argue or even to listen.

Contented solitude should be regarded as a gift. Some people shudder at the idea of solitude; they experience only boredom and even paralyzing fear when alone with themselves.

All religious traditions agree that solitude is necessary for all who seek the face of God. But it seems that in the constant

sociability of our age few have the desire for solitude. Most seem averse to being alone, and seek distractions of every sort.

Still, solitude is the most profound requirement of the inner journey. It is the backdrop for the silence we need to hear the Word of God, and for knowing ourselves truly, for venturing into the truth of ourselves.

Hence we are told that, no matter our state in life, we must have regular periods of solitude, times of absence from human beings and human vanities, just being alone before God. Teresa of Avila told us to *"shun over much*

company." Blaise Pascal, the 17th century Catholic French philosopher, said that *"we need to fast from too much togetherness and enjoy more solitude."* This was a radical condition for deep prayer.

The Gospels clearly depict Jesus as someone who often retreated into solitude. Jesus seems to have needed to be alone quite a bit. Luke 5:16: *"He would habitually go off to deserted places where he could be alone and pray"* (cf. Mark 2:35, 6:46; Luke 6:12).

The recommendation is that one should strive to have a period of solitude every day, and try to have a "desert day" every month — a day away from people in order to be alone someplace.

Ideally, one has some kind of hermitage to go to, where one can have a reprieve from people and can live the slow quiet rhythm of a day. We don't find time to do this; there is no time lying around waiting to be discovered. We make time, carve out some time for solitude.

Personally, I've always had a taste for solitude. During the days of my childhood, I enjoyed being by myself and have never lost the sense of the charm that surrounded those days. By current canons I probably would have been drafted into some supervised group activity thought up by adults. It seems that everything has become a group activity. A child who wants to be do anything alone has to fight off the organizers.

There is a report of a 31-year-old Norwegian named Borge Ousland who, pulling a 300-pound sled, cross-skied alone to the North Pole, over more than 600 miles. He later said: *"Being alone proved to be one of the greatest experiences of the entire trek."*

Again, I think it is one of the tragedies of our times that most people are unable to enjoy solitude. I have found that very few ordinary Catholics appreciate the value of solitude. However, sooner or later, if you have not found solitude, it will find you. Probably no one escapes solitude.

Inevitably, aging brings a time of solitude. No matter how it comes, solitude can bring us to God. God is within every solitude waiting to be discovered.

Let me end with some words from Gerard Manley Hopkins:

*Elected Silence, sing to me
And beat upon my whorled ear,
Pipe me to pastures still and be
The music that I care to hear.*
— "The Habit of Perfection"

— **Dr. Thomas Hicks**

Dr. Hicks, a member of St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull, is Professor Emeritus of Theology and Psychology at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

Liturgy of the Hours

Two kinds of life to be lived

St. Augustine of Hippo (d. 430 A.D.), Bishop, Doctor of the Church, and Patron of the Diocese of Bridgeport, was one of our greatest theologians. The following is from a treatise he wrote on St. John the Evangelist.

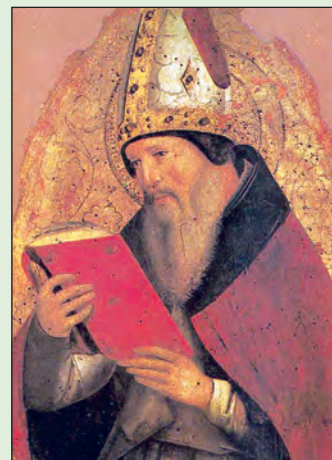
“**T**he Church recognizes two kinds of life as having been commended to her by God. One is a life of faith, the other a life of vision; one is a life passed on pilgrimage in time, the other in a dwelling place in eternity; one is a life of toil, the other of repose; one is spent on the road, the other in our homeland; one is active, involving labor, the other contemplative, the reward of labor.

“The first kind of life is symbolized by the apostle Peter, the second by John. All of the first life is lived in this world, and it will come to an end with this world. The second life will be imperfect till the end of this world, but it will have no end in the next world. And so Christ says to Peter: *Follow Me*; but of John He says: *If I wish him to remain until I come, what is that to you? Your duty is to follow Me. You are to follow Me by imitating My endurance of transient evils. John is to remain until My coming, when I will bring eternal blessings.* A way of saying this more clearly might be: *Your active life will be perfect if you follow the example of My Passion, but to attain its full perfection John's life of contemplation must wait until I come.*

“Perfect patience is to follow Christ faithfully, even to death, but for perfect knowledge we must await His coming. Here, in the land of the dying, the sufferings of the world must be endured; there, in the land of the living, shall be seen the good things of the Lord. . .

“And so for the sake of all the saints inseparably united to the body of Christ, to guide them through the storms of this life, Peter, the chief of the apostles, received the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven with the power to bind and loose sins; and for the sake of those same saints, to plumb the depths of that other, hidden life, John the Evangelist reclined on the breast of Christ.

“For it is not only Peter but the whole Church that binds and looses from sin; and as for the sublime teaching of John about the Word, who in the beginning was God with God, and everything else he told us about Christ's divinity, and about the trinity and unity of the Godhead, which now, until the Lord comes, is all like a faint reflection in a mirror, but which will be seen face to face in the Kingdom of Heaven — it was not only John who drank in this teaching that came forth from the Lord's breast as from a fountain. All who belong to the Lord are to drink it in, each according to his capacity, and this is why the Lord Himself has spread John's gospel throughout the world.”



“Perfect patience is to follow Christ faithfully, even to death, but for perfect knowledge we must await His coming.”

Catholics left a big mark on Old Hollywood films

The list of Catholics in old-time Hollywood is long. Be they cradle Catholics or converts, Tinseltown was once populated by folks who, although sometimes unable to resist the temptations of a glitzy lifestyle, were nonetheless proud and open practitioners of the Faith. So let's meet a few of your Catholic brethren who gave us so many entertaining moments in days gone by.

The Guys

The so-called "Irish Mob" included **Spencer Tracy** (who played Fr. Flanagan in 1938's *Boys Town*), and several Warner Brothers stars, among whom was **James Cagney**, beloved celluloid gangster and talented hooper (1942's *Yankee Doodle Dandy*) who remained married to his wife Billie for 64 years until his death in 1986. His funeral was held at St. Frances de Sales Church in Harlem, where he had been confirmed and served as an altar boy. Fellow altar boy **Pat O'Brien** was also married for 53 years and seriously considered



PAT O'BRIEN AND JAMES CAGNEY
IN "ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES" (1938)

the seminary. He played so many celluloid priests he once quipped, "One more and they'll have to ordain me." Who could forget him as Fr. Connolly opposite Cagney in *Angels with Dirty Faces*?

Rounding out the gang was the kindly **Frank McHugh**; he of the singsong laugh who played Fr. Timothy O'Dowd in 1944's *Going My Way* (directed by **Leo McCarey**, a Catholic) and was also married to the same woman for 50 years.

McHugh's *Going My Way* co-star, **Bing Crosby**, was well known for his Academy Award-winning portrayal of Fr. O'Malley and less known as a generous benefactor of his alma mater, Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA, and of Catholic Charities.

Another Christian gentleman was **Ricardo Montalban**, who once referred to his Catholic faith as "the most important thing in my life." He was made a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory the Great – the highest honor a lay person can receive – by Blessed Pope John Paul II in 1998 for his contributions to the Church.

The Gals

Then there were the actresses who, although a few gave in to the Hollywood proclivity to sexual dalliances, nevertheless were proud and charitable Catholic women. These included **Rosalind Russell**, **Maureen O'Hara**, **Jane Wyman**, **Irene Dunne**, and **Loretta Young**. These and many other stars attended Mass together, worked hard for Church charities, and were unashamed and vocal Catholics. Young was the godmother of Marlo Thomas, while Dunne – a daily communicant – and her husband were both Knights of Malta.

Lovely **Ann Blyth** and her husband were awarded the rank of Lady and Knight of the Holy Sepulchre by Terrence Cardinal Cooke. Now 85, Blyth is the picture of grace and elegance – quite unlike her star turn at age 17 as the wicked daughter Veda opposite Joan Crawford in *Mildred Pierce* (1945).

A beautiful story concerns **Grace Kelly**; she of the storybook life and tragic death. In 1954, on the 100th anniversary of the official definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, Prince Rainier of Monaco made a pilgrimage to Lourdes to pray to Our Lady for a suitable wife. Several years later, Princess Grace revealed that her confirmation name was Bernadette,

THE EAGLE

is published quarterly by

The Basilica of St. John the Evangelist
279 Atlantic Street, Stamford, CT 06901-3506
Telephone (203) 324-1553, ext. 21
E-mail: MailTheEagle@gmail.com

Edited by **Dr. Joseph McAleer**
Original photography by **John R. Glover**
Stock photography by Shutterstock Images

Printed by **Greg Duffey, Minuteman Press, Norwalk**

Current and past editions are posted online: www.stjohnsstamford.com/the-eagle
Annual subscription (4 issues): \$25.

Basilica Mass Times:

Monday through Saturday: 8:00 a.m., 12:10 p.m.

Sunday: Saturday Vigil, 4:00 p.m.;

Sunday, 7:30 a.m. (No Frills), 10:00 a.m. (Family Mass); 12 Noon;
5:00 p.m. (No Frills); 6:00 p.m. (Creole).

Confessions available prior to every Sunday Mass *

* Except the 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. Masses on Sunday.

Live 24/7 webcam: www.stjohnsstamford.com

© 2013 The Basilica of St. John the Evangelist. All rights reserved.



after the French girl to whom the Blessed Virgin appeared in Lourdes. On the 25th anniversary of the prince's pilgrimage, Princess Grace would also visit Lourdes in thanksgiving.

While filming 1961's *Francis of Assisi* in Rome, **Dolores Hart** met Blessed Pope John XXIII and told him, "I am Dolores Hart, the actress playing St. Clare." The Pontiff replied, "Tu sei Chiara!" ("You are Clare!"). Two years later, at the height of her career at age 24, she left Hollywood for the Benedictine Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, CT (featured in 1949's *Come to the Stable*, starring Loretta Young), where today she is Prioress.

The Converts

The fine British actor, **Alec Guinness**, said his conversion began while filming *The Detective* (1954), a delightful movie in which he played G.K. Chesterton's Father Brown. On his way to the set one day, a small French boy came running up, calling "Mon Père! Mon Père!" and seized his hand. He later recalled:

"I reflected that a Church that could inspire such confidence in a child, making priests, even when unknown, so easily approachable, could not be as scheming or as creepy as so often made out. I began to shake off my long-taught, long-absorbed prejudices."

In a letter to his wife, he wrote:

"I accept absolutely now and with no effort that I am in the actual presence of God on the altar. There have been very few days this year when I haven't paid a visit – even if only for three minutes – to a church, merely to kneel and be astonished at the humility of God."

Then there was Bing Crosby's "road" buddy, **Bob Hope**. Although he led the



CELESTE HOLM AND LORETTA YOUNG
IN "COME TO THE STABLE" (1949)

typical Hollywood life of carousing and womanizing, Hope finally converted to Catholicism seven years before his death; much to the joy of his wife of 69 years, Dolores, who, like St. Monica, "prayed" him into the Church. Another actor whose conversion was influenced by his wife was **Gary Cooper**, who was baptized in 1958.

Our list of stars who converted to the Faith would be incomplete without mentioning **John Wayne**, whose grandson, Matthew Muñoz, is a Catholic priest in the Diocese of Orange, CA. Wayne converted shortly

before his death in 1978 after raising all seven of his children as Catholics.

The Directors

And of course there were the directors, who seemed to leave a palpable Catholic impact on most or all of their films; be it the rosy optimism of **Frank Capra**, the serio-comic genius of **Alfred Hitchcock**, or the hauntingly redemptive films of **John Ford**. While Capra is best remembered for the Yuletide classic *It's a Wonderful Life*, it is Ford's *3 Godfathers* (1948) that remains one of my favorite Christmas movies.

One seldom thinks of Hitchcock as a religious man, much less a Catholic, yet he directed Montgomery Cliff in *I Confess*, a 1953 film about a priest accused of a murder actually committed by a man who admitted the crime to him in the confessional. Although a very good film, it remains one of the director's least popular. Hitch knew why, acknowledging:

"We Catholics know that a priest cannot disclose the secret of the confessional, but the Protestants, the atheists, and the agnostics all say, 'Ridiculous! No man would remain silent and sacrifice his life for such a thing.'"

– Lisa Fabrizio

Lisa is a columnist for the [American Spectator](http://www.spectator.org) (www.spectator.org).

➡ **EAR** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24
learn that Mother Dolores was the casket-maker for the community, and once saluted the entry of General George S. Patton's granddaughter into cloistered life with a gunshot volley. Her given name was Hicks, not Hart, leading one of her uncles to congratulate her on her early film success, but question, "Where in the world did you pick up a name like Natalie Wood?"

She has the ability to whistle in a loud, piercing way, "effective for hailing cabs in New York City." She

recalls: "I once whistled like that in the common room at the monastery, and food dropped from mouths."

When pressed by a visitor once if she needed anything, she whispered through the grille, "A vodka martini – very dry."

Why a book at this time? Simply because, she says, "the Community asked me to write my story." Obedience is another virtue Mother Dolores has cultivated. Her book is an important gift to our secular society, especially its youth. As her writing collaborator and life-long friend Dick DeNeit explains, "Her story can reach out to young

people who find themselves living in contradiction between their inner truth and the values of the world around them."

The title of Mother Dolores' book comes from the prologue of St. Benedict's Rule, which beckons: "Listen, O my son, to the precepts of thy master, and incline the ear of thy heart."

It is well worth lending an ear to this life of purpose and this affectingly written memoir.

– Andrew McAleer

Back by popular demand, THE EAGLE prize crossword puzzle this time is based on the Old Testament, principally the Books of Genesis and Exodus. Clues by Fr. Terry Walsh are based on the Revised Standard Version (RSV) translation of The Bible. Good luck!

ACROSS

1. 38 Down died and was buried there.
4. The mysterious priest, king of Salem.
6. Daughter-in-law of 41 Down.
8. The fair virgin who filled her jar with water and shared it with Isaac.
10. Brother to the leader, he was his spokesperson.
11. The voice of his blood cried out from the ground.
13. The New Tree of Life.
15. God spoke these words to 7 Down in the desert – “signposts” to Heaven.
18. “What is it?”
19. The Mountain of God.
21. You shall keep this day holy.
23. The sign of the Covenant with 26 Across.
24. The Lamb’s blood on their doorposts on the night of the 10th plague.
26. The father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
28. He dreamed he saw angels upon it.
32. Sold for 20 pieces of silver, he was taken to this foreign land.
33. The Ark of the Covenant was made with this wood.
34. Bride of Adam, formed from this.
36. Throughout their journeys, it rested over the Tabernacle by day.
39. She “looked back” upon Sodom and Gomorrah and became ____.
40. Forbidden Fruit.
41. He was the son of Nun who

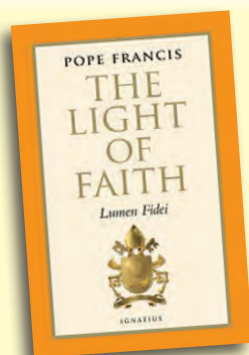
served 7 Down.

45. The Egyptian maid who gave birth to Ishmael.
46. The Feast of ____ for the “first fruits.”
47. Bride of Christ.
48. Number of the sons of 14 Down.
52. This brother tried to foil the plot to kill 58 Across.
54. God called him to a new land and later changed his name.
55. The Hallowed Day.
58. The son Israel loved the most.
59. The youngest received five times as much at the table of 58 Across.
60. The Story of the Israelites from Slavery to Freedom.

DOWN

1. Although it burned, it was not consumed.
2. Nephew of 54 Across who chose the land to the east.
3. Days and nights on Mt. Horeb.
4. Abraham took his son up this mountain as a sacrifice.
5. Sister of Simeon and Levi.
7. “I drew him out of the water.”
9. The land in Egypt where the Israelites dwelt.
12. 10 Across and his sons were anointed, ordained, and consecrated as ____.
14. He tricked Isaac and received the Blessing.
15. Asked if he were his brother’s keeper.
16. 14 Down’s bargain with 49 Down involved this animal.
17. “In the beginning . . .”
20. Pharaoh hardened it to the demise of his people.

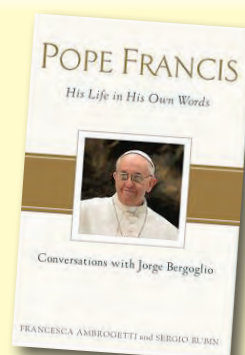
22. 54 Across’ new name, given at the establishment of the Covenant.
25. This first Tiller of the soil planted one.
27. Where did 58 Across see his brothers “bow down to my sheaf”?
29. Son of Jesse who became King; also Fr. Audette’s middle name.
30. The elder who served the younger.
31. 7 Down wore one because his face shone.
35. From there, God confused their language and scattered them abroad.
37. The older sister, mother to six sons of 14 Down.
38. Loved by 14 Down, she gave birth to the youngest two.
39. She gave birth to Isaac.
41. The Scepter shall not depart from him, nor the ruler’s staff . . .
42. The sign of the Covenant “on the 8th day.”
43. 58 Across prefigures another who was stripped of his garment and thrown into a pit.
44. God changed 14 Down’s name – because he prevailed.
49. Brother of 8 Across to whom the “younger” fled.
50. Jacob named the place where God spoke to him.
51. 58 Across was wrongfully accused and sent there for two years.
53. 58 Across warns of this and is greatly rewarded.
56. “Go to” 58 Across to buy it.
57. God formed man from it.



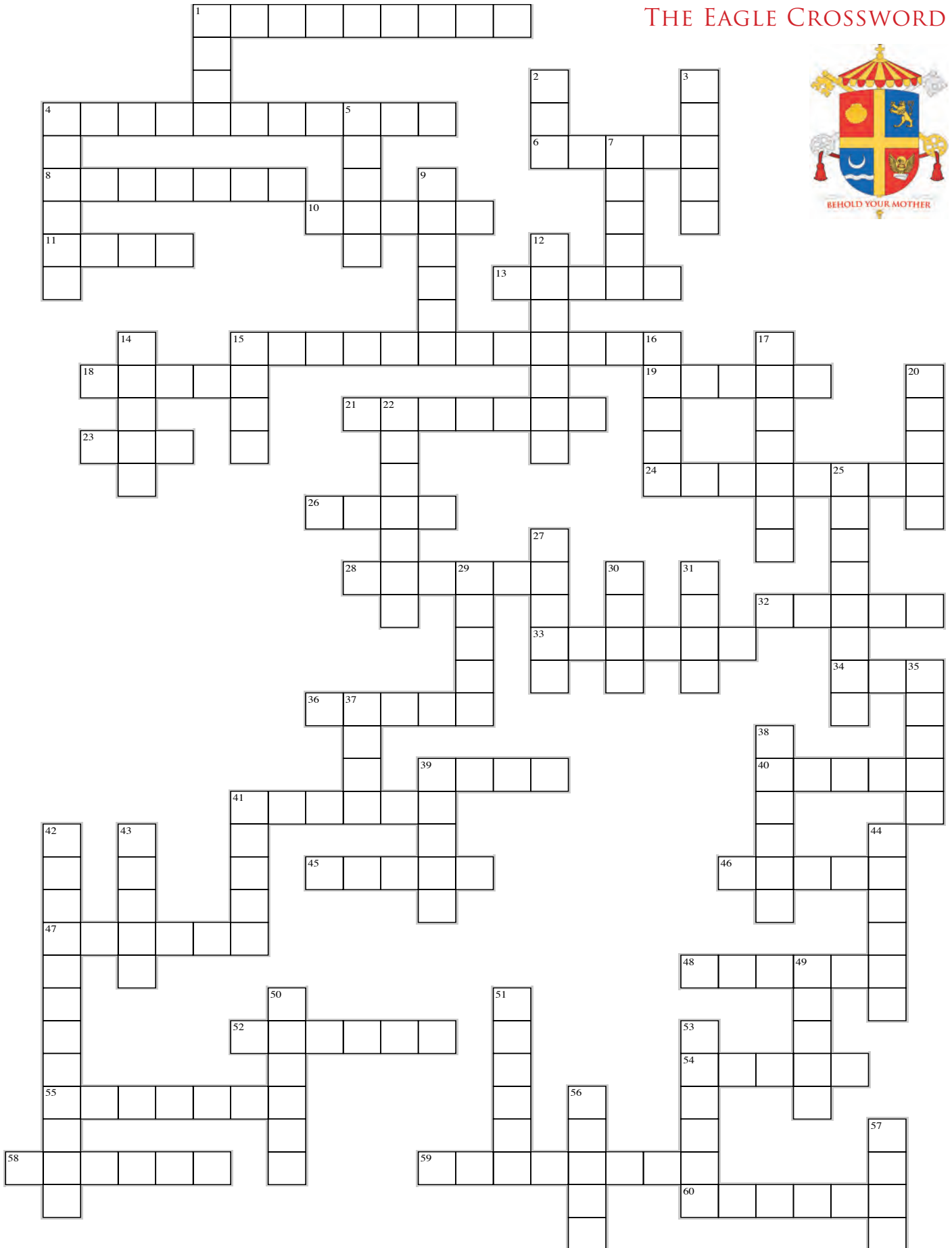
Submit your completed puzzle by **September 16** to win two prizes: *Lumen Fidei* (The Light of Faith), Pope Francis’ first encyclical, and *Pope Francis: Conversations with Jorge Bergoglio, His Life in His Own Words* by Sergio Rubin and Francesca Ambrogetti. Drop these two pages at the Parish Office, or mail them to: The Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, EAGLE Prize Crossword, 279 Atlantic Street, Stamford, CT 06901.

Name: _____

Daytime telephone: _____



THE EAGLE CROSSWORD



Hit the ground running, but take time to pause, too

Dear Soon-to-Be Seventh Grader,

Time to get back to work. You've had a pleasant summer and all the beaches and road trips and late-night movies and soccer camps that go with it. You've had the luxury of afternoons without clarinet practice and evenings without geometry homework. You've spent enough hours in the sun to look like a cherry tomato.

But this changes now. You're almost in high school, after all, so the expectations rise. You want to excel? Then you'll have to demonstrate you can handle the rigors of a three-hour homework load and enough extracurriculars to make you well rounded: tennis, student council, guitar club, Meals on Wheels.

Someone like you, with so many talents and so much to offer, can carve out a clear path to success, but it won't happen on its own. You have to grasp at every opportunity. It's September: time to hit the ground running.

That's at least what you'll hear from a lot of people. But may I offer one additional piece of advice?

Ignore it.

By that, I don't mean not to pursue excellence or cultivate your gifts from God or pursue knowledge. In and of themselves, these are very good things. Learning how to factor binomials or diagram a sentence sharpens your mind that you may use it for good. Education is a gift.

But . . .

Every time you're asked to be more productive or you're reminded of what it takes to succeed at the higher levels, I'd ask that you remember one verse:

"Yet the news about [Jesus] spread all the more, so that



"You may feel overwhelmed at times, surviving only on adrenaline and a desire to succeed. Remember that – like Christ Himself – we need to withdraw. In times like these, your homework is to go to the backyard, say three Hail Marys, and then stare at the tree leaves in the wind for a half hour."

crowds of people came to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."

– Luke 5:15-16

Did you catch that? Jesus often withdrew. Took a step back. Put down the metaphorical iPhone. Which is a little odd when you

think about it. Everything He was doing was good in and of itself – preaching, healing, converting hearts. Why wouldn't He try to do more of that in His short time on Earth? Couldn't He make more of an impact if He had spent more time with the crowds?

Shouldn't He have worked a little harder?

And yet that's not what He did. The Son of God, by retreating occasionally to the quiet, demonstrated that sometimes one of the most worthwhile and fulfilling and powerful things you can do is to do nothing at all. Embrace the silence, He seems to say, because it's the only environment that allows us to truly listen to God and reflect: Why am I here? What am I called to do? Am I living my life as I should? Who are my friends? Why did I call her that?

And even: That physics problem that Ms. Benton gave to us – how exactly should I tackle it?

Soren Kierkegaard thought that the prescription for many of the world's ills is something so simple that hardly anyone ever does enough of it. *"Create silence!"* he wrote. *"The Word of God cannot be heard in the noisy world of today."*

Noisy – yes, that's what the school year can be. Tests and quizzes and text messages and e-mail and dances and movies and YouTube and tryouts and chores and essays and apps and shopping and studying and more text messages. It's exhausting.

Paradoxically, though, it's also sometimes very easy. Sometimes it's easier to succumb to the pressure and distractions than it is to step back, take a deep breath, and just *be*. Retreating takes a certain discipline and wisdom, an understanding that there is much more

➡ PLEASE TURN TO [LETTER](#) ON PAGE 35

Beware the boundless, untouchable ego

On the Ship of Faith, be more than just a passenger

"It wasn't that I left the ship. It was the ship that deserted me."

This is an apt description by someone who stopped practicing their religion. Sometimes the ship is indeed to blame, but much more frequently it is the passengers who are at fault. The tendency to blame someone (or something) other than oneself is as old as Adam blaming Eve, and Eve, the serpent.

The deep-seated vanity of keeping the ego intact, and the contortions one practices to preserve one's *amour propre*, would dazzle Houdini, and cause even Macchiavelli to stretch his eyes.

To continue the nautical analogy, I picture some vast liner, turning a wide circle, then sailing over the horizon. The twinkling lights and drift of human voices fade and disappear. Tossing in the frothy wake of the big ship bobs a tiny coracle, a one-person vessel. The little craft is adrift, and since (of course) it is dead of night and moonless to boot, the lone sailor is plunged in darkness. A fanciful vision of infinite peril and solitude.

The resources in the coracle comprise only what the man has within himself, there is no lifebelt or even a light. He has some accumulated experience, a few physical attributes, a mind aware of what it has abandoned, and a determination to supplant those beliefs with ideas of his own. And a boundless, untouchable ego.

There are as many ways of coping out of Catholicism as there are lapsed Catholics. A particularly rich example was the intellectual who said something along the lines of: "*If I really believed Christ was present in the Eucharist, I would never leave the orbit of the tabernacle.*" This remark gives one pause as one turns to leave the church.

We have all experienced the tug-of-war between the demands of everyday life



"There is much rejoicing when one battered coracle rejoins the ship, and many a mariner abandons his ego-cruise with sighs of relief."

and the very real desire to linger longer in the Real Presence of Christ. The necessity of getting on usually takes precedence. But it is salutary to ask oneself at regular intervals, "Why am I (still) a Catholic?"

A few years ago I was asked to talk to a clutch of high-school students on the reasons why I became a Catholic. It was great fun, not least because they asked such peculiar questions. They were all "cradle" Catholics, a species I have always envied for their lack of inhibitions about their faith. They are so thoroughly at home in it. Genuflecting, the Sign of the Cross, the Real Presence, addressing Mary as "Our Lady" and so on, all things that come strangely and embarrassingly to your average convert. One had to accustom oneself to this new "freedom." For freedom it is.

But even they, I understand, often benefit from a sort of conversion at some

time during their lives. For many this must have come about after the Second Vatican Council when they had to re-think and re-align themselves to a "changed" Church.

Bear with me if I pick up the shipping parable (No islander can resist the rich vein of sea-doggerel!). I, and thousands like me, didn't join a rusting hulk, a fossil fixed in amber. If you believe the Church was founded by God, is the human Body of Christ, and was and is directed by the Holy Spirit, you have to stay aboard, however inconvenient the cabins or tasteless the decor.

What's more, it's not enough to be a mere passenger. One has to contribute to the running of the ship, from swabbing decks to filling-in the logbook. One's ego intrudes at every turn, and the devil and his minions suggest a hundred good reasons for not doing this or that.

How do you visualise your ego? I see mine as an incredibly tough nut. A Brazil nut perhaps, and you have only your fingernails with which to tackle it. Ouch.

👉 PLEASE TURN TO *SHIP* ON PAGE 35



Finally, our Mass schedule will change slightly this fall. The professional choir will begin singing at the 10:00 a.m. “Family Mass” beginning in September. They will sing more modern pieces and Mass settings than the Mozart and Haydn Masses they have been singing during the 11:30 Solemn Mass (which will be moved to 12 Noon). Some of the new Mass settings are composed by our own choirmaster, Chris Mueller, who, besides being a superb choir director and organist, is a talented jazz musician. That should liven up the 10:00 Family Mass. It is already full, so with more people coming to church, maybe we’ll have to add on to the Basilica! *Only joking!!*



YOUNG PRODIGES PRACTICE IN THE CHAMBER MUSIC INSTITUTE HELD IN THE MSGR. NAGLE HALL.



TONY COLON HAS OVERSEEN THE RESTORATION OF THE RECTORY GAZEBO. (PHOTO BY JOHN GLOVER)

So there you have it – the bare bones of a general plan to make our parish even more family-friendly in the coming years. With many new parishioners joining each week, and many more in the upcoming years with the construction of much new housing in the downtown area, the future and life of the Basilica parish looks very bright.

Truly, the Summer of 2013 has been a very interesting time of refurbishing, restoration and rebirth for the Diocese of Bridgeport and for St. John’s. While the tree growing in Brooklyn gave much hope to the Catholic immigrant family in the novel, the many trees of faith growing throughout the Diocese of Bridgeport and at St. John’s are signs that the Church is very much alive. For all these blessings, for our new Bishop, and for the continued growth of St. John’s, we should daily thank Our Lord.

– Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni, H.E.D.

Msgr. DiGiovanni is Pastor of the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist. His new book, [Ignatius: The Life of Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin-Mei](#), is on sale in the Basilica bookstore and on [Amazon.com](#) (print and Kindle editions).

📖 **LETTER** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

to life than what you can cross off on a list. In a word, retreating is counter-cultural.

So, be countercultural. That's what prayer is, anyway. It's taking a moment to elevate above the frenzy and say that the only thing that really matters is my relationship to God.

School is crucially important, friends too, family more so. But God comes above all and, as Elijah found, He is found not in the wind or the earthquake or the fire, but in the silence (1 Kings 19:11-13).

I know it's easier said than done, but that makes it no less true. It has to be an active choice. You have to *create* silence, as Kierkegaard said.

***"Be counter-cultural.
That's what
prayer is,
anyway."***

As school begins, you're likely to be quickly swept up in Spanish conjugations, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the latest gossip. You will feel the burden of wanting to please your parents, your friends, your teachers, your coaches, and your pastor.

You may feel overwhelmed at times, surviving only on adrenaline and a desire to succeed.

And so I'd suggest that, when all this is happening, remember that – like Christ Himself – we need to withdraw. To be truly successful, you need to create silence.

In times like these, your homework is to go to the backyard, say three Hail Marys, and then stare at the tree leaves in the wind for a half hour.

– **Ricky J. McRoskey**

Ricky, a member of St. John's and father of two who lives in Norwalk, writes for a New York-based financial firm.



THE VIEW FROM THE BACK PEW

We have a Bishop, at long last. A *sede vacante* of 498 days – one year, four months, and 11 days, to be precise – came to an end with the surprise mid-summer announcement from the Vatican on the Feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

What can we expect of the Fifth Bishop of Bridgeport? Will he be a “warrior” in the spirit of St. Ignatius, pursuing a much-needed and long-postponed campaign of reform and renewal in our Diocese? We hope so.

Goodness knows we crave strong leadership. Many in our Diocese nodded in assent last May when Pope Francis addressed the Catholic Bishops of Italy and warned about a disturbing trend:

“Lack of vigilance – we know – makes the shepherd lukewarm, makes him distracted, forgetful, and even impatient. It seduces him with the prospect of career, the lure of money, and compromises with the spirit of the world. It makes him lazy, transforming him into a functionary, a cleric more worried about self, about organization and structures than the true good of the People of God. It runs the risk then, as did the Apostle Peter, of denying the Lord, even though formally presenting itself as, and speaking in, His name. It obscures the holiness of the hierarchical Mother Church, making it less fruitful.”

Welcome aboard, Bishop Caggiano.

📖 **SHIP** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33

Like all good yarns, this deserves a happy ending. I put it to you that there is much rejoicing when one battered coracle rejoins the ship, and many a mariner abandons his ego-cruise with sighs of relief.

P.S. The other day, an Italian priest serving the missions in the Far East read what I had written above. He had been through the maelstrom of Vatican II, and was a witness to many friends, clergy and lay, leaving the Church. He commented:

“But the Boat is a mixture of Divine and Human elements. It comes to the final shelter only at the end of the world, and for the time being it has to deal with its limits, with the waves and the storms. Fortunately the Boat's rudder is controlled by Him.”

– **Virginia Barton**

Virginia, a writer, wife, mother, and grandmother, lives in Oxford, England. Her collected writings are posted on the web at: www.VirginiaBarton.com



IGNATIUS CARDINAL KUNG PIN-MEI

1901 - 2000

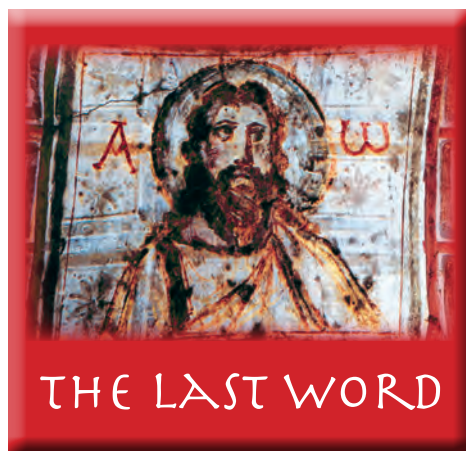
Please pray one “Hail Mary” daily for the opening of the cause of canonization for Cardinal Kung

One of my favorites of American literature is *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, published in 1943 by Betty Smith. It is the story of a family of Catholic immigrants and their children living their hardscrabble life in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Through the pages of their hopes, sufferings, sins, and failures, they never give up. The symbol of their perseverance is a “Tree of Heaven” (*Ailanthus altissima*) – an invasive species from China that crops up everywhere in abandoned city properties – growing between their apartment building and the local school. Despite years of attempts to destroy it, uproot it, and cut it down, the Tree of Heaven stubbornly insists on surviving, growing, and flourishing.

Just like the novel, much refurbishing, restoration, and rebirth has taken place both in the Diocese of Bridgeport and our Basilica parish during these summer months. We have been blessed with a new bishop, His Excellency Frank J. Caggiano, who was named by our Holy Father the fifth Bishop of Bridgeport on July 31. The son of Italian immigrants, Bishop Caggiano comes to a diocese created and formed by Catholic immigrants from nearly every country on the globe.

He will also find a diocese in trouble. Despite the efforts of immoral and troubled priests, and of political or self-interest groups to weaken and destroy the Church during the past decade, Pope Francis’ appointment of Bishop Caggiano to Bridgeport is a sign of great hope for all of us. Like the Tree of Heaven in the novel, the Catholic Church in Fairfield County is still alive and will continue to grow, resisting evil plots to uproot her by friend and foe alike.

One thing we can assure our new bishop: he will find his new sisters and brothers in the faith speaking many languages, yet professing one Creed. He will also find the vast majority of Catholics, both laity and clergy alike, very willing to cooperate with him as he begins to rebuild the Church in Fairfield County. [And, while not Brooklyn, I can also promise our new Bishop



that he can find the County’s *best* Italian food in Stamford – within the boundaries of our Basilica!].



“The appointment of Bishop Frank J. Caggiano to Bridgeport is a sign of great hope for all of us.”

At St. John’s, likewise a parish that has weathered periods of trial, nearly died, and yet still is very much alive and flourishing, these summer months have been filled with activity of refurbishing and restoration. Everyone in the parish has been so very generous during these past 15 years of restoration of our church. Now it’s time to move on to repair the rectory, which is our final major project.

Knowing how large a job that will be, we have used the past weeks testing the exterior before we begin the serious work of restoring and updating. The gazebo on the church side of the rectory, dating from 1857, has been rebuilt with new foundations and footings. The new decking and roof are nearly completed, using all the original decorative and structural woodwork, which has been painstakingly stripped and sanded by our Basilica custodian, Tony Colon.

This small project has given us an opportunity to look into the walls of the building in order to plan for the larger work next year. Architects will be contacted and asked to submit plans for the residing of the rectory, installation of new windows and insulation, and the creation of a small addition to the offices and classrooms at the rear of the building.

Once ideas and plans are drawn up, all this will then be submitted to the diocese for approval.



Each summer, St. John’s plays host to the Chamber Music Institute for young Musicians, led by Asya Meshberg, the founder and principal violinist of the Lumina String Quartet. Asya leads these young people – 7 to 17 years of age!! – and they are all superb musicians.

This is not a beginner’s course. These remarkable kids play cello, violin, viola, and other instruments like pros, because they are all going to perform in the Stamford Symphony. Some are preparing for studies at the Julliard School in Manhattan. The students are divided into quartets and assigned string works by Mozart, Borodin, Beethoven, Weber, and Schubert, and practice each weekend in the Msgr. Nagle Hall to perfect their technique and performance.

Allowing Asya and her young prodigies of the Chamber Music Institute free use of our hall is a great honor for St. John’s.

 PLEASE TURN TO *TREE* ON PAGE 35